

# The negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders: Evidence in Vietnam

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37178/ca-c.21.5.104>

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## ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in 2021 in 5 provinces in Vietnam to describe the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across the border and some related factors. A cross-sectional descriptive study with a quantitative design on 470 trafficked women. Information on the negative emotional experiences of trafficked women and some related factors was collected through personal questionnaire interviews at the clubs and places of residence of these women. Research results show that women trafficked across borders had negative emotional experiences when being trafficked such as insecurity, helplessness, depression, loss, pessimism, disappointment, confusion, and fear. sad. Among them, sadness is the emotion that these women feel the most and the least bewilderment. Ethnic minority women, who were trafficked across borders in adulthood, trafficked into prostitution, and spent more years living abroad due to trafficking, had negative emotional experiences when trafficked. sell at a higher level. 5 factors have a statistically significant impact on the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across the border, namely ethnic Kinh women, trafficked in adulthood, trafficked for sexual purposes. education, lived abroad for 1 year or less, and 2 to 5 years as a result of being trafficked. In which, ethnic Kinh women are the most influential factor, the number of years of living abroad due to trafficking is the factor with the weakest effect and inversely, that is, the longer the time of being sold abroad. The longer trafficked women experienced lower levels of negative emotions.

**Keywords:** experiencing negative emotions, women trafficked across borders, Vietnam.

## INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is a serious crime that uses deception to turn people into sex or labor slaves for exploitation. This is a transnational crime that affects people all over the world. Trafficking in persons can have serious consequences that leave victims with a lot of physical and emotional hardship.

Trafficking and returning victims often suffer a lot of physical and mental losses, even some suffer from memory loss, alcohol, drug addiction, and/or sexually transmitted diseases... Therefore, they easily encounter discrimination and alienation from those around them; and they also carry guilt and inferiority so it is not easy to integrate into the community...

In recent years, human trafficking has become a pressing problem in the whole society, not only in Vietnam but also on a worldwide scale. The situation of trafficking in human beings in general and trafficking in women and children, in particular, is increasingly complicated; the nature and tricks of the operation are increasingly serious, sophisticated, and cunning; many cases are closely organized and transnational.

Rescued victims who are reunited with their families often have panic attacks. Victims fear facing social stigma in their locality of residence; fear of revenge; fear of being punished for the illegal acts they have committed as a result of being a victim of trafficking.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Mental health is one of the issues that many authors and organizations supporting victims of trafficking are interested in and researching. The main method used to research this issue was individual interviews at centers that assist victims of trafficking.

The authors [1] conducted a qualitative study with 10 women who had been trafficked for sex purposes in India. These women had been trafficked for 2 to 10 years and rescued 5 years before the study. Research results have shown that these women still have emotional problems. From qualitative data through interviews, it can be seen that trafficked women feel discriminated against, stigmatized, and excluded. They often do not tell their stories to anyone to avoid discrimination, they fear others will know about their past. After being rescued, these women feel out of place, they hide their past to integrate into society, but they don't feel like a part of it. They always feel that other men see them as a woman who has been trafficked and engaged in prostitution. To gain respect, they often hide their past. They crave respect regardless of their background and past. All the women participating in this study said that they do not trust people, they are always cautious with those around them because they have been trusted and deceived. They feel unsafe, abandoned, and at risk of being trafficked back [1].

Using documentary analysis, the Office for Women's Development (2006) also pointed to similar emotional problems experienced by trafficked persons. [2] Research by Stiftelsen Kinnoforum (2003) indicates that, during reintegration, victims may fear that others will know about what has happened to them or that they return home will embarrass the family. They feel guilty for being trafficked and angry at themselves for allowing it to happen. They feel anger when they are not supported while feeling powerless to help themselves. They need to learn to trust others, make friends, and develop healthy relationships. Overcoming these emotional problems is important for their reintegration [3].

According to [4], after being trafficked many people feel "insecure" at some stage in life. They experience different emotions from stress, forgetfulness, anger, insecurity, depression, to despair and hopelessness. There are two reasons why these people feel "unwell": the difficulties caused by the trafficking situation and the

difficulties they face in trying to recover and move on from the trafficking situation. trade. [5].

Participants in the study "Post-Trafficking in Persons: Experiences and Challenges in the Reintegration of Trafficking Victims in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region" claim that they feel stress and anxiety when their identity is not confirmed, they are not supported, they will be questioned (instead of being interviewed), taken into custody (instead of being referred for assistance), charged and deported (instead of being referred for assistance). for getting help back home) or not being supported (instead of being helped). When they return, they feel shame, inferiority, unhappiness, sadness, disappointment, fear, anger, and confusion. [6].

In a qualitative study with 23 European women, the authors [7] presented a list of 21 negative psychological symptoms and asked interviewees to choose the ones they experienced. 8 out of 12 women reported that they had 50% of this expression, 4 cases admitted they had more than 15 reactions. The most common symptoms are feeling tired easily; crying more than usual; frequent headaches, often unhappy; feeling like I'm not as good as others, and feeling like I'm permanently stained. [7].

The results of a European study of 207 rescued trafficked women by Zimmerman et al. (2006) showed that victims of trafficking had the following symptoms of anxiety and depression: anxiety (91 %), horror/panic (61%), fear (85%), feeling depressed or very sad (95%) and hopeless about the future (76%). [8].

Using the post-traumatic stress disorder rating scale, [9] conducted a study on the mental health of 207 victims of human trafficking and found that participants did. research has negative thoughts about traumatic memories (75%), feeling things happen again (52%), having nightmares (54%), feeling helpless (60%), emotionless (44 %). recall of a traumatic past (61%), loss of memory related to traumatic events (36%), little interest in daily activities (46%), feeling hopeless about the future (65% ), have strong physical and emotional reactions when others mention traumatic events (65%). [10]

As such, emotional issues have not been studied in isolation, but are integrated into the study of mental disorders among trafficked women. The results of the analysis of the aforementioned studies show that trafficked women often feel lost, afraid, ashamed, angry, helpless, guilty, stressed, insecure, depressed, and hopeless. , hopelessness, anxiety, sadness, disappointment, fear, confusion, bewilderment, unhappiness, depression, horror, panic. In which, the emotions that were most clearly expressed in trafficked women were loss, insecurity, disappointment, sadness, helplessness, pessimism, stress, bewilderment, boredom, and depression.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Study design

A quantitative design was used in this study to generalize the research results. Quantitative design using a one-time cross-sectional survey.

### Study participant

The study participants were returning women who were trafficked across borders, meeting the following criteria: (1) Vietnamese women, (2) Being 18 years of age or older, (3) receiving financial assistance. determined by the research manager to be physically and mentally capable of participating in the study, (4) voluntarily participating in the study.

### Study setting

Five provinces in Vietnam were selected as study sites for the following reasons: 1) They are hotspots for trafficking in women to China; 2) These are provinces bordering China; 3) The topography of these 5 provinces is very difficult and the population is sparse, so it is convenient for women to go abroad.

### **Sample size and sampling**

470 returned trafficked women are living in 5 provinces in Vietnam by 2021 and meet 4 criteria: (1) being a Vietnamese woman, (2) being 18 years of age or older, (3) being supported determined by the research manager to be physically and mentally capable of participating in the study, (4) voluntarily participating in the study, eligible to be included in the study. A convenience sampling method was used.

### **Measurements**

#### ***The dependent variable***

The scale "Negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders" includes 8 items: 1. Insecurity, 2. Helplessness, 3. Depressed, 4. Lost, 5. Pessimistic, 6. Disappointed, 7. Confused, 8. Sad. Each item in the scale is rated by the customer on 5 levels: 1. Not true, 2. Little true, 3. Normal, 4. Much correct, 5. True. The scale "Emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders" was used as a dependent variable in the study.

#### **The independent variables**

The characteristics of the survey subjects include ethnicity (Kinh, Mong, ethnic groups: Dao, Thai, Muong, Nung, Khmu, Tay, San Tuoi, Day), an education level (cannot read and write, elementary school, middle school, high school), age of trafficked (child – 10 to 16 years old, youth – 17 to 25 years old, adult – 26 to 40 years old), the purpose of being trafficked. trafficking (selling into prostitution, being sold as a wife, selling into a place of labor exploitation) and the number of years living abroad due to being trafficked (from 1 year or less, from 2 to 5 years, over 5 years). These observed variables are used as independent variables in the study and are qualitative variables changed to dummy variables to meet the conditions for linear regression analysis.

The variable "ethnicity" is converted into 2 dummy variables: the first is Kinh ethnicity = 1, the remaining ethnic groups = 0; the second variable is the Hmong ethnic group = 1, the remaining ethnic groups = 0. Thus, the data of both these ethnic groups in the regression model are compared with the ethnic groups: Dao, Thai, Muong, Nung, Khmu, Tay, San Tuoi, Day (receive the value =0).

The variable "education level" is transformed into 3 dummy variables: the first variable is not able to read, write = 1, other degrees = 0; the second variable is primary level = 1, other grades = 0; the third variable is junior high school level = 1, other grades = 0. Thus, the data of all three levels in the regression model are compared with the high school level (receiving value = 0).

The variable "age of trafficked" is converted into 2 dummy variables: the first is youth age (17 to 25 years old) = 1, other ages = 0; the second variable is adulthood = 1, other ages = 0. Thus, the data of these two ages in the regression model are compared with children's ages – from 10 to 16 years old (get the value =0).

The variable "trafficking purpose" is converted into 2 dummy variables: the first variable is selling into prostitution = 1, other purposes = 0; the second variable is selling into labor exploitation = 1, other purposes = 0. Thus, the data of these two purposes in the regression model are compared to sell as a wife (getting value =0).

The variable "number of years living abroad due to trafficking" was changed into 2 dummy variables: the first variable is the group of 1 year or less = 1, the other groups = 0; the second variable is the group from 2 to 5 years = 1, the other groups = 0. Thus, the data of these two groups in the regression model are compared with the group over 5 years (get the value =0).

## Data collection

Survey data were collected by the enumerators by directly interviewing each return trafficked woman. Before conducting data collection, the enumerators were trained in research objectives, interview methods, and information content to be collected. At each study site, investigators approached trafficked women who attended to screen those eligible to participate in the study. After screening, eligible and voluntary trafficked women were discussed about the research objectives, content, rights, and benefits of participants, and possible risks of participating in the study. researcher. Supervisors strictly control the quality of information collected after each interview and during the interview.

## Data analysis and statistical method

Collected data were processed by the SPSS program in Windows environment, version 21.0.

The scale of "Negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders" with 8 observed variables was built. Here, Cronbach's alpha reliability test and EFA factor analysis method were used to determine the stability and validity of this scale.

The results of the reliability test show that the observed variables in the scale "Negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders" have the coefficient of correlation of all variables  $> 0.3$ . Cronbach's alpha coefficient is  $0.885 > 0.6$ , so the reliability is satisfactory.

*Table 1*  
*Cronbach's alpha reliability test results of the dependent variable "Emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders"*

Model	Observed variables	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's alpha
Feelings of women trafficked back across the border	1. Insecurity,	.758	.862	.885
	2. Powerless	.706	.866	
	3. Disappointment	.701	.866	
	4. Boredom	.683	.868	
	5. Lost	.671	.869	
	6. Sadness	.583	.878	
	7. Pessimism	.581	.878	
	8. Confused	.571	.879	

*(Source: The survey data of the study)*

The results of factor analysis of the scale of negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across the border showed that the KMO index was  $0.882 > 0.5$ , proving that the data used for factor analysis is complete. fit. Barlett's test result is 1776,462 with a Sig significance level. =  $0.000 < 0.05$ , which means that the observed variables are correlated with each other and satisfy the conditions of factor analysis. The results of factor analysis according to Principal components with Varimax rotation show that 8 observed variables are in the same group. The total value of variance extracted is  $56.063\% > 50\%$ , it can be said that this factor explains 56.063% of the variation of the data. Factor Eigenvalues value  $> 1$ . All variables load the same factor with a loading coefficient  $> 0.5$ . Therefore, this factor ensures convergence value and discriminant value when analyzing EFA.

Table 2

*The results of factor analysis exploratory factor EFA of the dependent variable  
"Emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders"*

Model		Observed variables	Component
Feelings of women trafficked across borders	Rotated Component Matrix	1. Insecurity,	.835
		2. Powerless	.794
		3. Disappointment	.784
		4. Boredom	.773
		5. Lost	.765
		6. Sadness	.682
		7. Pessimism	.675
		8. Confused	.664
		Eigenvalue	4.485
		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	56.063
	KMO	.882	
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1776.462
		Sig.	.000

(Source: The survey data of the study)

Thus, after testing the reliability of Cronbach's alpha and analyzing the EFA factor, the factor "Negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders" is used as a dependent variable for different steps. next analysis.

The parameters and statistical operations used in this study are descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis. In descriptive statistics, mean score, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage were used to describe the current status of negative emotional experiences of Vietnamese women trafficked across borders. The inferential statistical analysis mainly uses the technique of comparing mean values (compare means) with the oneway ANOVA test and linear regression analysis technique. In the ANOVA one-way test, the mean values were considered to be statistically different with probability  $P < 0.05$ . A linear regression model was performed to assess the effects of independent variables (ethnicity, education level, age of trafficked, purpose of being trafficked, and the number of years spent abroad as a result of being trafficked). to the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders.

### Ethical considerations

The study was based on the principle of informed consent, in which each woman who returned from being trafficked across the border to participate in an interview was fully informed about the research objectives, content, and who participated in the study. research, how the data is stored and processed, what is the data used for, and then returned cross-border trafficked women are asked if they have permission to collect and process them. personal data or not. Returned cross-border trafficked women invited to participate in interviews have the right to refuse to be interviewed, to withdraw from the study, or to refuse to answer one or more specific questions at any time during the interview. interview. The data collected from the study is strictly confidential, in which the use of a unique identification number is an information protection measure that has been applied, so the full name and surname of women trafficked across the border are protected. Interviews are never written on questionnaires, informed consent forms, list of study participants, contact addresses (along with identifiers) are stored separately, securely and there is a plan to destroy the data. data after completing the study.

## RESULTS

### General characteristics of the study sample

Out of 500 Vietnamese women who were trafficked back across the border who were invited to return, 480 agreed to participate, however, 10 refused to continue participating after answering a few questions, so only 470 people participated and completed the survey (participation rate was 94%). The characteristics of the survey respondents are shown in Table 3. Most of the women were trafficked abroad for marriage (74.5%,  $n = 350$ ), the rest were sold into the trade. prostitution (13.2%,  $n = 62$ ) and sold into labor exploitation (12.3%,  $n = 58$ ). Nearly half of trafficked women lived abroad for 2 to 5 years (49.6%,  $n = 233$ ), had a lower secondary education (43%,  $n = 202$ ), and were trafficked in young people aged 17 to 25 years old (47.7%,  $n = 221$ ). Over one-third of women trafficked across the border were Hmong (36.6%,  $n = 172$ ) and aged between 10 and 16 years (33.8%,  $n = 159$ ).

Table 3

General characteristics of the study caregivers

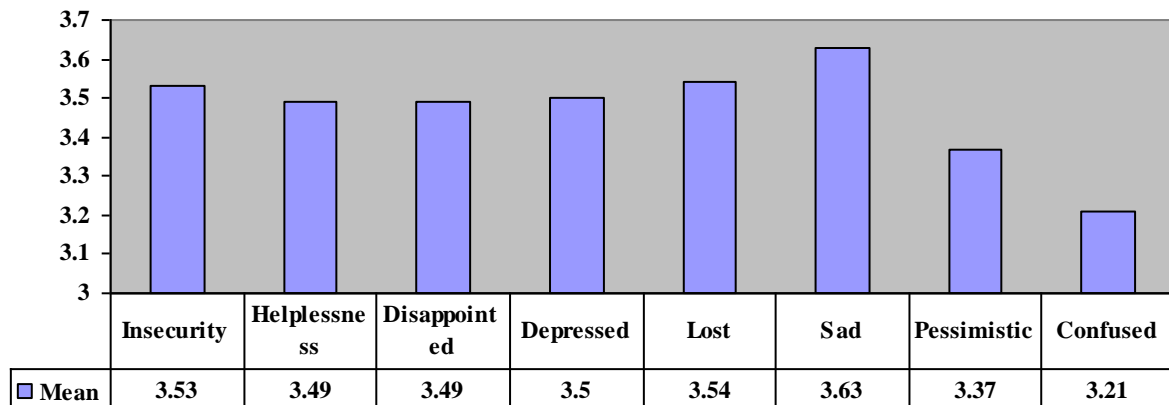
Factor		Value
N (%)		470 (100.0)
Ethnic	Experience (%)	126 (26.8)
	Mong, n (%)	172 (36.6)
	Other ethnic groups, n (%)	172 (36.6)
Academic level	Can't read or write	66 (14.0)
	Subfamily	82 (17.4)
	Middle school	202 (43.0)
Age of being trafficked	High school	120 (25.5)
	Children (10-16 years old)	159 (33.8)
	Young people (17-25 years old), n (%)	221 (47.0)
Purpose of being trafficked	Mature (26-40 years old), n (%)	90 (19.1)
	Sold into prostitution	62 (13.2)
	Sold as a wife	350 (74.5)
Number of years spent abroad due to trafficking	Selling to a place of labor exploitation	58 (12.3)
	From 1 year or less	101 (21.5)
	From 2 to 5 years	233 (49.6)
	Over 5 years	136 (28.9)

(Source: The survey data of the study)

### Main findings

Chart 1 shows the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked abroad. Sadness was the emotion these women felt the most ( $M = 3.63$ ), followed by feeling lost ( $M = 3.54$ ), third was insecurity ( $M = 3.53$ ), fourth was boredom ( $M = 3.53$ ).  $M = 3.50$ ), the fifth is helplessness and disappointment ( $M$  equals = 3.49), followed by pessimism ( $M = 3.37$ ) and finally bewilderment ( $M = 3.21$ ).

**Chart 1: Levels of the emotional experience of women trafficked across borders**



(Source: The survey data of the study)

Over 10% of women surveyed said that negative emotional experiences when being trafficked abroad were true for them, of which the highest percentage belonged to feelings of sadness (14.5%), followed by feelings of sadness (14.5%). is the feeling of disappointment (13.2%). And less than 10% are emotions such as lost and depressed (both = 9.8%), pessimism and bewilderment (both = 8.9%), insecurity (7.2%), helplessness (6.4%).

Considering the percentage of women who feel that the negative emotions of being trafficked abroad are not true for them, research results have shown that, over 3% of women do not feel helpless, depressed, and confused (both = 3.4%), 3% did not feel disappointed and more or less 2% did not have pessimistic emotions (2.6%), insecurity (1.7%), lost and sad (both = 1.3 %).

Table 4

*Negative emotional expressions of women trafficked across borders*

	Incorrect	Right a little	Normal	Much true	True
1. Insecurity, n (%)	8 (1.7)	32 (6.8)	166 (35.3)	230 (48.9)	34 (7.2)
2. Impotence, n (%)	16 (3.4)	26 (5.5)	172 (36.6)	226 (48.1)	30 (6.4)
3. Disappointment, n (%)	14 (3.0)	36 (7.7)	190 (40.4)	168 (35.7)	62 (13.2)
4. Depressed, n (%)	16 (3.4)	36 (7.7)	160 (34.0)	212 (45.1)	46 (9.8)
5. Lost, n (%)	6 (1.3)	54 (11.5)	136 (28.9)	228 (48.5)	46 (9.8)
6. Sadness, n (%)	6 (1.3)	48 (10.2)	126 (26.8)	222 (47.2)	68 (14.5)
7. Pessimistic, n (%)	12 (2.6)	50 (10.6)	202 (43.0)	164 (34.9)	42 (8.9)
8. Confused, n (%)	16 (3.4)	66 (14.0)	234 (49.8)	112 (23.8)	42 (8.9)

(Source: The survey data of the study)

Comparison of the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders by cross-sections such as ethnicity, education level, age of traffic, the purpose of being trafficked, and the number of years spent abroad as a result of trafficking. Trade will highlight the similarities and differences in negative emotional experiences in different target groups.

The results of comparing the mean scores of negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders with the one-way ANOVA test shown in Table 5 show the following points:

There is a statistically significant difference in emotional experiences of being trafficked abroad between women of different ethnicities ( $p < 0.000$ ). In which, Kinh



women have the highest negative emotional experiences, followed by Hmong women and Dao, Thai, Muong, Nung, Khommu, Tay, San Meo, and Day ethnic minorities. experience the lowest negative emotions when being trafficked.

There were no statistically significant differences in emotional experiences among trafficked women of different educational backgrounds ( $p>0.05$ ). Regardless of whether they are literate, and have an elementary, middle, or high school education, trafficked women experience negative emotions to the same extent. Understandably, education level was not a factor that made a difference in the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders.

Comparing the emotional experiences of trafficked women in terms of age, traffic purpose, and the number of years spent abroad as a result of trafficking, statistical data shows that there are significant differences statistically significant between these groups of women (with  $p = 0.002, 0.001, \text{ and } 0.000$ , respectively). In particular, women who have been trafficked abroad in adulthood (aged 25 to 40 years) experienced higher levels of negative emotions when trafficked in youth (aged 17 to 25 years) and when they were trafficked. children (from 10 to 16 years old). Women who are trafficked into prostitution often have higher levels of negative emotions than women who are sold as wives, and the lowest are women who are trafficked into labor exploitation. Women living abroad for more than 5 years had higher negative emotional experiences than women living abroad for 1 year or less or 2 to 5 years ( $p = 0.000$ ).

*Table 5*  
*Cross-sectional comparison of negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders*

Factor	N	M	SD	P	
Ethnic	Kinh	126	3.73	.77	.000
	Mong	172	3.41	.43	
	Other ethnic groups	172	3.34	.53	
Academic level	Can't read or write	66	3.47	.47	.950
	Primary school	82	3.46	.72	
	junior high school	202	3.46	.70	
Age of being trafficked	high school	120	3.50	.61	.002
	Children (10-16 years old)	159	3.37	.58	
	Youth (17-25 years old)	221	3.46	.64	
Purpose of being trafficked	Mature (26-40 years old)	90	3.67	.76	.001
	Sell into prostitution	62	3.79	.74	
	Selling as a wife	350	3.42	.58	
Number of years spent abroad due to trafficking	Selling to a place where labor is exploited	58	3.44	.86	.000
	From 1 year or less	101	3.25	.58	
	From 2 to 5 years				
	Over 5 years	233	3.49	.63	
		136	3.60	.70	

*(Source: The survey data of the study)*

The results of the regression analysis shown in Table 6 show that the model of socio-demographic variables is statistically significant in predicting the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders. ( $p<0.001$ ). All the variables in the model can explain 10.3% for the variation of the dependent variable. Five factors had a statistically significant impact on the negative emotional experiences of trafficked women. These are ethnic Kinh women trafficked ( $p=0.002$ ,

B=0.256), trafficked in adulthood (p=0.049, B=0.232), trafficked abroad for the purpose of trafficking in prostitution (p=0.004, B=0.275), lived abroad for 1 year or less (p=0.001, B=-0.269) and lived abroad for 2 to 5 years (p=0.042, B=-0.174) due to trafficking. The factor that has the strongest impact on the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked abroad is ethnic Kinh women ( $\beta=0.174$ ), the weakest factor is the number of years living abroad due to Trafficked women ( $\beta= -0.097$ ) and inversely, that is, the longer they live abroad, the less negative emotions experienced by trafficked women.

*Table 6*

*Predictions of sociodemographic factors for the emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p	WIF	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)	3.363	.083		40.671	.000		
Ethnic	Kinh = 1	.256	.081	.174	3.142	.002	1.601
	Mong = 1	.129	.071	.095	1.810	.071	1.444
Academic level	Can't read or write = 1	.050	.099	.027	.507	.613	1.443
	Elementary school = 1	-.010	.091	-.006	-.112	.911	1.463
	Middle School = 1	-.039	.074	-.030	-.529	.597	1.639
Age of being trafficked	Youth (17-25 years old)=1	.045	.069	.034	.650	.516	1.463
	Mature (25-40 years old)=1	.232	.089	.140	2.608	.009	1.502
Purpose of being trafficked	Selling into prostitution = 1	.275	.095	.143	2.907	.004	1.264
	Selling to a place where labor is exploited = 1	.116	.093	-.058	-1.245	.214	1.147
Number of years spent abroad due to trafficking	From 1 year or less = 1	-.269	.077	-.169	-3.479	.001	1.240
	From 2 to 5 years = 1	-.174	.085	-.097	-2.042	.042	1.189
R <sup>2</sup> = .103    F=5.872    p < .001							

(Source: The survey data of the study)

Note: VIF is Variance Magnification Factor and is less than 2, so there is no multicollinearity in the regression model.

## DISCUSSION

### Main findings

Using a structured questionnaire, research results have shown that, when being trafficked across borders, Vietnamese women have had varying degrees of negative emotional experiences. Sadness was the emotion these women felt the most, followed by loss, insecurity, depression, helplessness, frustration, pessimism, and at least a sense of bewilderment. The findings in this study are similar to those of other authors around the world. After being rescued, trafficked women feel lost and helpless (Silva, Sathiyaseelan & Cerniglia, 2019; Kinnoforum, 2003; Williamson, Dutch, & Clawson, 2008; OHCHR & WHO, 2008). In addition to describing a range of emotions ranging from stress, forgetfulness, anger, insecurity, depression, to despair, many trafficked persons experienced feelings of "insecurity" at some stage in life after being trafficked (OHCHR & WHO, 2008). Upon returning home, trafficked persons may experience shame and inferiority, unhappiness, sadness, disappointment, fear, anger, and confusion (Surtees, 2016). Zimmerman, C.,

Hossain, M., Yun, K., Roche, B., Mo, 2006) shows that victims of human trafficking have the following symptoms: anxiety, horror, fear, depression, very sadness, and hopelessness about the future.

Less than 10% of women trafficked back across the border said that negative emotional experiences such as insecurity, helplessness, frustration, depression, loss, sadness, pessimism, confusion are true with them. The number of women who feel that the negative emotional experience of being trafficked abroad is not true for them accounts for a much lower percentage, from only 1.3% to over 3.4%.

The results of the ANOVA oneway test showed that education level was not a factor that made a difference in the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across borders.

Ethnic minority women experience higher levels of negative emotions than women of other ethnic minorities in Vietnam. The results of this study can be explained by the reality of the culture, traditions, beliefs, and ethnicities of the Vietnamese people.

Women who have been trafficked abroad in adulthood had higher negative feelings about being trafficked in youth and as children. Women who are trafficked into prostitution often have higher levels of negative emotions than women who are sold as wives, and the lowest are women who are trafficked into labor exploitation. Women living abroad for more than 5 years have higher negative emotional experiences than women living abroad for less than 5 years.

Five factors had a statistically significant impact on the negative emotional experiences of trafficked women. Women who are trafficked are of Kinh ethnicity, trafficked in adulthood, trafficked abroad for sexual purposes, lived abroad for 1 year or less from 2 to 5 years as a result of being trafficked. sell. In which, the factor that has the strongest impact on the negative emotional experiences of women trafficked across the border is ethnic Kinh women, the factor with the weakest impact is the number of years living abroad due to being trafficked. and vice versa, meaning that the longer they lived abroad as a result of trafficking, the fewer negative emotions these women experienced.

### **Limitations of the study**

This is the first study on negative emotional experiences and some factors influencing these emotions of women trafficked across borders in 5 border provinces of Vietnam in 2021. a few limitations. The first limitation is that the cross-sectional study design makes it difficult to determine a cause-and-effect relationship. The second limitation is that convenience sampling techniques can lead to biases and may affect the overall outcome of the study. In addition, the information returned by women trafficked across borders was self-shared, so recall bias may have occurred during the interviewing process. To mitigate these limitations, more interviews should be performed. In addition, this was a study in 5 provinces, so the results may not be generalizable to all returning cross-border trafficked women in Vietnam.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

In summary, the results of the study demonstrated that returning women trafficked across borders had negative emotional experiences while being trafficked. These are emotions such as insecurity, helplessness, depression, loss, pessimism, disappointment, confusion, and sadness.

A larger percentage of women who returned from being trafficked across borders said that negative emotional experiences were true for them than women who felt negative emotional experiences while being trafficked abroad. not true for them.

The results of the ANOVA oneway test showed that education level was not a factor that made a difference in the emotional experiences of women trafficked

abroad. Ethnic minority women experience higher levels of negative emotions than women of other ethnic minorities in Vietnam. Women who were trafficked across borders in adulthood had higher negative feelings about being trafficked as a teenager or as a child. Women who were trafficked into prostitution often had higher levels of negative emotions than women who were sold as wives and sold into labor exploitation. Women living abroad for less than 5 years have higher negative emotional experiences than women living abroad for more than 5 years due to trafficking.

The results of the regression analysis have shown that, of the 5 factors that have a statistically significant impact on the negative emotional experiences of trafficked women, ethnic Kinh women are the factor that has a strong impact on the negative emotional experiences of trafficked women. The factor with the weakest impact was the number of years spent abroad as a result of trafficking.

### Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express their sincerest gratitude to the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, local authorities, club leaders, Women's Union, and women trafficked across borders. about... of 5 provinces/cities in Vietnam selected as research sites, who have wholeheartedly guided, contributed ideas, and helped to complete this study.

### Declaration of conflicting interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

### Funding

This research is funded by Vietnam National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED) under grant number 501.02-2019.04.

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