

# The Impact of Catholic Culture on the Cultural and Spiritual Lives of Contemporary Vietnamese Students

Đỗ Thị Ngọc Anh<sup>1</sup>, Nguyễn Anh Cường<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

*Catholicism has been practiced in Vietnam for more than four centuries. Over seven and a half million people are members of the Vietnamese Catholic community as of the year 2022. The most notable examples of Catholic culture in Vietnam are these forms. A deeper relationship between Vietnamese spirituality and Catholic culture has been established due to the phenomenon known as "Vietnamese" Catholicism. Beyond the confines of the Christian community, Catholic culture is now pervasive throughout Vietnamese society. Students constitute a significant component of the Vietnamese population, particularly the younger generation. In light of this, the question arises as to how the spirituality of Vietnamese students has been influenced by Catholic culture. In order to investigate the process of Catholic cultural assimilation among Vietnamese people, the writers use empirical analysis to investigate four typical narratives: New Year's Day on January 1, Valentine's Day on February 14, and Christmas Day on December 25. It provides a complete explanation of the cultural shifts in society due to globalization. In addition to being inspired by Confucian culture, Vietnam is open to Western culture, particularly Catholicism. Vietnam has a long and illustrious past and a unique culture.*

**Keywords:** *New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, Christmas, Independent lifestyle, Young generation.*

## Introduction

Vietnam possesses a youthful demographic. The most recent data provided by the United Nations indicates that Vietnam's population stood at 99,312,406 individuals as of March 17, 2024 (Dân số, 2024). Within this population, there are 2.2 million students, constituting a fraction of the overall 22.1 million young individuals (Báo Dân tộc, 2022).

A student is an individual who is pursuing education at universities or colleges. This group consists of young people who are enthusiastic about society, possess high levels of qualifications, exhibit boldness and daring in their thinking and actions, and are always at the forefront of embracing new ideas and trends. According to the Vietnamese Youth Law 2020, these individuals are young adults who play a crucial role in the construction and development of the country. They are defined as individuals between the ages of 16 and 30 (Quốc hội Việt Nam, 2020). The progression of the student and youth cohort serves as an indicator of the present state and prospective trajectory of human development within each nation.

Catholicism is a prominent denomination of Christianity that emerged from Judaism and was established by Jesus Christ. Catholicism originated in Asia Minor but experienced significant growth in Europe, ultimately establishing itself as a prominent cultural emblem of the continent (Phạm Huy Thông, 2012, p. 29). There is a prevalent belief among individuals that the notions of "Europe" and "Western World" are intricately intertwined with the notion of "Catholic culture." Consequently, Christianity, as a whole, and Catholicism in particular, are establishing connections to foster a cohesive European identity. According to Paul Legutko, a historian from Stanford University, the Catholic Church played a pivotal role in shaping the values, ideas, science, laws, and institutions that constitute Western civilization (Service, 2006).

Its diverse ethnic and religious composition characterizes Vietnam. Consequently, the cultural and spiritual existence of Vietnamese individuals is abundant and vibrant (Nguyễn Anh Cường et al., 2021). As per the Vietnamese Dictionary, spiritual culture encompasses a wide range of human activities that are directed towards meeting the overall needs of spiritual life (Hoàng Khê, 2017, p. 1446). Consequently, it represents

<sup>1</sup> VNU University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi. Email: dothingocanhhdhgg@gmail.com.

<sup>2</sup> VNU University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0687-4430>. Email: nguyenganhcuong@ussh.edu.vn  
Mobile: +84 912593419 Address: 336 Nguyen Trai, Thanh Xuan, Hanoi, Vietnam. Postal Code: 100000.

a comprehensive concept that encompasses various elements, including ideas, concepts, perceptions, lifestyle, and entertainment requirements. Spiritual culture exerts influence on individuals' cognition and behavior. It is influenced by traditions, ideologies, historical and societal elements, environmental circumstances, and geographic positioning.

From a geographical and historical perspective, Vietnam is situated in the Eastern region and shares a border with China. China has exerted a prolonged period of dominance over Vietnam, spanning over a millennium. Consequently, the cultural and spiritual aspects of Vietnamese society have been significantly impacted by Chinese cultural influences. Vietnamese individuals have consistently exhibited a deliberate inclination to resist the establishment of their own cultural identity despite being subjected to significant influence from mainland China since their formative years. Consequently, they find themselves predominantly situated within the cultural sphere of the Chinese world (Woodside, 2022, p. 13). Presently, alongside the intrinsic national cultural identity characterized by bold Eastern attributes, the spiritual practices of Vietnamese individuals, particularly the younger cohort of students, are progressively being shaped by Western culture, predominantly Catholic culture. This fact may appear paradoxical. Vietnam, in contrast to certain countries in the region, is primarily an agrarian nation with a disadvantaged and underdeveloped economy.

Additionally, it adheres to a conservative ideology and exhibits a solid domestic character, primarily influenced by foreign nations. The Doctrine of Confucianism Moreover, Vietnam's embrace of international integration occurred at a later stage in comparison to its neighboring countries in the region. During the initial stages of the reform era, the Vietnamese Government exhibited a prudent approach towards embracing global cultural trends. The dissemination of Western culture in Vietnam has encountered challenges, yet recent developments have deviated from this rationale.

Every individual's culture is manifested through their thoughts and behaviors. In addition to its cognitive implications, culture assumes a crucial role in shaping and directing the behaviors of individuals. In Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh asserted that culture should facilitate the comprehension of responsibilities and the cultivation of happiness among all Vietnamese individuals, regardless of age or gender. Culture should serve as a guiding beacon for the nation (Hồ Chí Minh, 2011, p. XXVI; Quốc, 1946). This observation demonstrates that an individual's cultural assimilation not only influences their cognitive processes and beliefs but also progressively results in modifications to their decision-making, conduct, and way of life.

In order to investigate the impact of Catholic culture on the cultural and spiritual aspects of student's lives, including their thoughts and actions, we conducted an online survey of 500 students. It was done by creating a Google questionnaire form link and distributing it to students at various schools. Additionally, qualitative analysis was performed. The results are processed utilizing Excel software through the creation of charts, thereby ensuring the quantitative outcomes possess a high degree of accuracy and objectivity. It is noteworthy that among the 483 respondents, the majority were non-Catholics, with 458 individuals representing 94.8% of the total, while Catholics constituted only 25 individuals, accounting for 5.2% . The survey method was selected due to the geographical distribution of our survey participants, who reside and pursue their education in both the northern and southern regions of Vietnam. The survey was conducted at four prominent educational institutions, namely Ho Chi Minh College of Industry and Trade, Ho Chi Minh National University, Hanoi Law University, and VNU University of Foreign Languages.

Consequently, in order to streamline our research endeavors, we employed online surveys. The questionnaire was formulated with precise inquiries (refer to Survey Table ), and the subsequent four fundamental components will substantiate this claim: Firstly, the New Year is commemorated on January 1st. Secondly, Valentine's Day is observed on February 14th. Thirdly, Christmas is celebrated on December 25th. Lastly, the post-marital independent lifestyle of young individuals is examined. We have selected these four essential contents for study due to two primary justifications: All four contents above derive their origins and theological foundations from the Bible or the Church, which is rooted in Catholic culture. Consequently, they have emerged as a prominent characteristic of Western culture, characterized by a rich and extensive tradition.

Furthermore, drawing from ongoing research endeavors: In Vietnam, research projects have been conducted to explore the influence of Catholic culture on Vietnamese society, including painting, architecture, and poetry, which have gained significant popularity. Nevertheless, the existing body of research on the impact of Catholic cultural influences on Vietnamese students in the four areas above remains limited and requires additional elucidation. The article's findings will elucidate this pleasurable process of acculturation in Vietnam.

#### *First, the January 1 New Year festivity*

This text highlights two distinct forms of Tet: the Solar New Year, also known as the Western New Year in Vietnamese, and the Lunar New Year, referred to as Tet Ta in Vietnamese.

New Year's Day, alternatively referred to as International New Year, is a commemorative event occurring on January 1, which corresponds to the initial day of the year as per the Gregorian and Julian calendars. This holiday holds significant importance in numerous countries across the globe.

According to the pre-Christian Julian calendar, this day was designated explicitly for Janus, a deity associated with gateways and beginnings, who also gave rise to January. New Year's Day, the inaugural day of the Christian Gregorian calendar, holds significant ceremonial significance as it commemorates the Feast of Jesus' Circumcision, a practice that the Lutheran church subsequently adopted.

Currently, with the majority of nations adhering to the Gregorian calendar, New Year holds great importance as a public holiday, frequently commemorated with fireworks to mark the commencement of the new year. Global New Year's Day traditions encompass a range of activities, such as engaging in church services, attending religious services or making phone calls to friends and family, hosting social gatherings, and meeting with relatives.

Vietnam employs both the Gregorian calendar (also known as the Sun calendar) and the Lunar calendar. All administrative activities of the State and Vietnamese citizens are synchronized with the Solar calendar on the government side. Nevertheless, Vietnamese individuals continue to adhere to the Lunar calendar for various occasions such as holidays, New Year celebrations, death anniversary offerings, and other customary practices. It entails the simultaneous utilization of both the Solar Calendar and the Lunar Calendar. The Vietnamese calendar block consistently incorporates both the Solar calendar and the Lunar calendar on a daily basis.

In contrast to European nations, Vietnam and several Asian countries, including China, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, North Korea, and India, are prominent examples of countries that observe the Lunar New Year in accordance with the lunar calendar. The Lunar New Year holds significant cultural importance in the lives of the Vietnamese population, serving as a longstanding tradition. Vietnamese individuals consistently strive to accumulate funds after a year of diligent labor in order to adequately prepare for a secure and cozy Tet celebration with their family and relatives. For Vietnamese individuals, Tet holds utmost significance as a significant event for enjoyment, relaxation, and gathering. Prior to 1986, a significant turning point for Vietnam in terms of embracing innovation and economic liberalization, the Vietnamese populace appeared to place greater emphasis on the New Year, in addition to the Lunar New Year. It is deemed suitable due to the adherence to traditional Vietnamese customs. Moreover, as a result of the constraints imposed by the media during that era in contrast to the present, Vietnamese individuals required increased avenues for acquiring novel cultural concepts from external sources. Prior to the reform period in 1986, New Year in Vietnam primarily attracted the attention of officials, company employees, and students due to their designated day off from work.

Nevertheless, with Vietnam's embrace of integration, economic growth, and cultural advancement, particularly in recent years, the official adoption of the Internet in Vietnam led to the emergence of Christmas. The New Year is regarded as a significant annual celebration. The cultural and spiritual aspects of Vietnamese society have undergone significant transformations over time. In addition to commemorating the customary Lunar New Year, Vietnamese individuals also partake in the celebration of

the New Year. This trend is steadily growing. While the New Year was previously only of interest to a select few, it has now transformed into a highly anticipated holiday. 71.7% of the surveyed students expressed a high level of interest and enthusiasm towards this particular day. The evening of December 31 emerged as a notably significant occurrence for numerous students. In major urban centers of Vietnam, such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, and Da Nang, the evening of December 31 is consistently characterized by a significant influx of individuals, predominantly comprising young individuals, pupils, and students. They extended invitations to one another, eagerly anticipating the arrival of the new year. From the perspective of the government, public offices also engage in celebratory activities to commemorate significant events throughout the year. These activities may include the display of banners and slogans, the adornment of fresh flowers, or the organization of fireworks in certain cities. Mass media platforms, including television, newspapers, and radio, curate programs featuring distinctive and captivating content to commemorate solemn occasions. In addition, families engage in various activities to manifest the celebratory ambiance associated with the commencement of the new year, as per the Yang calendar. These activities encompass embellishing the household, fostering unity, arranging excursions, partaking in meals, and socializing with acquaintances. The atmosphere is evidently conveyed through the emotional state of each individual, spanning from their residence to the streets and various entertainment establishments.

Young Vietnamese students adhere to the Gregorian calendar for their academic pursuits. Hence, the New Year represents the arduous commencement of a fresh year following the conclusion of the preceding year. Additionally, it is regarded as a chance for them to genuinely relax and commemorate, reflect, condense, gain knowledge from past encounters, and establish fresh objectives for the future. Based on a survey conducted among young students, 85.7% of respondents indicated that they are enthusiastically anticipating and engaging in activities to commemorate the New Year, such as arranging meals, taking breaks, going out, or traveling with friends and family. This information can be found in question 5 of the survey. Based on data provided by reputable international travel companies in Vietnam, it is observed that approximately 5 million individuals from Vietnam engage in international travel annually. Among these travelers, approximately 50% partake in holiday trips such as Christmas, New Year, and Lunar New Year (Vietmytourist, 2024). It demonstrates that "currently, New Year has undergone Vietnameseization and evolved into a customary holiday." (Cầm Tú, 2014) Observing the New Year is a prevalent custom among Vietnamese individuals, serving as a chance to come together, have enjoyable times, and derive pleasure.

Due to the current trend of integration, numerous Vietnamese scientists have expressed their views on the possibility of merging Western New Year and New Year into a single celebration. It would involve exclusively celebrating Tet on January 1 of the solar calendar, aligning with the prevailing trend of the era, similar to the current situation in Japan. This viewpoint is evident in various articles, including: "Tet integration, why not?" (Nguyễn Văn Toàn, 2013); "Let our Tet assimilate into the Western Tet" (Ly Ly, 2022); "Tet New Year - Western New Year, preserving tradition or enhancing integration?" (Lam, 2017); "Defining Tet integration?" (Hà, 2007); "Combining our New Year with the Western New Year: Exploring a novel experience." (ITVN, 2013) The fervent viewpoints expressed in the articles above by intellectuals and researchers demonstrate a tangible phenomenon: Vietnamese students, specifically, and Vietnamese society as a whole is undergoing a robust process of integration, which includes the observance of the New Year in accordance with Catholic cultural practices.

### *Second, Valentine's Day is February 14*

Valentine's Day originates from Christianity and is an integral component of the Christian lifestyle. The name of this saint is derived from Saint Valentine (Italian: San Valentino, Latin: Valentinus), who is recognized as one of the earliest martyrs. His birth year was 226, and he met his martyrdom on February 14, 269. Consequently, February 14 is annually commemorated as Valentine's Day (An, 2018).

Numerous legends surround him (An, 2018; Minh, 2018), yet they all share a common thread: he was martyred in the name of safeguarding human love with unwavering Christian devotion. That is of profound significance, an honorable proclamation for the existence of humanity. Saint Valentine's actions have served as a source of inspiration for individuals of all ages, ethnicities, and religions worldwide. The theological

foundation for the Catholic morality of charity is also derived from this. Catholicism is commonly referred to as the religion of love due to several factors.

Regarding this matter, Ho Chi Minh, the prominent figure who wielded considerable influence over the Vietnamese populace, expressed the following viewpoint: "The Giesu religion possesses a notable advantage in the form of substantial philanthropy." (Thông, 2004, p. 325) Numerous researchers also corroborate this assertion. "This charity has fostered a benevolent and philanthropic way of life within the Catholic community, serving as a valuable contribution of this religion to both society and Vietnamese culture." (Thông, 2004, p. 79) Valentine's Day was historically observed exclusively in North America and Europe; however, it has gained widespread popularity in numerous countries today (Minh, 2018). Valentine's Day emerges from the Christian and Catholic traditions, and the allure of this culture has been disseminated globally, encompassing Vietnamese students as well. Annually, on February 14, the global community joyfully commemorates by exchanging flowers and gifts as a manifestation of reverence for the exquisite nature of love.

Love is a distinct emotional and psychological state that elicits strong attraction and a desire for attachment to the object of affection. It pertains to the romantic relationship between individuals of different genders or encompasses a broader range of human affections, such as love for one's parents, siblings, relatives, fellow human beings, or even nature. Love is widely regarded as a virtue that embodies human kindness and noble emotions, as it contributes to the improvement of individuals' lives and fosters a more humane existence.

The observance of Valentine's Day and the commemoration of human love are integral aspects of Catholic culture that are prevalent among Western individuals. Gradually, this cultural splendor has disseminated to the majority of nations worldwide and to individuals of all ages and geographical locations. Hence, it is unavoidable that Vietnamese students enthusiastically embrace Valentine's Day, showcasing their assimilation of Western cultural elements in alignment with contemporary trends, human civilization, and the customary lifestyle of the Vietnamese populace.

Valentine's Day is now widely celebrated in Vietnam, gaining significant popularity among the youth in both urban and rural areas, as well as among Catholics, Protestants, and pagans. This observation indicates that Vietnamese individuals exhibit contentment not only with their indigenous Eastern culture but also with the pervasive impact of Catholic culture on a significant portion of the Vietnamese populace, extending beyond adherents. Christians, as well as a significant portion of the younger demographic, are individuals who experience love and lead content lives characterized by love. A survey of over 400 students revealed that 90.9% of young individuals, regardless of their romantic status, consider Valentine's Day to be a significant holiday that emphasizes care and patience. Additionally, 68.3% of young people, including 19.8% who consider it crucial and 48.5% who consider it significant, believe that there will be specific activities to commemorate this holiday, such as going out, planning travel, arranging meals, or exchanging gifts. These activities are intended to honor love and express gratitude towards one's partner for bringing them joy, happiness, and positive energy and emotions in life. Individuals convey their emotions to their romantic partners through the act of sending Valentine's Day cards, roses, chocolates, and various other distinctive presents. The impact of Catholic culture on the younger generation in Vietnam is on the rise due to the corresponding actions of manufacturing enterprises and sales distributors. These entities actively promote Valentine's Day as a significant event, highlighting its significance as a crucial day for business operations and demonstrating its commitment to customer satisfaction.

### *Third, celebrate Christmas on December 25*

Despite varying viewpoints, Christian historians have universally acknowledged December 25 as Christmas day, the commemoration of Christ's birth, since the early Christian era. Christians consider the primary purpose of celebrating Christmas to be the belief that God came to earth in human form to make amends for humanity's sins, rather than the debate about whether it is December 25 according to the Gregorian calendar or not.

Christmas, also referred to as Nativity, Noel, or Christmas, is a yearly festival that commemorates the birth of Jesus. It is observed on December 25 and is celebrated by a billion people worldwide as a religious and cultural celebration. As a pivotal celebration of the Christian liturgical year, it marks the conclusion of the Advent season and the commencement of the Christmas season, which traditionally spans twelve days and reaches its peak on the twelfth night. Christmas Day is a widely observed public holiday in numerous countries globally, wherein it holds religious significance for the majority of Christians and is also regarded as a cultural celebration by a significant number of non-Christians. It constitutes an essential component of the Christmas and New Year holidays, which revolve around the days above.

The narrative surrounding the birth of Jesus is expounded upon in the New Testament. Jesus' birth took place in Bethlehem, Judea, which aligns with the predictions of the Messiah. Upon their arrival in the city, Joseph and Mary encountered a shortage of accommodations at the inn, necessitating their accommodation outside a stable where the infant Jesus was delivered (Minh, 1998b).

The festive traditions linked to Christmas in various nations encompass a blend of pre-Christian, Christian, and secular motifs and origins. Prominent contemporary traditions associated with the holiday encompass the act of presenting gifts, engaging in carol performances and singing, attending nativity plays, exchanging Christmas cards, participating in church services, hosting festive meals, and showcasing various items. Diverse embellishments, including Christmas trees, Christmas lights, Nativity scenes, and fresh flowers. Furthermore, an essential figure intricately associated with this occurrence is Santa Claus, who bestows presents upon children throughout the Christmas period and possesses a rich mythological narrative.

Due to the involvement of production and business activities in gift-giving and various other aspects of Christmas festivities, the holiday has emerged as a highly anticipated event and a crucial period for retailers and enterprises to engage in sales activities. The global economic influence of the Christmas holiday has exhibited a consistent upward trend throughout the preceding centuries. Hence, in this particular instance, enterprises and producers perceive this as an exceptional business prospect that necessitates broader promotion. Partly due to this rationale, Christmas is rapidly disseminated to all individuals with the most joyful ambiance.

In contemporary Vietnam, Christmas holds significant importance for the majority of young individuals and individuals who adhere to the Christian faith, encompassing both Christians and non-Christians alike. Annually, during the Christmas season, the youth of Vietnam, encompassing young individuals, students, pupils, and children, eagerly embrace it. In communal spaces such as classrooms, schools, companies, shops, restaurants, hotels, or public venues, all are meticulously adorned with magnificent and distinctive festival decorations, such as Christmas trees, Santa Claus, snowflakes, or meticulously crafted gifts to present to friends and family. It is noteworthy to highlight that the jovial Christmas ambiance has pervaded a significant portion of the younger demographic, encompassing students as well. Each Christmas, individuals engage in reciprocal visits and exchange gifts, perceiving this as a significant event for fostering connections, sharing experiences, and facilitating reunions. According to a survey conducted among predominantly non-Catholic students, 85.7% of the surveyed young individuals acknowledged that Christmas is a holiday they eagerly anticipate. The Christmas ambiance is vibrant in all locations, ranging from residences to thoroughfares, particularly in areas where Catholics, churches, and religious communities take center stage, adorned with customary adornments and a stimulating ambiance. The Christmas ambiance permeates all individuals, irrespective of their religious affiliation, age, or geographical location. The observation above highlights the significant impact of Catholic culture on the cultural and spiritual aspects of Vietnamese society, particularly among the younger cohort of students.

#### *Fourth, married Vietnamese students live independently*

Religion plays a significant role in shaping human perception and regulating human behavior. Hence, the development of Christians' beliefs and religious practices will have a direct impact on their behavioral

decisions. Put simply, Catholics' lives are governed by their adherence to the Bible, the doctrinal system, and the canon law of the Church (Anh, 2015b).

Catholics hold the belief that marriage is a divine institution established by God to manifest His affectionate intentions among humanity. Consequently, the love between a husband and wife inherently necessitates seeking unity and inseparability. A monogamous union refers to a marital union characterized by monogamy. Indissoluble refers to the inability to form a divorce (Anh, 2014).

The prevalence of high levels of independence among Western youth is not coincidental. The Catholic faith governs the establishment and continuation of this entity, drawing its theological foundation from two biblical passages: "For this reason, a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and both become one flesh" (Minh, 1998a, p. 35) and "What God has joined together, let no man separate." (Minh, 1998c, p. 35)

In the initial verse, as stated in the Bible, upon reaching adulthood and entering into matrimony, a man will separate from his parents and unite with his spouse, resulting in the formation of a unified entity. The phrase "leaves his parents" in the Bible does not imply that a man will entirely forsake his parents and reside with his wife after marriage. However, we interpret it in the following manner:

Firstly, individuals who attain adulthood (beyond the age of 18) or enter into matrimony will cease to rely on their parents. They will relocate and reside autonomously, occupying a distinct residence from their parents.

Second, as children transition into adulthood, they will assume autonomy in shaping their own lives and prospects and will bear the responsibility for their perspectives and behaviors. Parents will refrain from intervening in their children's lives, abstain from providing protection or financial support, and relinquish custody of their children.

Furthermore, respecting a child's privacy serves as evidence of parental regard for human freedom and equality. Have faith in your child's independence, development, willingness to think, willingness to act, and willingness to assume accountability.

The statement posits that the act of children departing from their parents and relocating to live autonomously does not imply a cessation of parental responsibility or a cessation of parental interaction. Instead, it underscores the biological connection that exists between parents and children. Meat possesses an enduring quality, serving as a testament to the maturity and autonomy of children, as well as the trust and reverence parents hold for their offspring. The independent lifestyle of the younger generation of Catholics, which is a characteristic of Western culture, is rooted in the theological basis. It stands in contrast to the traditional Vietnamese parents who prioritize the protection of children and demonstrate unconditional love by sacrificing their own lives to strengthen their children's lives. The enduring safeguarding of children by their parents results in the younger generation adopting a reliant, lethargic, purposeless, and suboptimal way of life due to the deprivation of housing, vehicles, and financial resources. Acquired through the acts of selflessness made by grandparents and parents. Some traditional Vietnamese parents engage in the concept of "financial embrace" (Hà, 2020) for their children. This cultural phenomenon is also gaining popularity in China. These individuals are a consequence of the policy that restricts couples to having only one child, resulting in the child being regarded as the pinnacle of the family and clan. The culture of "lying still" (also referred to as "tang ping") has emerged in China as a result of individuals being indulged and receiving comprehensive care devoid of any deficiencies, concerns, or aspirations (Dung, 2023).

The biblical verse "Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and the two become one flesh" serves as the initial theological foundation for the autonomous cultural development of Western individuals, particularly in relation to the philosophy of marriage. It signifies the cohesion of Catholic matrimony. Catholic marriage is not only characterized by unity but also by its eternal nature, rendering divorce impossible. Catholics adhere to the belief that once a man and a woman enter into a legal

marriage, they are obligated to remain faithful to each other indefinitely (Lộc, 2006), as this is considered a divine decree. This enduring attribute eliminates the possibility of divorce.

Without discussing its profound theological meaning, here, we want to emphasize the internal logic, the relationship between the two Bible verses: "What God has joined together, no human being is allowed to separate." (Minh, 1998d, p. 1878) and "For this reason, a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and the two become one flesh." (Minh, 1998a, p. 35) Loyalty is a fundamental requirement for achieving marital happiness. The value of Catholic marriage is derived from the faith of Christians. It is due to their deep affection for God, perceiving it as a divine favor, or their apprehension of divine retribution and damnation. Hence, in the event of a conflict, a couple will collaborate to resolve it to preserve their chosen marriage and receive divine blessings rather than seeking to flee or terminate it. "No man should separate what God has united." (Minh, 1998d, p. 1878)

Due to the absence of a remarriage option following the validity of a marriage, young Catholics express a desire to exercise autonomy in decision-making and personal agency in matters pertaining to their overall well-being and contentment. They exhibit a reluctance to be swayed by their parents and are susceptible to the influence of individuals in their vicinity during instances of conflict within the couple. It contradicts the traditional beliefs held by specific Vietnamese individuals, who hold the belief that: "fish do not consume salt, spoiled fish, disregard parental authority," and that "eggs are inferior to ducks in intelligence." (English equivalent: "Spare the rod and spoil the child." and "Do not teach your grandmother to suck eggs.")

In Vietnam, the traditional Vietnamese family is characterized by a multi-generational structure, often spanning three or four generations, wherein a patriarchal dynamic prevails. Within this family unit, the male member is accorded greater significance compared to the female member. Women must endure numerous adversities. Confucianism profoundly influences traditional Vietnamese families (Vinh, 2022). When a child is born, it is common for grandparents and parents to impart to the child the values of obedience, critical thinking, and adherence to instructions. Consequently, a well-adjusted child cannot engage in arguments. Furthermore, this method of education is responsible for fostering a "culture of silence" and "obedience" among numerous adults. However, it is also the underlying cause for the need for more emphasis on the culture of criticism and the expression of opinions (Diệp, 2018). The child was raised in a household where his parents and grandparents resided, resulting in a continuous process of monitoring and advising his thoughts and actions, which gradually shaped his development. The prevailing culture of obedience in Vietnam engenders a tendency among individuals to bow their heads (Đình, 2019).

The Western individuals' right to self-determination is affirmed by their culture of self-reliance, boldness in thinking and action, and tenacity in recovering from setbacks, as well as their ability to handle issues independently (Anh, 2015a, p. chapter 4). It exhibits a profound sense of accountability for their existence. As societal progress persists, the imperative to safeguard and uphold individual privacy rights has heightened significance. The decisions made by individuals have a profound impact on their lives and include the weight of personal accountability. No one possesses the jurisdiction to make decisions on their behalf. This philosophy embodies both humanity and the inherent worth of individuals in accordance with the ideals of liberty and self-governance as stated in the United Nations Charter.

As per customary practice, Vietnamese women, upon marriage, commonly reside with their husbands' families and partake in communal meals with them. The proverbial expression "Follow the helm, the woman follows the husband" conveys the notion that a married woman is obligated to adhere to her husband's guidance and decisions, and her existence is fully reliant on and interconnected with her husband and his family. Based on the findings of the Vietnam Family Survey conducted in 2006, it was observed that the proportion of daughters residing with their parents-in-law subsequent to marriage is 64.8% among couples within the age range of 18 to 60. Conversely, 23.7% of couples in this age group live entirely apart, while the remaining percentage pertains to alternative types of cohabitation (Ngọc, 2012a, p. 308). Currently, as a result of the influence of industrialization and urbanization, a significant number of young individuals opt to relocate from rural regions when they establish families, opting to reside independently from their parents from the outset. The Vietnamese youth have a strong inclination towards embracing this



trend, which is influenced by Western culture and is in line with the growing emphasis on freedom, independence, and self-sufficiency among contemporary youth.

## Discussion

Cultural disparities exist between the Eastern and Western areas. In contrast to Western culture, Eastern culture focuses significant emphasis on communal values such as village life, ancestry, and familial relationships. Hence, in previous times, several radical Vietnamese citizens expressed disapproval towards parents who, although possessing financial resources and vast residences, permitted their children to reside independently after reaching the age of 18 while observing Western culture. Advocates of this perspective contended that upon the establishment of a family unit, its constituents must cohabit within a shared dwelling, be it within a nuclear or expanded familial framework, in order to exemplify the intimate bonds derived from biological kinship. The phenomenon of adolescents transitioning to independent living arrangements subsequent to reaching the age of 18 or entering into matrimony is widely regarded as a deviation from conventional familial frameworks (Nhi, 2022).

If an individual holds the belief that a self-reliant way of life between parents and children is the root cause of conflict within the family, indicating a sense of detachment and apathy, or if one contends that when children reach adulthood, it aligns with their parents' advanced age and requirement for assistance, then the act of separating from parents is ethically incorrect. These perspectives solely take into account a single facet of the matter. Empirical evidence has substantiated the existence of children's filial piety towards their parents, as well as parents' concern for their children, even in situations where they reside separately (Thi, 2007).

The protracted conflict between Eastern and Western cultures has a multitude of dimensions. The issue surrounding the cohabitation of married children with their parents bears resemblance to the ongoing discussion surrounding the placement of old folks in nursing homes. The practice of children placing their parents in nursing homes has been subject to criticism by Eastern civilizations for an extended period (Lê, 2021). On the other hand, Western society was puzzled by the phenomenon as they pondered the reasons behind children's reluctance to provide improved living conditions for their elderly parents within these establishments (Nhi, 2022). This disparity in opinions underscores the fact that the same matter can be perceived in varying ways depending on individual consciousness and perspectives. Nevertheless, under the present framework of global integration, Vietnamese individuals have exhibited a greater receptiveness, particularly among the younger cohort. They have transcended the limitations of their cultural and spiritual life and enthusiastically embraced beneficial influences from external sources, enhancing their internal realms. Vietnamese individuals are progressively pursuing autonomy and demonstrating reverence for the private rights of others.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, a famous German philosopher (1770-1831), made a profound statement about human beings and society: "What is real is rational, and what is rational is real." (Huyèn, 2018) The aspiration of young individuals to establish an independent household following marriage is a valid and common requirement. The divorce rate among young couples in Vietnam is currently on the rise. According to the 2019 survey conducted by the General Statistics Office, the divorce rate in Vietnamese households has increased from 1.4% to 2.1% compared to the same period in 2009. Court reports indicate that Vietnam has an annual average of 600,000 divorce cases, with women initiating up to 70% of these divorces (Thi, 2020). Multiple reasons contribute to this predicament, such as disparities in perspectives and lifestyles between parents and children, which generate substantial psychological burdens for generations cohabiting in the same household (Ngọc, 2012b). Marital tragedies often arise from disagreements between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, as well as fights between different generations. A study conducted by the Institute of Family and Gender in Ho Chi Minh City revealed that the primary cause of conflict between parents and children, accounting for 55.8%, is attributed to divergent perspectives and lifestyles. Simultaneously, disagreements pertaining to other matters are diminished (Ngọc, 2012b, p. 258). Another forum further asserts that "in actuality, numerous conflicts develop from the dynamic between daughters-in-law and their husbands' families, particularly when the daughter-in-law also assumes the role of a mother-

in-law.” (Phununet, 2015) The traditional Vietnamese society, which places great importance on family bonds, must face a sorrowful truth.

Given the current circumstances, as well as the extensive global integration and the rapid advancement of information technology, the assimilation of foreign cultures into Vietnam has expedited. The introduction of Western culture has had a significant impact on Vietnamese society, which has historically placed a high emphasis on harmony and acceptance. Many young students have embraced the concept of prioritizing individual freedom, independence, and autonomy as pioneers. In a pragmatic investigation, Phạm Thành, the author of an article titled "The Trend of Living Independently" among contemporary youth, published in *Tuổi trẻ Thủ đô* (Youth of the Capital), asserts that in today's society, a significant number of young individuals opt to relocate and live autonomously, even prior to marriage. They are adopting a novel lifestyle marked by liberty, autonomy, and an absence of reliance on others to achieve their personal growth (Thành, 2021). The autonomous way of life is shaped by Western culture, with theological principles rooted in Catholicism.

During a student survey, participants were asked if they had any preferences after getting married. The responses provided valuable insights. A majority of respondents, accounting for 56.9%, are of the opinion that the decision to live together or separately with their in-laws or their spouse's parents is contingent upon the unique circumstances of the family. Concurrently, 33.5% of young individuals articulate a preference for autonomous living following marriage, indicating their aversion to cohabitating with their parents. These data illustrate the growing inclination of young individuals in Vietnam towards living alone.

Due to their Eastern heritage, the Vietnamese have historically attached significant significance to the inheritance of cultural norms. Contemporary Vietnamese culture continues to be strongly influenced by Confucian principles. Traditionally, Vietnamese individuals have a belief in gender differentiation inside their households. Each married couple endeavours to achieve a balance between having male and female offspring in their family planning. In Vietnamese culture, it is customary for grown children to reside with their boys rather than their daughters when they start their own families. In families with several sons, it is customary for the eldest son to serve as the patriarch and for the rest of the family to live with him. This tradition has influenced the Vietnamese family culture, in which many generations commonly reside together (referred to as "tam, tứ đại đồng đường"). When daughters get married, they join their husbands' families and reside with their parents-in-law, which is a prevalent cultural tradition in Vietnam. This organization exhibits both advantageous and constraining elements, which are in accordance with the context of small-scale agricultural production. In this environment, each family unit functions autonomously, and family members depend on one another (Bộ Giáo dục và Đào tạo, 2021, pp. 348-349). Nevertheless, as personal autonomy progresses and society dynamics transition towards modernity, the constraints of living with many generations under one roof have become increasingly evident. Therefore, this model is no longer the optimal selection for several young individuals. Instead, they choose to lead an independent and self-governing lifestyle that values personal privacy. The survey above data accurately represents this pattern, and contemporary society increasingly confirms its rationality. As one astute young Vietnamese individual accurately expressed:

“In Vietnam, we are currently experiencing a situation characterized by a deficiency in autonomy. During our early years, we depend on our parents to provide for our needs and ensure our well-being. As we become older, we rely on filial piety, anticipating that our offspring will provide care for us. Both eventualities can be succinctly described by the adage, “When young, rely on parents; when old, rely on children.” Nevertheless, this proverb should no longer function as a guiding principle for individuals. Regardless of age, we need to cultivate self-sufficiency and avoid relying on others (Naly, 2022).

Consequently, the current inclination among Vietnamese students is to choose to live independently and separately from their parents after getting married. This phenomenon is shaped by Western society, with its origins in Catholicism. Furthermore, recent sociological research supports and promotes this trend, as recommended by experts (Trang, 2010). Throughout his career, Hồ Chí Minh, the leader of Vietnam, had a strong dedication to constructing a fresh cultural basis that included the core of the nation and assimilated

the finest aspects of global culture. He held the belief that "Vietnamese culture is a synthesis of both Eastern and Western traditions... We assimilate the favourable elements from both Eastern and Western cultures to shape a Vietnamese society that adheres to democratic values." (Minh, 1997) This viewpoint continues to be significant in the present-day environment of global integration, where culture plays a dual role as an objective and a catalyst for progress.

Hence, the decision of the younger generation, including Vietnamese students, to live independently, without depending on others, displaying courage in their thoughts, actions, and endurance serves as a means for their personal growth and maturity. Furthermore, understanding one's role and responsibilities, as well as establishing one's familial happiness, can be seen as a form of advancement and should be promoted.

Prior research has thoroughly examined the impact of Catholic culture on Vietnamese culture. Missionaries have spread scientific, technological, and Western civilization information, introduced the Vietnamese script (quốc ngữ) to promote more efficient preaching, and established newspapers. Nevertheless, this article will specifically analyze the influence of Catholic culture on present-day Vietnamese students, with a particular emphasis on the increasing significance of observing Western holidays like New Year's Eve, Valentine's Day, Christmas, and the desire for independence. In relation to this impact, Phạm Huy Thông, a Catholic scholar, affirms that holidays such as Christmas and Valentine's Day are no longer restricted to Catholics in the present era. These events have evolved into celebratory occasions for numerous individuals, particularly the younger generation. Across many locations, especially urban areas, there are abundant cultural and creative initiatives associated with these holidays. The festive ambience is not limited to urban areas but also extends to rural towns, with activities like the 'Miss Noel' pageant, 'Valentine's Day' music festivals, and souvenir stores offering Christmas and love-themed things (Phạm Huy Thông, 2012, p. 49). Furthermore, this impact on the Vietnamese young is also seen in various typical behaviours, The act of exchanging rings during wedding ceremonies. A significant majority of young individuals, specifically 75.3%, consider this practice to be crucial . This tradition includes seeking divine blessings from God during challenging circumstances or sickness, conducting wedding ceremonies in churches, and using Western architectural styles in construction designs.

Based on the analysis provided before, we can trace the growing impact of Catholic culture on Vietnamese students of the younger generation to various factors:

1. Globalization Trend: Globalization and cultural interchange are regarded as fundamental necessities for individuals and society. Globalization is leading to increased interconnectivity between nations, making cultural connections unavoidable.
2. Strategic Promotion by the Universal Church and Western Countries: The deliberate promotion by the Universal Church and Western nations through cultural diplomacy impacts the countries they target.
3. The receptiveness of Vietnamese Youth: The present generation of Vietnamese youth demonstrates a willingness to embrace beneficial elements from external origins (46.8% display a high level of eagerness to adopt novel concepts ).
4. Marketing endeavours: Enterprises and vendors actively advertise discounts and exclusive promotions throughout holidays, captivating public interest.
5. Impact of Digital Media: The rapid advancement of technology and digital media has dismantled boundaries between nations, enabling swift cultural fusion and interchange. Currently, individuals have generally equitable chances to engage with and appreciate cultural and spiritual aspects of life on a global scale.

Every nation is now interconnected and no longer exists as a self-contained kingdom with distinct cultural limits. Individuals and nations should have the freedom to select various cultural expressions according to their understanding and individual choices without making a distinction between Eastern and Western

cultures. Hence, the diverse range of external cultural influences is crucial for individual enrichment. Thanks to proactive international integration, Vietnamese culture and people have assimilated and enhanced themselves with the ideals and core of global culture. The Vietnamese people have experienced the emergence of new cultural forms, which have enhanced their cultural and spiritual life. Cultivating contemporary folks with novel attributes that are in accordance with the current era (Hằng, 2021). It illustrates that, in addition to the unique cultural characteristics of each country, the process of cultural integration and interchange causes nations to come together and embrace universal human ideals. This convergence is achieved by mutual recognition and comprehension, with the objective of advancing the nation and embracing modernity. The existence of a global culture in today's era of cultural globalization can be explained by the presence of shared cultural values across humanity.

## Conclusion

The contemporary spiritual landscape of the Vietnamese population is a fusion of Eastern and Western influences rooted in our traditional cultural heritage. The young Vietnamese students, known for their innovative thinking and imaginative approach, are no longer satisfied with adhering to the traditional cultural practices passed down by their forefathers. Instead, they consistently welcome external ideas, enhancing their own spiritual lives.

International and cultural integration are inherent and unavoidable phenomena in the present era. While Vietnam successfully preserved its cultural identity during the period of Chinese occupation in the North by actively resisting, it also experienced a period of spiritual enrichment by embracing the values and essence of Catholicism through assimilation. Vietnamese culture has interacted extensively with the North and the West for millennia. Throughout this time, it has displayed its capacity to refine and adjust, remain unaltered (static), and transform (dynamic) to endure and progress (Thưởng, 2022). Reflecting on the history of Vietnamese culture, it is clear that the process of interaction and interchange has led to substantial changes and alterations in the cultural and spiritual aspects of the Vietnamese people and society, particularly among the younger student generation.

The Vietnamese government's policy of fostering a solid national identity and embracing diverse cultural influences leads to the young generation of Vietnamese students being influenced by the positive aspects of Catholic culture. It aligns with the government's current efforts to construct a new culture in Vietnam.

Christianity played a prominent role in influencing Western culture and thought during Vietnam's cultural integration process. Throughout history, religion has consistently acted as a catalyst for visits, interactions, and cultural exchanges between nations (Thu, 1997).

Young Vietnamese students incorporate specific elements of Catholic culture into their social lives to enhance the spiritual culture of the Vietnamese population. The influence of Catholic culture is evident among Christian adherents and has permeated the Vietnamese population, surpassing a staggering count of 7,294,713 believers as documented (as of 2022) (Hội đồng giám mục Việt Nam, 2022). The statement suggests that despite not experiencing substantial growth in its followers, Catholicism significantly impacts individual and collective aspects of people's lives (Dụ, 2006). The impact of Catholicism is so deeply ingrained that, according to a specialist in Vietnamese Catholicism, it is difficult to differentiate between Catholics and non-Catholics, particularly among the younger generation, based solely on their outward appearance (Dương, 2010, p. 31).

Furthermore, apart from the four analyzed contents, additional aspects have not been explored in this study, such as the influence of Vietnamese people on Catholic culture in the realms of painting, architecture, music, and poetry. In addition to the beneficial effects of Catholic culture on the youth of Vietnamese students, are there any adverse consequences? What are the disadvantages of cultural integration? Alternatively, are Catholic and Western cultures unified? Is Catholic culture a global culture? Future research will address these gaps progressively.

## Disclosure of interest

There are no relevant financial or non-financial competing interests

## Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, [NAC], upon reasonable request.

## Ethical approval

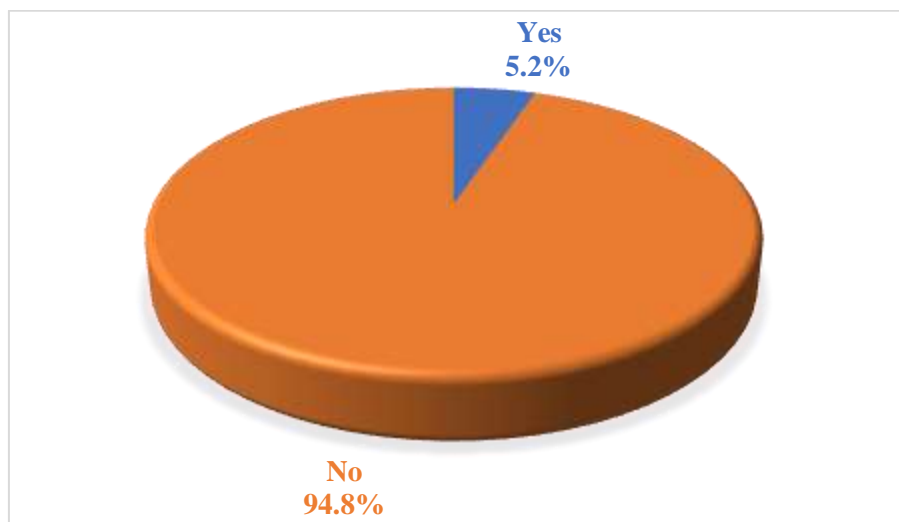
This study received ethical approval from VNU University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi ensure that it complies with the ethical principles governing social research.

## References

- An, T. (2018, 13/2). Nguồn gốc của Lễ Tình nhân 14/2 [Origin of Valentine's Day February 14]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vietnamnet.vn/nguon-goc-cua-le-tinh-nhan-142-355259.html>
- Anh, Đ. T. N. (2014). Giá trị bền vững, tính thánh thiêng của hôn nhân và gia đình Công giáo Việt Nam [The lasting value and sacredness of Vietnamese Catholic marriage and family]. *Nghiên cứu Tôn giáo*(6), 73-81.
- Anh, Đ. T. N. (2015a). Giá trị của hôn nhân và gia đình Công giáo Việt Nam [The value of Vietnamese Catholic marriage and family] Vietnam National University Hanoi].
- Anh, Đ. T. N. (2015b). Giá trị văn hoá, đạo đức của hôn nhân và gia đình Công giáo ở Việt Nam hiện nay [Cultural and moral values of Catholic marriage and family in Vietnam today]. *Nghiên cứu Tôn giáo*(10), 55-65.
- Báo Dân tộc. (2022, 25/3). Tháng thanh niên: Những số liệu vàng về thanh niên Việt Nam [Youth month: Golden data about Vietnamese youth]. Retrieved 13/9 from <https://baodantoc.vn/thang-thanh-nien-nhung-so-lieu-vang-ve-thanh-nien-viet-nam-1648193523251.htm>
- Bộ Giáo dục và Đào tạo. (2021). Sự biến đổi của gia đình Việt Nam [The transformation of the Vietnamese family]. In *Giáo trình Chủ nghĩa xã hội khoa học [The textbook of Scientific Socialism] Chính trị quốc gia Sự thật*.
- Cầm Tú. (2014, 1/1/2014). Xu hướng ăn tết Tây của người Việt [Vietnamese people's tendency to celebrate Western Holidays]. Retrieved 17/3/2024 from <https://vtv.vn/trong-nuoc/xu-huong-an-tet-tay-cua-nguoi-viet-116653.htm>
- Dân số. (2024, 17/03/2024). Dân số Việt Nam [Vietnam's population]. Retrieved 17/03 from <https://danso.org/viet-nam/>
- Diệp, B. (2018, 14/9). Nghĩ khác đi về “văn hoá vâng lời” [Think differently about “obedience culture”]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://dantri.com.vn/blog/nghi-khac-di-ve-van-hoa-vang-loi-20180914035146353.htm>
- Định, N. T. (2019, 22/5). Văn hóa nghe lời ở Việt Nam tạo ra những con người cúi đầu [The culture of obedience in Vietnam creates people who bow their heads]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vnexpress.net/van-hoa-nghe-loi-o-viet-nam-tao-ra-nhung-con-nguoi-cui-dau-3927238.html>
- Dụ, L. m. A. N. V. (2006). Hội nhập văn hoá trong hôn nhân và gia đình Việt Nam theo Tông huấn Familiaris Consortio [Cultural integration in Vietnamese marriage and family according to the Apostolic Exhortation Familiaris Consortio]. *Trung tâm mục vụ Việt Nam – Italia*.
- Dung, H. (2023, 26/08). Trào lưu “nằm yên, mặc kệ đời” của giới trẻ Trung Quốc [“The trend of “lying still and ignoring life” among Chinese youth”]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vietnamnet.vn/trao-luu-di-du-lich-kieu-nam-yen-mac-ke-doi-2175125.html>
- Dương, N. H. (2010). nếp sống đạo của người công giáo Việt Nam [Religious lifestyle of Vietnamese Catholics]. *Từ điển Bách khoa*.
- Hà, N. T. T. (2020, 16/7). Cha mẹ Việt hãy để “đời của của máy, đời cây cày đào [Vietnamese parents should leave “Parents’ lives plow, children’s lives also have to plow themselves”]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vnexpress.net/cha-me-viet-hay-de-doi-cua-cua-may-doi-cay-cay-dao-4131117.html>
- Hà, T. (2007, 12/2). Thế nào là "hội nhập" tết? [What is Tet "integration"?]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://tuoitre.vn/the-nao-la-hoi-nhap-tet-186834.htm>
- Hằng, C. T. (2021, 15/12). Xây dựng nền văn hóa mới, con người mới trong thời kỳ hội nhập quốc tế ở nước ta hiện nay [Building a new culture and new people in the current period of international integration in our country]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from [https://www.tapchiconsan.org.vn/web/guest/van\\_hoa\\_xa\\_hoi/-/2018/824543/xay-dung-nen-van-hoa-moi%2C-con-nguoi-moi-trong-thoi-ky-hoi-nhap-quoc-te-o-nuoc-ta-hien-nay.aspx](https://www.tapchiconsan.org.vn/web/guest/van_hoa_xa_hoi/-/2018/824543/xay-dung-nen-van-hoa-moi%2C-con-nguoi-moi-trong-thoi-ky-hoi-nhap-quoc-te-o-nuoc-ta-hien-nay.aspx)
- Hồ Chí Minh. (2011). Hồ Chí Minh Toàn tập, Tập 1 [Ho Chi Minh Complete Works, Volume 1]. Chính trị Quốc gia.
- Hoàng Phê. (2017). Từ điển tiếng Việt [Vietnamese Dictionary]. Đà Nẵng.
- Hội đồng giám mục Việt Nam. (2022, 15/08). Hội đồng Giám mục Việt Nam: Bản tổng hợp toàn quốc cho Thượng Hội đồng Giám mục Cấp giáo phận [Vietnam Bishops' Conference: National summary for the Synod of Bishops at the

- diocesan level]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://hdgmvietnam.com/chi-tiet/hoi-dong-giam-muc-viet-nam-ban-tong-hop-toan-quoc-cho-thuong-hoi-dong-giam-muc-cap-giao-phan-46380>
- Huyền, Q. (2018, 23/9). Cái Nhìn Của Hegel Và Kierkegaard Về Con Người [Hegel and Kierkegaard's View of Man]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vnexpress.net/bat-hieu-khi-dua-cha-me-vao-vien-duong-lao-4249976.html>
- Lam, N. H. (2017, 11/2). Tết Ta, Tết Tây – giữ truyền thống hay tăng hội nhập? [Vietnamese New Year, Western New Year – keep tradition or increase integration?]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://cand.com.vn/dien-dan-van-nghe-cong-an/Tet-ta-Tet-tay-giu-truyen-thong-hay-tang-hoi-nhap-i421590/>
- Lê, T. (2021, 18/3). 'Bất hiếu khi đưa cha mẹ vào viện dưỡng lão' [It's disrespectful to send parents to a nursing home]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vnexpress.net/bat-hieu-khi-dua-cha-me-vao-vien-duong-lao-4249976.html>
- Lộc, T. G. m. X. (2006). Hôn nhân Công giáo [Catholic marriage]. Tôn giáo.
- Ly Ly. (2022, 8/1). Để Tết Ta hội nhập Tết Tây [Let the Vietnamese New Year integrate into the Western New Year]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vnexpress.net/de-tet-ta-hoi-nhap-tet-tay-4413708.html>
- Minh, H. C. (1997). Về văn hoá [About culture]. Báo tăng Hồ Chí Minh
- Minh, T. T. g. m. t. p. H. C. (1998a). "Sách Sáng thế", [St 2, 24], chương 2, câu 24 ["Book of Genesis", [Gen 2, 24], chapter 2, verse 24]. In Kinh Thánh trọn bộ Cựu ước và Tân ước [The Bible completes the Old and New Testaments]. Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh.
- Minh, T. T. g. m. t. p. H. C. (1998b). "Tin mừng theo Thánh Luce-ca", [Lc 2,7]- chương 2, câu 7 ["The Gospel according to St. Luke", [Luke 2:7] - chapter 2, verse 7]. In Kinh Thánh trọn bộ Cựu ước và Tân ước [Complete Bible of the Old and New Testaments]. Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh.
- Minh, T. T. g. m. t. p. H. C. (1998c). "Tin mừng theo thánh Macco", [Mc 10,9], chương 10, câu 9 ["The Gospel according to Saint Macco", [Mc 10:9], chapter 10, verse 9]. In Kinh Thánh trọn bộ Cựu ước và Tân ước [The Bible completes the Old and New Testaments]. Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh.
- Minh, T. T. g. m. t. p. H. C. (1998d). "Tin mừng theo Thánh Mat-thêu", [Mt 19,6], chương 19, câu 6 ["The Gospel according to Saint Matthew", [Mt 19:6], chapter 19, verse 6]. In Kinh Thánh trọn bộ Cựu ước và Tân ước [The Bible completes the Old and New Testaments]. Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh.
- Minh, T. t. m. v. T. g. p. t. p. H. C. (2018, 8/7). Nguồn gốc và ý nghĩa của ngày Valentine [Origin and meaning of Valentine's Day]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <http://ttmucvusaigon.org/van-hoa/lich-su4804194/nguon-goc-va-y-nghia-cua-ngay-valentine/>
- Naly. (2022, 14/10). Đưa cha mẹ vào viện dưỡng lão là đẩy trách nhiệm cho xã hội [Putting parents in a nursing home is pushing responsibility to society]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vnexpress.net/dua-cha-me-vao-vien-duong-lao-la-day-trach-nhiem-cho-xa-hoi-4523438.html>
- Ngọc, L. V. (2012a). Family and family change in Vietnam. Khoa học xã hội.
- Ngọc, L. V. (2012b). Gia đình và biến đổi gia đình ở Việt Nam [Family and family change in Vietnam]. Khoa học xã hội.
- Nguyen Anh Cuong, Thuy, T. T. N., Nhac, Đ. V., & Anh, N. H. (2021). Main Characteristic of Belief and Religious Living in Vietnam. Russian Journal of Vietnamese Studies, 2(1), 58-67. <https://doi.org/10.24411/2618-9453-2021-10006>
- Nguyễn Văn Toàn. (2013, 18/1). "Tết hội nhập"- tại sao không? ["Integration Tet" - why not?]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://vietnamnet.vn/tet-hoi-nhap-tai-sao-khong-105754.html>
- Nhi, B. (2022). Viện dưỡng lão và người già – 2 thái cực văn hóa Đông-Tây [Nursing homes and the elderly - two cultural extremes East and West]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://miraagedcare.com.au/vien-duong-lao-va-nguoi-gia-2-thai-cuc-van-hoa-dong-tay/>
- Phạm Huy Thông. (2012). Ảnh hưởng qua lại giữa đạo Công giáo và văn hoá Việt Nam [Reciprocal influence between Catholicism and Vietnamese culture]. Tôn giáo.
- Phununet, B. (2015, 19-4). Trăn trở chuyện sống chung hay ở riêng? [Concerned about living together or living separately?]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <http://me.phununet.com/WikiPhununet/ChiTietWiki.aspx?m=0&StoreID=13690>
- Quốc, B. C. (1946, 25/11). số 416. Báo Cứu Quốc.
- Quốc hội Việt Nam. (2020). Luật Thanh niên Việt Nam năm 2020 [Vietnamese Youth Law 2020]. Lao Động.
- Service, N. R. B. (2006, 22/8). How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization. Retrieved 17/3/2024 from [https://web.archive.org/web/20060822150152/http://www.nrbookservice.com/products/BookPage.asp?prod\\_cd=c6664](https://web.archive.org/web/20060822150152/http://www.nrbookservice.com/products/BookPage.asp?prod_cd=c6664)
- Thành, P. (2021, 16/11). Xu hướng ra ở riêng của giới trẻ hiện đại [Trend of modern young people living on their own]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://tuoitrethudo.com.vn/xu-huong-ra-o-rieng-cua-gioi-tre-hien-dai-183119.html>
- Thị, K. t. Đ. (2007, 26/10). "Tứ đại đồng đường" có còn là đại phúc? [Is "The Four Great Paths" still a great blessing?]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://dantri.com.vn/tinh-yeu-gioi-tinh/tu-dai-dong-duong-co-con-la-dai-phuc-1193482733.htm>
- Thơ, V. (2020, 29/09). Tại sao có tới 70% vụ ly hôn do phụ nữ đệ đơn? [Why are up to 70% of divorces filed by women?]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://thanhnien.vn/tai-sao-co-toi-70-vu-ly-hon-do-phu-nu-de-don-185998223.htm>
- Thông, P. H. (2004). Chủ tịch Hồ Chí Minh với đồng bào Công giáo [President Ho Chi Minh with fellow Catholics]. Chính trị Quốc gia.
- Thư, N. T. (1997). Ảnh hưởng của các hệ tư tưởng và tôn giáo đối với con người Việt Nam hôm nay [The influence of ideologies and religions on Vietnamese people today]. Chính trị Quốc gia.
- Thưởng, P. T. (2022, 20/1). Văn hóa và văn nghệ trong tiến trình giao lưu, hội nhập quốc tế [Culture and arts in the process of international exchange and integration]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://tuyengiao.vn/van-hoa-xa-hoi/van-hoa/van-hoa-va-van-nghe-trong-tien-trinh-giao-luu-hoi-nhap-quoc-te-137577>

- Trang, C. (2010, 27/12). Sau kết hôn, con cái nên ở riêng [After marriage, children should live separately]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://baotintuc.vn/tin-tuc/sau-ket-hon-con-cai-nen-o-rieng-20101222014520657.htm>
- TTVN. (2013, 11/01). Gộp Tết ta với Tết Tây: Sao không thử một lần trải nghiệm "cái mới"? [Combining our New Year with the Western New Year: Why not try a "new" experience?]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://hanoimoi.vn/gop-tet-ta-voi-tet-tay-sao-khong-thu-mot-lan-trai-nghiem-cai-moi-328060.html>
- Vietmytourist. (2024). Xu hướng đón Tết phương Tây của người Việt [The inclination of Vietnamese individuals to observe Western holidays]. Retrieved 17/3 from <https://vietmytourist.com/cam-nang-du-lich/xu-huong-don-tet-phuong-tay-cua-nguoi-viet.html>
- Vinh, T. Đ. h. T. (2022). Gia đình truyền thống Việt Nam [Traditional Vietnamese family]. Retrieved 18/3/2024 from <https://www.studocu.com/vn/document/truong-dai-hoc-tra-vinh/phuc-hoi-chuc-nang-20/gia-dinh-truyen-thong-viet-nam/24825466>
- Woodside, A. B. (2022). Việt Nam và hình mẫu Trung Hoa [Vietnam and the Chinese model] (N. M. Diên, P. T. T. Huyền, N. T. Lê, & N. T. M. Trung, Trans.). Thế Giới.



## UNIVERSITY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, VNU-HANOI, VIETNAM QUESTIONNAIRES

—\*\*\*\_—

**Dear Students !**

Vietnam is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. Perhaps because of this, the cultural and spiritual life of Vietnamese people is somewhat rich and colorful. In addition to the inherent national cultural identity with bold Eastern characteristics, nowadays the spiritual life of Vietnamese people, especially the younger generation, tends to be increasingly influenced by Western culture, mainly Catholic culture. To clarify this, we conducted a survey with the topic "*The influence of Catholic culture on the cultural and spiritual life of Vietnamese students today*". We look forward to the enthusiastic and honest participation of students when answering survey questions. We commit that all information results will be kept confidential and only for scientific research purposes.

To answer the questions, please check ✓ in the selection box (unless otherwise instructed).

**Question 1:** Are you a Catholic?

1. Yes  
 2. No

**Question 2:** Could you please tell us how much interest you are in New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>), Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>), Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>)? (*Choose only one option*)

1. Very interested  
 2. Interested

- 3. Normal
- 4. Not interested
- 5. Very disinterested

**Question 3** How do you know about New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>), Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>), Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>)? (*Multiple answers can be selected*)

- 1. Self-inquiry, self-research
- 2. Through friends, relatives, colleagues
- 3. Through the mass media
- 4. Other comments (*Please specify*).....

**Question 4:** How do you learn about the meaning and origin of New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>), Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>), Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>)?

- 1. Self-inquiry, self-research
- 2. Through the mass media
- 3. Through classroom lectures
- 4. Through friends, relatives, colleagues
- 5. Through the preaching of the Bishop, the Priest in the Church
- 6. Other comments (*Please specify*).....

**Question 5:** Are you eagerly waiting and having celebratory activities such as organizing meals, resting or going out, traveling on New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>), Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>), Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>)?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

**Question 6:** When you have a lover (even if you don't have one), are you willing to celebrate Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>) by going out with your partner and giving gifts to your loved one?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

**Question 7:** Do activities such as organizing meals, resting or going out, traveling on New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>), Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>), Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>) with relatives and family become important marks/memories in your life?

- 1. Very important
- 2. Important
- 3. Normal
- 4. It doesn't matter
- 5. Very unimportant

**Question 8:** If you are married to a non-Catholic spouse, will you give your wedding ring as an important milestone to your spouse?

- 1. Definitely yes
- 2. Unknown
- 3. Definitely not

**Question 9:** Living independently from your parents after getting married will face many difficulties and challenges, are you willing to accept this challenge?

- 1. Yes
- 3. No

• **Question 10:** What do you want after getting married? (*Choose only one option*)

- 1. Want to live with your parents
- 2. Don't want to live with your parents
- 3. It is up to the family's circumstances to decide
- 4. Other comments (*Please specify*)....

**Question 10.1:** If question 5 is "want to live with your parents", could you please tell us why you want to live with your in-laws (or in-laws) after marriage? (*Multiple responses can be selected sentence*)

- 1. Being close and able to take care of in-laws (or in-laws)
- 2. Subsidized for food, accommodation and living expenses
- 3. Get help caring for your children
- 4. Other comments (*please specify*): .....

**Question 10.2:** If question 5 answers "do not want to live with your parents", could you please tell us why you do not want to live with your in-laws (or in-laws) after marriage? (*Multiple responses can be selected sentence*)

- 1. Repressed, lost freedom
- 2. Being dominated, dependent, interfering with private life
- 3. Want to decide your own life without interference from your parents



4. Other comments (*please specify*): .....

**Question 11:** What motivates you to want to stay alone from your parents? (*Multiple answers can be selected*)

1. Want to be free  
2. Want to grow up: be independent, arrange your own life  
3. Want to be challenged and overcome challenges  
4. Other comments (*please specify*): .....

**Question 12:** As someone who did not convert to Catholicism, would you indicate your willingness to receive influences from Catholic culture? ? (*Choose only one option*)

1. Very ready  
2. Ready  
3. Normal  
4. Not ready  
5. Very unwilling

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

**1. Gender:**     1. Male                             2. Female

**2. Which year are you in?**

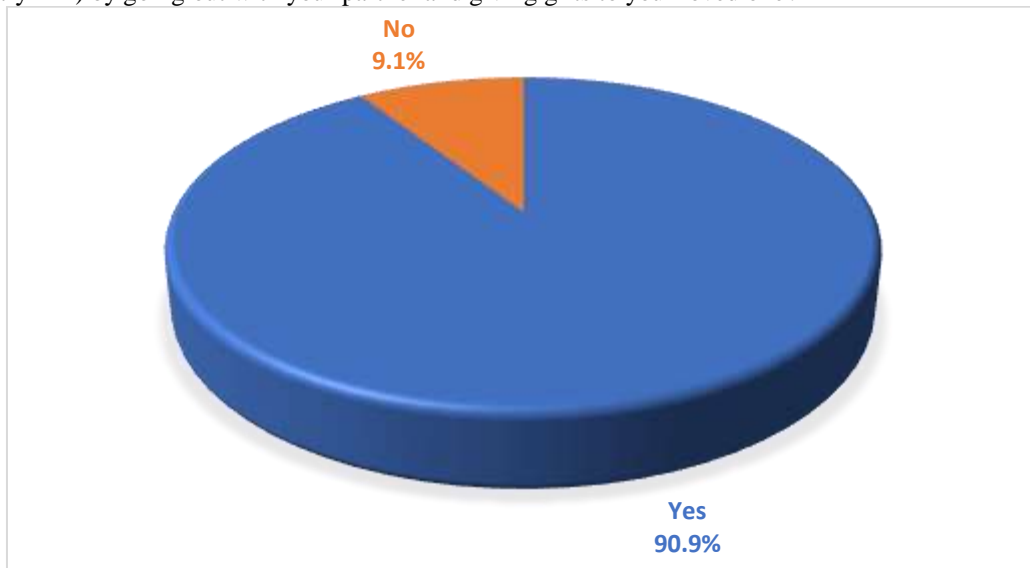
1. First year  
2. Second year  
3. Third year  
4. Fourth year

**3. Which school are you a student of?**

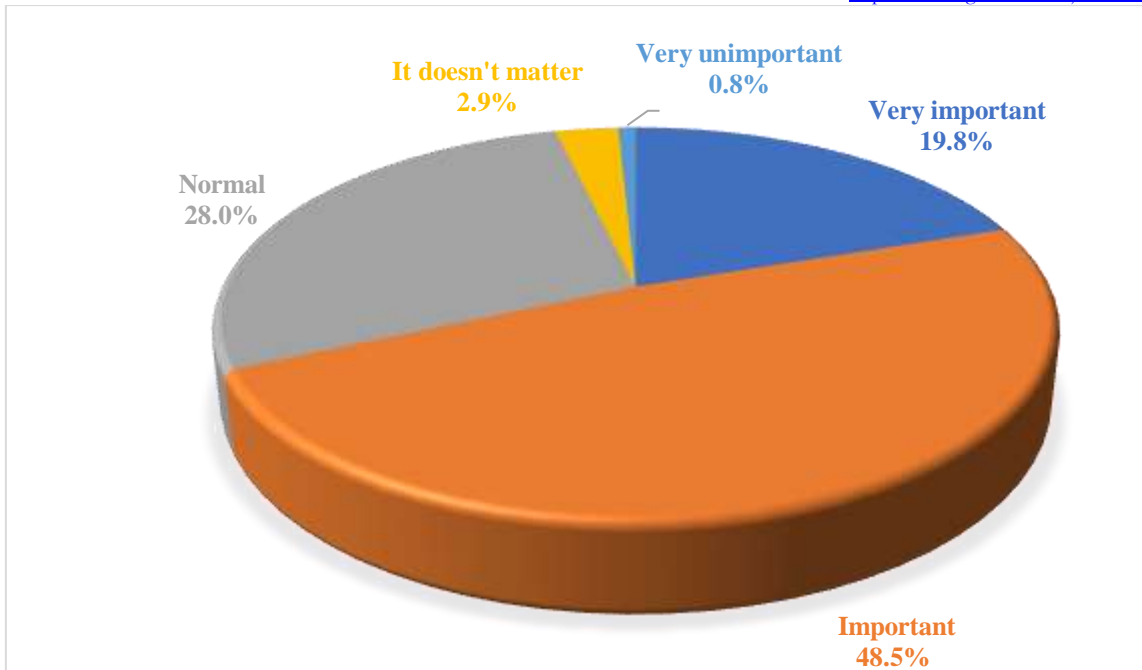
1. Hanoi Law University  
2. University of Foreign Languages - Vietnam National University -Hanoi  
3. Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City  
4. Ho Chi Minh College of Industry and Trade

**Thank you very much for participating in the interview!**

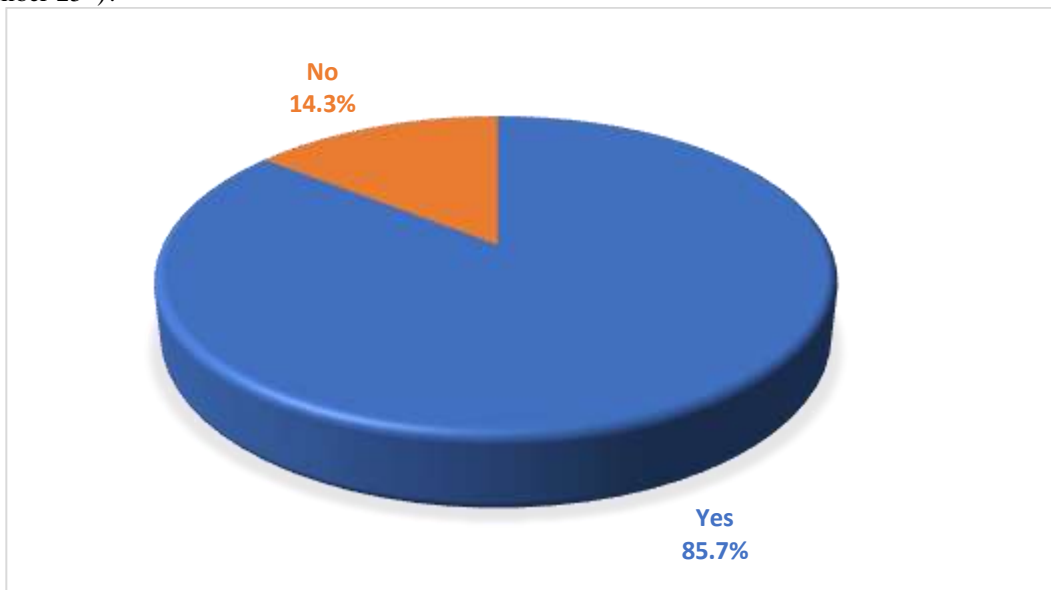
<sup>1</sup> **Question 6:** When you have a lover (even if you don't have one), are you willing to celebrate Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>) by going out with your partner and giving gifts to your loved one?



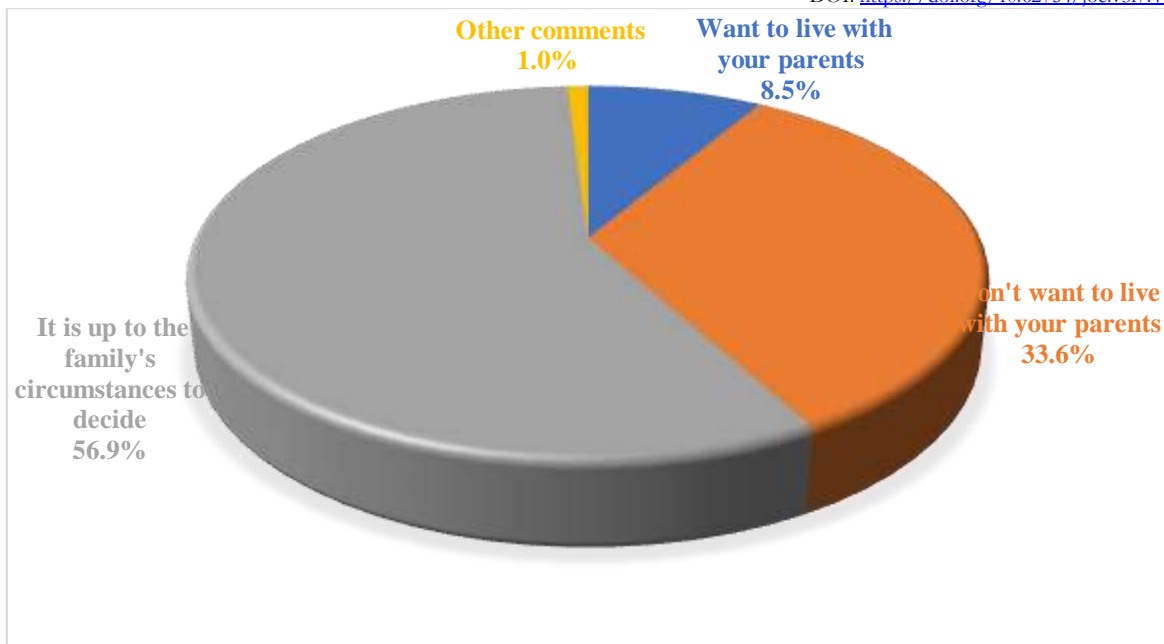
**Question 7:** Do activities such as organizing meals, resting or going out, traveling on New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>), Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>), Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>) with relatives and family become important marks/memories in your life?



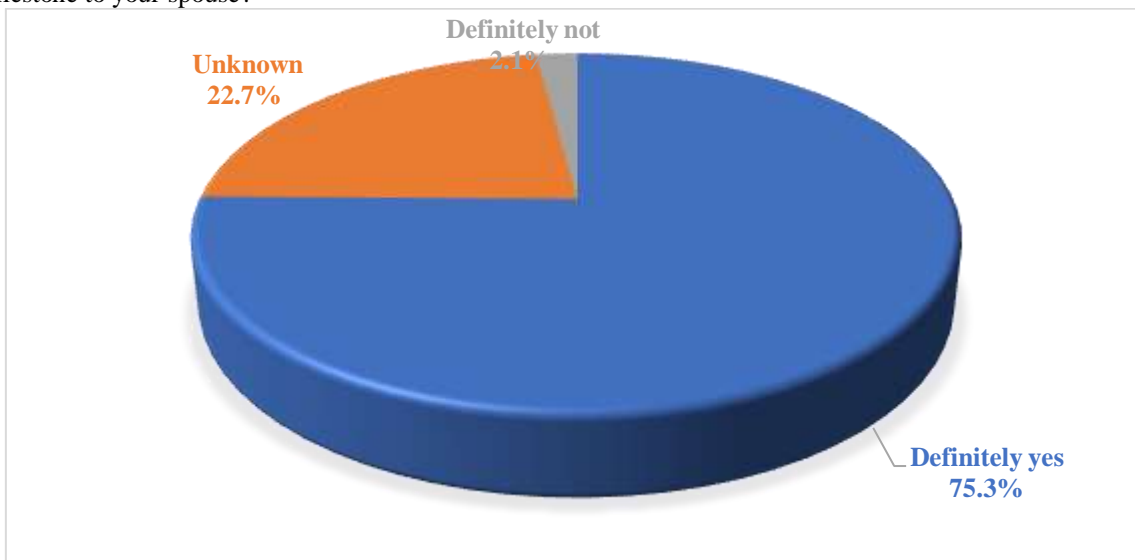
**Question 5:** Are you eagerly waiting and having celebratory activities such as organizing meals, resting or going out, traveling on New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>), Valentine's Day (February 14<sup>th</sup>), Christmas Day (December 25<sup>th</sup>)?



<sup>1</sup> **Question 10:** What do you want after getting married?



<sup>1</sup> **Question 8:** If you are married to a non-Catholic spouse, will you give your wedding ring as an important milestone to your spouse?



<sup>1</sup> **Question 12:** As someone who did not convert to Catholicism, would you indicate your willingness to receive influences from Catholic culture?

