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Vietnamese online media leaders' and citizens' perspectives on Vietnam-US relations

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After more than 26 years since the normalization of Vietnam-US relations, cooperation in all fields, including the most sensitive ones, such as military, security, and politics, has significantly advanced. Moreover, the political beliefs of the people and governments of the two nations have at least partially converged. Therefore, it is time for Vietnam to consider the United States' proposal to elevate their relationship from a comprehensive partnership (2013) to a strategic one. Using qualitative and quantitative methodologies through content analysis, we first focus on particular areas of cooperation between the two countries, especially in development, and clarify the policies and desires to deepen collaboration and relations from both sides. The paper then evaluates Vietnamese public opinion regarding Vietnam-US relations by analyzing online articles in Vietnam. However, it is noteworthy that the announcement made on September 10, 2023, by the respective top leaders of the United States, President Joe Biden, and the Communist Party of Vietnam, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, regarding the elevation of Vietnam-US relations to the utmost level of comprehensive strategic partnership, bypassing the intermediate stage of a strategic partner, has indeed surpassed the anticipations of the Vietnamese populace. Contrarily, this phenomenon can be considered commonplace when examining the escalating dynamics of support from political leaders and the general populace toward Vietnam-US relations.

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as defense - security, economy - trade, health, and historical and logical presentation.

To reinforce the arguments about the above themes, we additionally used a quantitative method. The collected articles were divided into political (including national defense and security), economic (including commerce), social, and cultural (including health) groups. Counting words, which express support or opposition to the Vietnam-US relationship, expressing an attitude of wanting to upgrade or not wanting to upgrade this relationship. And some other data is listed in online articles. The results are obtained through SPSS software to analyze the content of articles through variables (upgrade, improve, strengthen, promote, difficulty, hindrance, prohibition, negativity, harassment). Those empirical analysis results to make judgments and assessments about the future of this relationship.

Context and driving factors. In less than ten years, US Secretary of State Blinken has made three trips to Vietnam, the most recent of which was April 14–16, 2023. This Blinken visit will pave the way for further improvement of ties between Vietnam and the United States. At a time when the United States and Vietnam are commemorating the tenth anniversary of the establishment of a comprehensive partnership, it is “considered a sign that the United States wants to strengthen ties with Hanoi.” (Thu, 2023)

Blinken was not the first high-ranking American official or member of Congress to travel abroad recently. These included July 2021’s trip by the Defense Secretary, August 2021’s trip by the US Vice President, and February 2022’s trip by John Kerry, the US President’s Special Envoy. The first few months of 2023 will see several high-level visits from US officials and lawmakers, such as Trade Representative Katherine Tai, US Agency for International Development Director General Samantha Power, and a Senate-led bipartisan congressional delegation. As the leader, Dr. Jeff Merkley was responsible for everything.

The purpose of Blinken’s trip is twofold: first, to continue the relationship begun by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong and US President Joe Biden in their March 29, 2023 phone call (Hà & Đạt, 2023) and second, to continue the relationship begun by Blinken’s visit.

All necessary preparations have been finalized after the visit of the United States Secretary of State in April 2023. During his 24-hour visit to Vietnam, President Joe Biden arrived at a consequential determination. On September 10, 2023, President Biden, in conjunction with General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong of the Communist Party of Vietnam, reached a significant milestone by announcing the elevation of bilateral relations between the United States and Vietnam to the most advanced level, characterized as a comprehensive strategic partnership.

Following the conclusion of the Cold War in 1991, the strategic objectives of both Vietnam and the United States have aligned, with a primary focus on fostering a peaceful, stable, and conducive environment that facilitates economic growth (Chính & Hoàng, 2021). The emergence of a shared security threat in the South China Sea has played a significant role in fostering a newfound alliance between China and its former adversaries (Nguyễn Anh Cường, 2022, p. 532). The duality of strategic interests plays a significant role in enhancing the Vietnam-United States relationship. However, it is essential to consider the current context, where Vietnam and China have established a comprehensive strategic partnership. At the same time, China and the US engaged in an intensifying strategic competition. In this light, Vietnam’s decision to elevate its relationship with the US to a strategic partnership could be perceived as challenging for China. The potential consequences of this could harm Vietnam.

In an additional dimension, it is anticipated that China will attempt to advance the establishment of military installations in the South China Sea for the next two decades. This strategic move aims to displace the United States from the region and encroach upon Vietnam’s territorial sovereignty, specifically about the Spratly and Paracel archipelagos. The United States is becoming increasingly cognizant of its crucial responsibility in guaranteeing the authentic freedom and openness of the South China Sea region. Consequently, Vietnam emerges as a partner that necessitates a close association. Hence, Vietnam’s assertion of territorial control over the Spratly and Paracel Islands primarily serves the national interests of Vietnam. Nevertheless, this poses a significant obstacle to China’s aspirations while simultaneously providing advantages to the United States. Vietnam finds itself once more confronted with a challenging predicament in its diplomatic interactions with China and the United States (Cường, 2023).

Furthermore, within the context of the competition between the United States and China, the rivalry in technology has been contributing to a global state of fragmentation in terms of technology utilization and accessibility. The United States and China seek to enhance the global influence of their respective allies through the widespread deployment of their technological resources. Within this particular context, Vietnam has expressed its support for prioritizing the utilization of technology in collaboration with strategic partners. The Document of the 13th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, 2021, explicitly emphasizes the imperative of enhancing international collaboration and integration in science and technology domains. It further underscores the significance of diversifying international cooperation efforts, particularly prioritizing partnerships with strategic allies (Đảng Cộng sản Việt Nam, 2021, p. 142). The desire of the United States to enhance its relationship with Vietnam is also a contributing factor.

The context mentioned above elucidates the rationale behind the desire to enhance the current bilateral ties between Vietnam and the United States or elevate the relationship. The presence of context significantly influences how the involved parties convey wishes. While the US side exhibits directness and candor, the Vietnamese side remains tentative and has yet to articulate its intentions. The subsequent analysis will provide a clear depiction of the contextual background, specific motivations behind activities, and the attitudes of the United States and Vietnam in various areas of collaboration.

Military and security cooperation. Military security cooperation between the United States and Vietnam has significantly progressed, overcoming all previous obstacles. The United States and Vietnam attach great importance to building cooperation mechanisms in security. However, it was not until 2008 that, after 13 years of normalization, the two countries set up a dialogue mechanism for security, military, and politics. In 2010, the two sides launched a dialogue mechanism at the deputy ministerial level of the Ministry of National Defense, which is the Defense Policy Dialogue conference. Furthermore, in 2010, the United States participated in the ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting Plus (ADMM+), which boosted military cooperation between Vietnam and the US (CSIS, 2010).

Since 2008, the United States and Vietnam have held 11 political, security, and military dialogues to discuss bilateral security cooperation (Vũ Chính trị - quân sự, 2021). These dialogues have fostered the growing bilateral relationship between the two states and reflect the two countries’ shared commitment to a free, open, and independent Indo-Pacific region. The topics discussed included war, maritime security, humanitarian

assistance/disaster relief, peacekeeping operations, and international initiatives on Women, Peace, and Security (State, 2020).

Since 2015, Vietnam's military and security cooperation with the United States has received stronger and clearer support from the United States. For example, between 2015 and 2019, the US State Department approved the permanent export of US\$32.3 million worth of defense equipment to Vietnam through Direct Commercial Sales (DCS). Furthermore, in the same years, the US State Department conducted more than \$162 million in foreign military transactions with Vietnam (Vụ Chính trị - quân sự, 2021). In addition, the US has made commitments to Southeast Asia in general and Vietnam in particular, chiefly through the Southeast Asia Maritime Security Initiative (SAMSI). This support reflects Vietnam's credibility in the international community.

In May 2016, the United States lifted its ban on sending lethal weapons to Vietnam. Instead, it has resumed uninterrupted maritime security assistance to Vietnam through the Maritime Security Initiative, the joint Venture Program Threat Reduction Partnership, and the Foreign Military Financial Assistance Fund.

From 2017 to 2021, Vietnam received approximately \$60 million in bilateral security assistance through Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and more than \$20 million through SAMSI. Vietnam received an additional 81.5 million USD from the FMF program in fiscal 2018 to support the Indo-Pacific Strategy (Vụ Chính trị - quân sự, 2021). Crucial projects for the Vietnam Coast Guard include the transfer, refurbishment, and long-term maintenance of two used patrol boats of the United States Coast Guard under the program of Excess Defense Articles (EDA), as well as the delivery of the Metal Shark patrol boat. Implementing this program, the United States handed over Hamilton-class coast guard ships to Vietnam in 2017 and 2020 to help Vietnam improve its maritime law enforcement capacity (Archus, 2021). These coast guard ships represent the most significant defense transfers between the United States and Vietnam.

The two sides have been active in resolving Vietnam war issues such as Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Removal, dioxin pollution treatment, support for disabled people, and humanitarian activities on the search for soldiers missing in war (POW/MIA). Since 1993, the United States government has contributed more than \$166 million to mine and unexploded ordnance disposal efforts (Dương Ngọc, 2021; Vietnam, 2021b).

In addition, in defense cooperation between the two countries, the United States affirms its support for Vietnam's peacekeeping efforts by assisting Vietnam in deploying a United Nations peacekeeping force for the first time in South Sudan in 2018 (Đại sứ quán và Tổng lãnh sự quán Hoa Kỳ tại Việt Nam, 2022).

Following the policies and achievements of the previous governments in improving relations with Vietnam, after taking office, the administration of President Joe Biden sent Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to visit Vietnam (from July 28 to 29, 2021). Moreover, Vice President Kamala Harris's trip to Hanoi was right after that (from August 24 to 26, 2021). The representatives of the US government to Vietnam during the COVID-19 pandemic clearly and frankly expressed the US position. First of all, Minister Lloyd Austin: "The US is committed to supporting a strong, prosperous, and independent Vietnam." (Pamuk, 2021) Minister Austin especially emphasized the strategic urgency of the partnership between the two countries, asking the two sides to study and upgrade the relationship to a strategic partnership level (Tạp chí Cộng sản, 2021; Vu, 2021). In terms of personal feelings, the head of the US Department of Defense also has a unique share with Vietnam. When discussing the US supporting Vietnam with 5 million doses of Moderna vaccine in the fight against COVID-19 (Pamuk, 2021), he made the following touching overture: We look forward

to continuing to support Vietnam in many different ways... without any binding conditions. It is simply a case of friends helping friends in need (Nguyễn & Nguyễn, 2021).

Immediately after the visit of the United States Secretary of Defense, Vice President Kamala Harris' visit to Vietnam reaffirmed the United States commitment to the shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. When emphasizing: "I confirmed the commitment of the United States to the shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The United States will continue high-level security cooperation and support for a prosperous and independent Vietnam; continue to cooperate with Vietnam to confront threats to freedom of navigation and the rules-based international system." (Forum, 2021; News, 2021) The United States affirmed its support for Vietnam to strengthen its maritime security and law enforcement capabilities and pledged to continue high-level security cooperation (Vietnam, 2021a). The cooperation of expansion of humanitarian and response to natural disasters will also focus (Vinh Trần, 2021).

As Chairman of the National Defense and Security Council, Vietnamese President Nguyen Xuan Phuc responded that he would create favorable conditions for the two countries' defense ministries to strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual need. Vietnam continues to look forward to the US deepening its relationship with ASEAN for peace and prosperity in the region and the world. The Vietnamese Prime Minister, Pham Minh Chinh, affirmed that he would create all conditions for the Defense Ministries and militaries of the two countries to increase exchanges, improve understanding, and strengthen mutual trust and cooperation. That depends on the suitability of needs, abilities, and mutual benefits. The Prime Minister suggested that the US Defense Secretary continue to promote the cooperation relationship between the two countries defense ministries and militaries and the comprehensive partnership between Vietnam and the US (Tạp chí Cộng sản, 2021; Vu, 2021).

The views of Vietnamese leaders are also the views of the Vietnamese state and have in the white paper Vietnam National Defense 2019 with the principle of "Four Nos." It is "not joining a military alliance; not affiliated with one country to fight another; not allowing foreign countries to set up military bases or use Vietnam territory against other countries." And the fourth "No" point, newly added in 2019, is "not to use force or threaten to use force in international relations." In this book, there is a warning: "Depending on the development of the situation and in specific conditions, Vietnam will consider developing necessary defense and military relations with an appropriate degree." (Bộ Quốc Phòng, 2019, p. 19) It demonstrates the Vietnamese leadership's willingness to cooperate, upgrade, and advance defense ties with the United States when necessary. This newly added fourth "no" reflects the practicability of Vietnam's perspective on defense relations with the United States.

Cooperation between Vietnam and the United States is illustrated through the publication of official views from the top leaders and other Vietnamese publications about the US-Vietnam relationship. Furthermore, strengthening defense and security cooperation with the United States, as indicated above, means more effective participation in maintaining world order through international law and the United Nations Charter. Therefore, Vietnam is persisting in implementing the four principles above.

Economic and trade cooperation. The relationship between Vietnam and the United States has made significant developments in economy and trade. Results from the Bilateral Trade Agreement (2000); Permanent Normal Trade Regulations for Vietnam (2006); Framework Agreement on Trade and

Investment (2007); Established the Vietnam - United States Comprehensive Partnership (2013).

Bilateral trade turnover between Vietnam and the United States has increased about 250 times, from 450 million USD in 1995 to more than 111 billion USD in 2021 (an increase of nearly 21 billion USD compared to 2020). The United States became the second trading partner, with trade turnover exceeding 100 billion USD with Vietnam. The United States is Vietnam's largest export market, and Vietnam is the 9th largest trading partner of the United States (Tuổi trẻ online, 2022). For many years, the United States has always been one of the largest investment partners in Vietnam, with nearly 1150 active projects and total registered investment capital of more than 10.3 billion USD, ranking 11th out of 141 countries investment in Vietnam (Thanh, 2022).

United States investors also invest in more than 20 economic sectors. Most of the largest United States corporations have presented in Vietnam as Exxon Mobil, Murphy Oil, Chevron, Boeing, Ford, Intel, Wal-Mart, Nike, Amazon, and P&G... Many United States investors appreciate Vietnam will become an ideal, critical and safe investment location of the global supply chain (Nguyễn, 2021). However, in reality, the United States is often not fulfilled with "security exports, trade deficit" in Asia but wants to expand the market and find more exits for United States goods here. Assistant United States Trade Representative in charge of Asia affairs of the D. Trump Administration, Jeffrey Gerrish, has asked ASEAN countries to relax market access standards. Former President D. Trump himself also repeatedly mentioned the United States trade deficit issue. Facing that situation, Vietnam has taken significant steps to improve the import-export balance between the two countries through large contracts that the two sides have achieved.¹ Accordingly, Vietnam has become an emerging Asian market that imports many American agricultural products.

With Vietnam's efforts, the year 2021 maintains a very high mutual complementarity between the two economies of Vietnam and the US. First of all, look at import and export activities. The total two-way turnover reached a record level of over 100 billion USD, but also export activities from both directions have had acceptable growth rates. The Vietnamese main export groups to the United States are components, electronic machinery, textiles, footwear, agricultural and aquatic products. Meanwhile, Vietnam imports from the United States groups of materials for production such as cotton for the textile industry, wood materials for the export of wood and furniture or any other materials, pharmaceuticals, and temperate fruit groups that Vietnam cannot grow domestically.

Specifically, according to official statistics from Vietnam, Vietnam's exports to the United States achieved a growth rate of over 24%, while United States exports to Vietnam also grew by nearly 14%. It is a very positive result. That demonstrates market opportunities and the ability to capture and take advantage of opportunities between the two economies (Đoàn, 2021).

Economic-trade cooperation with an open policy from both sides has become an important pillar, marking an impressive mark in relations between the two countries.

In the medical field. Cooperation in the health sector shows the US's share in Vietnam's weak health system. Organizations and the United States government have many activities in this area. It shows America's interest in the development of Vietnamese people, not only in civil, political, economic, cultural, and social rights.

After normalization with Vietnam, the U.S. Government has provided Vietnam with more than 1.8 billion USD in support, of which more than 925 million USD is for the health sector. The

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has supported more than one million people with disabilities in Vietnam, funding more than 125 million USD for assistive devices, planning rehabilitation services, improving housing, and many other activities (Vietnam +, 2020).

The United States has accompanied Vietnam in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In 2003, Vietnam was the first country in Asia to receive support from the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Since then, PEPFAR has donated more than 800 million USD to help Vietnam deal with HIV/AIDS.

Vietnam is one of the countries with the highest number of TB cases. Therefore, since 1997, the United States CDC has provided technical support to Vietnam's National Tuberculosis Program to increase the effectiveness of TB detection, treatment, and prevention activities. USAID is also improving TB treatment delivery platforms, strengthening TB detection networks, improving TB surveillance, and building a forceful delivery TB response for the Government of Vietnam and the private sector.

For seasonal flu, since 2005, the United States Government has cooperated with the Vietnamese Government in preventing and controlling this disease. The United States CDC has supported Vietnam to set up two National Influenza Centers. It complies with USAID to build a surveillance system for severe respiratory infections, a laboratory-assisted surveillance system for severe viral pneumonia, and a laboratory-assisted surveillance program for avian influenza at selected live poultry markets nationwide. In 2019, Vietnam licensed the first locally produced seasonal flu vaccine. The result of multi-million-dollar support from the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Agency under the United States Ministry of Health over the past 26 years. In addition, since 2017, the United States CDC has supported Vietnam to vaccinate more than 32,000 health workers in six provinces and cities (Vietnam +, 2020).

Prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States CDC and USAID have jointly supported the Vietnamese Ministry of Health in surveillance, data analysis, laboratory testing, field investigation, and infection prevention and control. The United States has provided more than \$13 million in medical and financial assistance to Vietnam to help Vietnam fight against COVID-19. In addition, USAID has also provided 100 US-made ventilators to Vietnam to support the treatment of patients infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Specifically, the cooperation in response to COVID-19 of the two countries is not only done from one side. The Vietnamese government has donated hundreds of thousands of medical masks to the people of the United States, firmly demonstrating Vietnam's solidarity and support for the United States (Vietnam +, 2020). So far, the United States Government has supported 29.1 million doses of vaccine. The United States businesses have also actively shared with Vietnam about means and equipment for epidemic prevention and control for Vietnam (Thanh, 2022).

In addition, one of the highlights of the recent visit of United States Vice President K. Harris is the opening of the Southeast Asia Regional Office of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Vietnam. Male. The CDC Southeast Asia Office will support countries in the region to strengthen health security and promote transnational solutions to global health security issues.

The medical assistance of the United States to Vietnam has strengthened the trust and good feelings of the Vietnamese people towards the US. It is a solid foundation for solid cooperation from both sides. This humanitarian medical assistance is not only significantly eased the wounds of war but also helped the Vietnamese people become more open and trustworthy to cooperate with the Americans.

The aspirations of Vietnam and the United States. The United States position in cooperation with Vietnam is clear, while Vietnam's position in collaboration with the United States has also been quite clear. But what will the future of Vietnam- United States relations be?

Signals from the United States and Vietnam from leaders and published documents show the approach from the United States side, from the Vietnam side, both sides, and from the behavior of the Vietnamese online media.

For America. America's interest in Vietnam in recent times will allow it to confidently arrange for an aircraft carrier to dock in Vietnam every year and regularly invite Vietnam to participate in RIMPAC exercises (VNA, 2018). The United States will also support the development of the Navy and Coast Guard and increase financial support for Vietnam (Stewart & Pearson, 2019). At the same time, the United States also pushed Vietnam to openly express its support for FONOP activities and urged Vietnam to participate in this activity (Fravel & Glaser, 2022). When Vietnam joins, it will attract other countries in the region to respond in turn. The United States will rely on that to build a regional strategic posture with Vietnam as the focus.

The United States implements its strategic commitments to Southeast Asia and universally to the Indo-Pacific region. The United States is well aware of the need for increased diplomatic engagement in Southeast Asia, where it has "long-term interests," as affirmed in the Southeast Asia Strategy Act and approved in April 2021 (Vinh, 2021). "The United States is proud to be part of the Indo-Pacific region. This region is crucial to our security and prosperity. We will invest time and energy in strengthening key partnerships. The United States will pursue a free and open Indo-Pacific that advances our interests as those of our partners and allies. In addition to deepening our bilateral relationships, we will also cooperate multilaterally, through established institutions like ASEAN." (Đại sứ quán và Tổng lãnh sự quán Hoa Kỳ tại Việt Nam, 2022).

The United States continues supporting a strong, independent, and prosperous Vietnam to build trust towards elevating the two countries' relations; highly appreciate and support Vietnam to play an increasingly active role in ASEAN and the United Nations Security Council. The United States will continue to assist Vietnam in overcoming the consequences of the war, including the search for remains of Vietnamese martyrs during the war, Agent Orange, and mine clearance; support Vietnam to improve maritime security capacity and continue to support Vietnam to join the UN Peacekeeping Force. The United States will continue to support Vietnam and other countries receiving additional vaccine sources to reverse the COVID-19 epidemic (Nguyễn, 2021).

The United States will continue to attend the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) and is committed to building well and better cooperative relationships with countries in this region (Mạnh, 2021).

The United States will support foreign energy companies to participate in Vietnam's exploitation projects in the South China Sea. The United States has not only backed Vietnam's positions, especially in the South China Sea issue but also supported the building of maritime capacity for Vietnam through funding patrol, coast guard ships... These cooperative activities will maintain, and the two sides will continue to work closely to deal with new security challenges in the South China Sea in the coming time (B.Poling et al., 2021).

In particular, in recent times, it has shown the strong desire of the United States to upgrade the relationship with Vietnam to a strategic partnership level in the future (Mạnh, 2021). Messages from the United States show that they consider "doing what they

can" to elevate the current comprehensive partnership between the two countries to a strategic partnership. The message has been given by many American politicians when coming to Vietnam recently. Those are from the Secretary of Defense in July 2021, the United States Vice President (August 2021), and Special Envoy to the United States President John Kerry (February 2022). (Nguyễn, 2022) It clearly shows the United States desire to upgrade the relationship between the two countries to a new level - a strategic partnership. And "It will send a positive signal to the Government, people of the two countries and the region as we deepen the relationship between the two sides." (Thông tấn xã Việt Nam, 2021).

For Vietnam. The Vietnamese side will continue to promote cooperation in overcoming the consequences of war. That includes the cleaning of a dioxin-contaminated environment at Bien Hoa airport and some other localities and strengthening humanitarian support for Vietnamese people affected by Agent Orange/dioxin. Vietnam will fully and effectively cooperate in the search for the remains of a missing United States service member (MIA). (Nguyễn, 2021).

Vietnam will create all favorable conditions for the defense ministries of the two countries to strengthen the cooperation of both sides (Vietnam + , 2016; VNA, 2022). Vietnam wants the United States to deepen its relationship with ASEAN for peace and prosperity in the region and the world (Thuy, 2022).

Vietnam considers economy - trade as a pillar and strong driving force in the two countries' relations, and this field still has great potential and room for development (Hà, 2022). Vietnam suggested the two sides continue to strengthen cooperation within the framework of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA), and at the same time consider the possibility of establishing a new economic-trade cooperation framework to promote more harmonious and sustainable trade cooperation. Vietnam asked the United States side to create favorable conditions for Vietnamese agricultural products to access the market, avoiding trade remedies that may harm the Vietnamese people and U.S. consumers; continue to support Vietnam with drugs, and vaccines, improve medical capacity... (Hà, 2022)

For Vietnam, the United States has always been one of the most important partners. Vietnam wishes to continue bringing the Comprehensive Partnership between the two countries to a new height, becoming more in-depth, practical, and substantive based on respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and physical integrity of each other's political system (Chinhphu.vn., 2022).

Both Vietnam and the United States. Both sides "affirm their commitment to continue high-level security cooperation to support a strong, prosperous, and independent Vietnam, including humanitarian activities (with the participation of the United States Pacific Fleet) under the Pacific Partnership mechanism and visits to Vietnam by American ships, including aircraft carriers." (Trọng, 2021).

Vietnam and the United States have many similarities and great room for cooperation between the two countries in the economy - trade - investment, defense - security, overcoming the consequences of war, and health care, education, science-technology. Education is an area that is recognized as particularly important in US-Vietnam relations, with nearly 30,000 Vietnamese studying in the US, contributing about \$1 billion to the United States economy. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is financing the three largest national universities in Vietnam in "teaching, research, innovation, and governance" with 14.2 million USD. Nearly 150,000 Vietnamese students support this project to contribute to

promoting “a strong, prosperous and independent Vietnam” - a crucial partner of the United States (Trọng, 2021). Therefore, Vietnam and the United States will continue the long-term cooperation in education. In addition, Vietnam and the United States both want to continue promoting cooperation in science - high technology, focusing on the medical and health sciences, especially the pharmaceutical industry, biotechnology agriculture, post-harvest technology, innovation, and space cooperation for civilian purposes (Thùy, 2021).

Quantifying the attitude of Vietnamese media. In the first section of the study, we employed qualitative methods to conduct an in-depth analysis of the perspectives and attitudes of Vietnamese and American leaders in various fields. It has assisted us in developing a clear understanding of the leader’s attitude. The article then uses quantitative methods to analyze the content of randomly selected and classified papers according to the following criteria described in the materials and methods section to further clarify Vietnamese people’s attitudes. Characteristics of 113 articles with statistical variables as independent variables such as Time of publication of the article in 4 months (Apr, May, Jun, Jul), Belonging to - Class (State, other organizations), In the fields - Sector (Economics, politics, culture, society), Number of articles, Number of words in favor of articles - wordscount Support, Number of words against in articles - wordscount Oppose. Levels of Behavior Toward Raising the Vietnam-United States Relationship Level (Behavior Level: for, against, unknown) coexist with the dependent variable. The descriptive statistics are as follows:

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Months	113	1	4	2.30	0.611
Class	113	1	2	1.34	0.475
sector	113	1	4	2.18	1.002
wordscount Capacity	113	212	1898	822.58	365.106
wordscount Support	113	0	25	4.91	5.309
wordscount Oppose	113	0	2	0.02	0.188
Behaviour Level	113	0	2	0.81	0.434
Valid N (listwise)	113				

Crosstab							
	sector	Class				Total	
		Economics	Politics	Culture	Society		
Behaviour Level	unclear	Count	6	11	1	5	23
		Expected Count	5.3	12.8	0.4	4.5	23.0
		% within sector	23.1%	17.5%	50.0%	22.7%	20.4%
		Std. Residual	0.3	-0.5	0.9	0.2	
	for	Count	20	51	1	16	88
		Expected Count	20.2	49.1	1.6	17.1	88.0
		% within sector	76.9%	81.0%	50.0%	72.7%	77.9%
		Std. Residual	-0.1	0.3	-0.4	-0.3	
	against	Count	0	1	0	1	2
		Expected Count	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.4	2.0
		% within sector	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	4.5%	1.8%
		Std. Residual	-0.7	-0.1	-0.2	1.0	
Total	Count	26	63	2	22	113	
	Expected Count	26.0	63.0	2.0	22.0	113.0	
	% within sector	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	Std. Residual						

After including survey data from 113 articles in Testing the Statistical Significance of Relationships in Cross-Tabulations (The Chi-Square Test) to assess whether “if there were no relationship in the population between the independent variable and dependent variable - Behavior Level.” There are hypotheses Ho and Ha as follows:

Ho: in the population - of online media in Vietnam, there is no relationship between the independent and dependent variables - Behavior Level.

Ha: in the population - of online media in Vietnam, there is a relationship between the independent and dependent variables - Behavior Level.

Since the independent variables Months, Wordscount Capacity, Wordscount Support, and Wordscount Oppose have similar results, we take an example from the results in a typical correlation with two independent variables, Sector and Class, respectively as follows:

Behaviour Level * sector

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.097 ^a	6	0.797
Likelihood Ratio	3.086	6	0.798
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.024	1	0.876
N of Valid Cases	113		

a. 7 cells (58.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.04.

See Fig. 1: Behaviour Level * sector

From the statistical results, the relationship between the sector and the Behaviour Level is to reject Ho and accept Ha (in the population - of online media in Vietnam, there is a relationship between the sector and behavior). From that, we can observe that support for upgrading Vietnam- United States relations is in Economic, Politics, Culture, Society and in the politics field is the strongest (81%).

Behaviour Level * Class

Crosstab					
	Class	Class			Total
		State	Organisation		
Behaviour Level	unclear	Count	12	11	23
		Expected Count	15.3	7.7	23.0
		% within Class	16.0%	28.9%	20.4%
		Std. Residual	-0.8	1.2	
	for	Count	62	26	88
		Expected Count	58.4	29.6	88.0
		% within Class	82.7%	68.4%	77.9%
		Std. Residual	0.5	-0.7	
	against	Count	1	1	2
		Expected Count	1.3	0.7	2.0
		% within Class	1.3%	2.6%	1.8%
		Std. Residual	-0.3	0.4	
Total	Count	75	38	113	
	Expected Count	75.0	38.0	113.0	
	% within Class	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	Std. Residual				

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.975 ^a	2	0.226
Likelihood Ratio	2.870	2	0.238
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.817	1	0.178
N of Valid Cases	113		

a. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.67.

See Fig. 2: Behaviour Level * Class

The statistical result of the relationship between Class and Behaviour Level is to reject Ho and accept Ha (in the population - of online media in Vietnam, there is a relationship between the Class and Behavior Level). From that, we can observe that support for upgrading Vietnam- United States relations is in both state online media and online media of other socio-political organizations, in which state media holds the leading position (82.7%).

According to quantitative analysis, public support for improving relations between the two countries is evident. Independent variables demonstrate that the average level of political support is

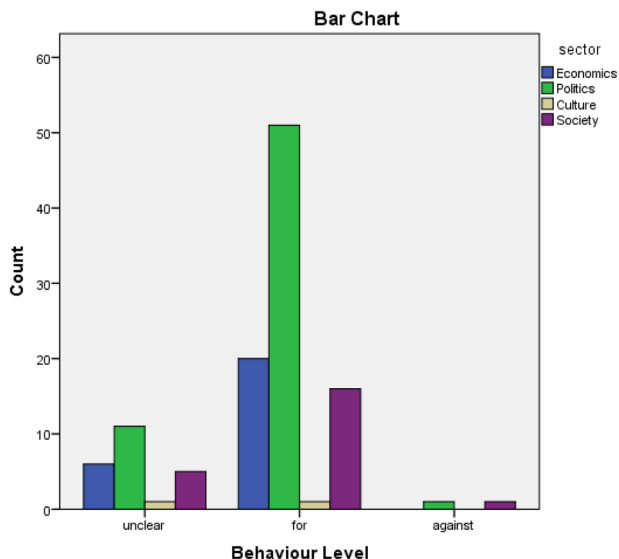


Fig. 1 Attitudes of people in various fields toward Vietnam-US relations. Behaviour Level * Sector - Economic, Politics, Culture, Society online media.

81%, with newspapers published by state-run agencies showing the highest level of support at 82.7%.

Conclusion

The remarkable development in the relations between the two countries reflects not limited to essential fields. Such as defense, security, political-diplomacy, economy and health, and resolving the residual consequences of war, but expand to many. That is combating climate change and supporting Vietnam in transitioning to a digital economy. The United States has also been considering Vietnam as an equal, equal partner with the same responsibility in jointly promoting the sustainable development of Vietnam and the region. Vietnam considers the United States as its most important partner. The crucial thing is that both sides want to raise the relationship between the two countries to a new height.

The above results are not only through qualitative analysis but also verified through the analysis of textual content collected through big data of articles published in 2021–2022 in Vietnam and analyzed by SPSS software. The article’s limitation is that the non-linear and time-series nature of Vietnamese people’s attitudes toward media data makes using a simple Chi-Square Test insufficiently persuasive. The analysis findings in the article have substantiated the evident inclination of US leaders to enhance the bilateral relations between Vietnam and the United States. Nevertheless, the Vietnamese leadership is demonstrating a desire to enhance the depth and substance of the partnership in response to the proposals put forth by the United States. It is important to note that the contextual constraints in Vietnam make it challenging for leaders to engage in open and candid discussions with one another. In contrast to the leaders, the citizens of Vietnam, as discussed in the articles, have articulated their aspiration to elevate the Vietnam-US relationship to the status of a strategic partnership. Regarding the American populace, the article is comprehensive if it incorporates criteria for analyzing the attitudes of the American people.

There is clear support from the heads of state, the state’s online media, and the online media of sociopolitical organizations in the Vietnamese political system. Hence, the decision of the two nations to establish themselves as comprehensive strategic partners was a premeditated endeavor by their respective leaders, intended to be kept confidential. The Vietnamese side expresses a significant concern regarding disclosing this specific relationship,

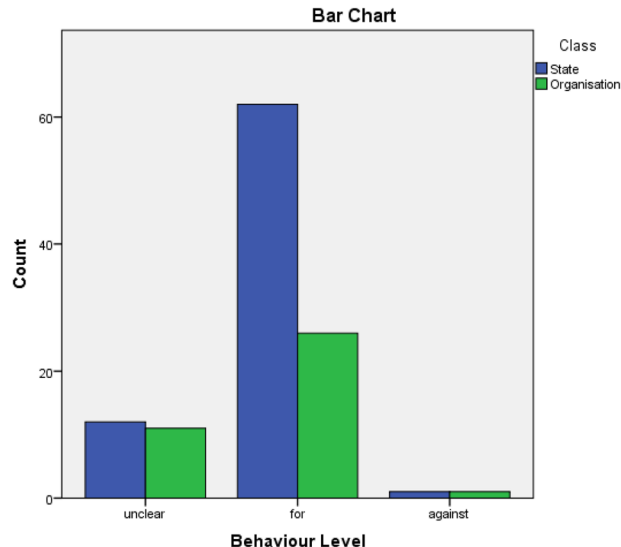


Fig. 2 People’s attitudes in the online newspapers of organizations and the state toward Vietnam-US relations. Behaviour Level * Class – State, Organisation online media.

primarily due to the influence of various other factors. Nevertheless, the abrupt transition from the strategic partnership to the comprehensive partnership level has elicited astonishment among the Vietnamese populace. The Vietnamese populace was taken aback by the unexpected nature of the decision made by the two nations to elevate their bilateral ties to the status of a comprehensive strategic partnership. This inquiry necessitates additional investigation and explanation.

Data availability

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available in the Cuong (2023), “Vietnamese online media leaders’ and citizens’ perspectives on Vietnam-US relations”, Mendeley Data, V1, <https://doi.org/10.17632/zknddhc8sy.1>. <https://data.mendeley.com/datasets/zknddhc8sy/1>.

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Note

1 In May 2017, after receiving the Vietnamese Prime Minister at the White House, the US Department of Commerce announced that the two countries had signed 13 new contracts worth \$8 billion. That could add 230,000 jobs in the US. These deals include General Motors’ electrical equipment, engines, and aircraft services worth \$5.5 billion.

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Author contributions

The author, NAC, is unique in this article.

Competing interests

The author(s) declare no competing interests.

Ethical approval

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Informed consent

This article does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any of the authors.

Additional information

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