

Building and Educating Vietnamese People Standards for Generation Z

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Abstract

Generation Z (Gen Z) refers to those born between 1995 and 2012, influenced by technology and the Internet since their birth. Being exposed to technology and social networks from an early age, this generation can use technology proficiently and have a sharp and intuitive mindset. Gen Z is generally open-minded and adaptable. They dare to think, dare to do, dare to speak, and respect themselves. They hardly prefer a leisurely and pre-arranged life. They are gradually becoming pioneers of new trends and tendencies in today's society. The characteristics of Gen Z require the creation and education of Vietnamese standards, in which the emphasis will be on inheriting a number of traditional Vietnamese standards such as patriotism and benevolence; pointing out some outdated traditions that are no longer suitable for Gen Z in the new era; analyzing some standards that are considered suitable for the new era such as responsibility, discipline, and creativity. In addition, this article points out a number of requirements for education and propagation of Vietnamese standards such as technology application, combining family, school, and social education for Gen Z in the current context.

Keywords: *Gen Z, standards for Vietnamese people.*

Introduction

Author Ho Si Quy suggests the need to classify standards in different fields such as culture, ethics, law, and economics,... Author Luong Dinh Hai points out 5 characteristics of the new context in building and developing the value system and human standards in Vietnam are the market economy; science and technology; globalization; and the complicated relationship between countries. In addition, the author also shows the socio-economic conditions in Vietnam through 35 years of renovation and the basic standards of Vietnamese people determined through different historical periods. Authors Le Ngoc Van and Le Thi Dan Dung have pointed out the functions of standards, the classification of standards, the relationship between standards and values, definition, structure, and empirical indicators for studying Vietnamese standards. Author Nguyen Chi Dung has given the concept of standards and factors affecting the formation of social norms, and traditional Vietnamese standards (patriotism; industriousness, love of labor; solidarity, high community spirit; loyalty and faithfulness,...), on this basis, he points out the variation of these standards in modern society. Authors Dang Thi Lan and Nguyen Thi Le Thu have pointed out challenges to building Vietnamese standards such as moral degradation, and the decline, or the breakdown of traditional values. On that basis, the authors agree on a number of human standards that Vietnam needs to develop to meet current international integration requirements. Author Ho Ba Tham has pointed out the factors that affect the formation of the human standard system and the building of human standards such as patriotism, solidarity, self-reliance, affection, honesty, responsibility,

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discipline, creativity, personal identity, civilization, thrift, integrity, optimism, progress, health, resilience, studiousness, humbleness, patience, and adaptableness,...

General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong at the National Cultural Conference clearly stated that the orientation of Vietnamese human standards is patriotism, solidarity, self-reliance, love, honesty, responsibility, discipline, creativity, and integration.

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism proposes two options for building a value system and standards for Vietnamese people. Option 1 includes the values of patriotism, responsibility, discipline, creativity, and honesty. Option 2 includes the values of patriotism, responsibility, discipline, creativity, honesty, solidarity, and compassion.

Thus, the construction of a value system and Vietnamese standards has been interesting and discussed by many researchers. However, the research on building Vietnamese standards for Gen Z has not been much researched. Therefore, this paper sets out the purpose of understanding the characteristics of Gen Z and making recommendations to effectively build and educate Vietnamese standards for Gen Z – the future owners of our country.

Research Methods

The author uses the document research method to collect information and research results related to Gen Z such as the concept, division of generations, and characteristics of Gen Z. Research in the materials shows that Gen Z (also known as Post Millennials, the iGeneration, or the Homeland Generation) is the demographic cohort after The Millennials (Generation Y or Gen Y). According to a Pew Research's article by author Michael Dimock, he defined Gen Z as a group of people born after 1996. Like other generations, Gen Y is maturing and Gen Z has begun to carry on these traditions. Gen Z, being the youngest generation, grew up with technology, the internet, and social media, which makes them perceived as tech addicts, antisocial, or "warriors of social justice".

The generations defined

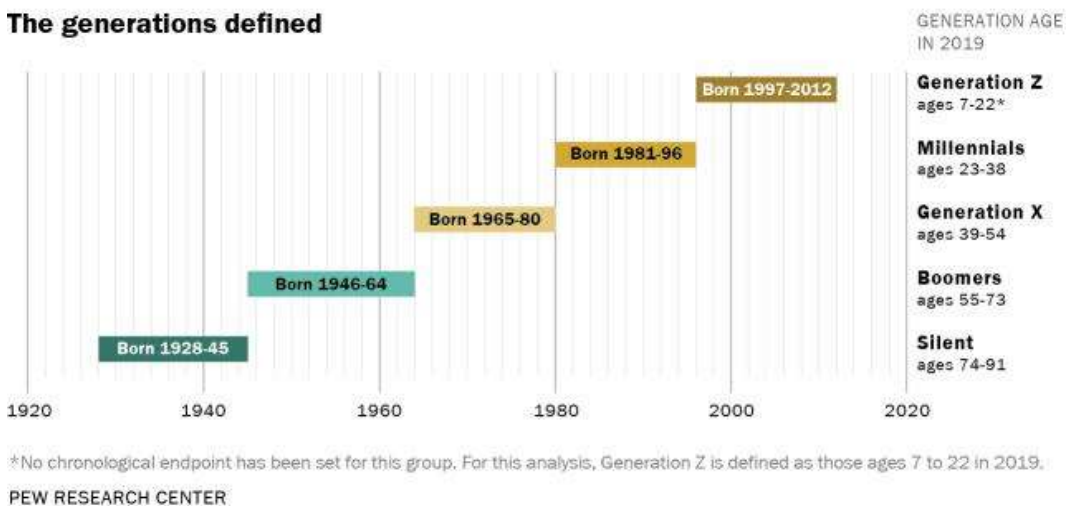


Figure 1.1. Table of generation groups (Source: Pew Research Center)

By the method of document research, analysis, and comparison, the author points out the difference in characteristics of generations. The traditional generation (Silent generation) was born and raised in difficult socio-economic conditions so they tend to be persistent, determined, and ready to do everything to make life better, and they are also affected by patriarchy. Generation X (Gen X) is often independent, and loves freedom but also attaches great importance to responsibility. They know the balance between work and life, and have the ability to adapt. They are the "work hard, play hard" generation and were

born and raised in the 80s when economic life was very difficult so they wanted a stable job. Gen X has seen the world before and after the explosion of social networks but their youth are much less dependent on technology than Gen Y and Gen Z. Although Gen Y (Millennials) was not born in the technology boom, technology is a part of their daily lives. All activities of Gen Y are related to technology, computers, and smartphones. Unlike their parents, the personality traits of Gen Y people are often ambitious and want to achieve their goals intensely.

The characteristics of Gen Z raise requirements for building Vietnamese human standards, so as to ensure the structure of traditional values preserved from the past; current values determined by objective conditions; and guiding values for development in the new period, the period in which Gen Z are citizens of the digital age, has economic thinking and is expected to be the leader in building, developing and changing the world in the future.

Gen Z's life, right from birth, is related to technology, the Internet, and has been exposed to technology and social networks from an early age so this generation can use technology proficiently, and think quickly and intuitively. Gen Z is often open-minded and not afraid to change, dares to think, dare to do, dare to express personal views, and respect themselves. They hardly like the comfortable and pre-arranged life. They are gradually becoming pioneers, leading to new trends and tides in today's society.

The characteristics of Gen Z raise requirements for building Vietnamese people's standards ensuring the structure of traditional values preserved from the past; the current values determined by objective conditions; and guiding values for development in the new period in which the Gen Z people are citizens of the digital age, have an economic mindset and are expected to be the leader in building, developing and changing the world in the future.

On the basis of pointing out the characteristics of generations, the author uses logical and historical methods combined with analytical and synthetic methods to study the characteristics and personality of Vietnamese people through historical periods. Each stage is different due to the influence of different socio-economic conditions, so people also have their own characteristics. In Vietnam, the generations before Gen Z, especially the traditional generation, the Boomer generation, and the X generation, people are often responsible for family and society, patriotic, united, and compassionate. However, many of them are also influenced by the ideology of valuing men above women (male chauvinism), patriarchy, absolutizing the role of the family, and putting the interests of the family above the interests of society. A part is often influenced by local, passive, and dependent ideas overemphasizing community, family, and lineage, not paying much attention to individual's thoughts and feelings, and forcing individuals to submit to the will of others, they often do not dare to express and assert themselves. However, for Gen Z, due to its own characteristics being different from the previous generation, the construction, and education of Vietnamese people's standards for them also have its own requirements.

The author uses the method of analyzing and synthesizing documents to study the views of scientists and researchers on building Vietnamese people's standards. According to many researchers, the Vietnamese people's value system needs to be built with 8 main values that are patriotism, solidarity, self-reliance, affection, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and creativity. The family value system consists of 4 core values: well-being, happiness, progress, and civilization. The cultural value system consists of 4 values, namely, nation, democracy, humanity, and science. The national value system consists of 9 values which are peace, unity, independence, rich people, strong country, democracy, justice, civilization, and happiness.

On the basis of synthesizing research materials, the author introduces the concept of Vietnamese people's standards, according to which, Vietnamese people's standards are

the standards of residents in the entire Vietnamese society, including all social groups, classes of population, and citizens of Vietnamese origin. Those are general conventions about what to do or should do which are basically positive factors, qualities, and requirements in the relationships between people and people, people with nature and the social community, which are agreed upon and approved by the whole community or a small group, formed and transmitted in the process of human and social development.

To study the values and standards of Vietnamese people in the long history from tradition to modernity such as patriotism, compassion, solidarity, responsibility, initiative,...., the author uses the methods of logic and history, analysis, and synthesis.

Besides, the author uses a survey method and case study. Through a survey of 500 Gen Z students from the University of Natural Resources and Environment and the Academy of Journalism and Propaganda, the author investigates the current state of Gen Z's knowledge and views of Vietnamese standards, from which to set out requirements as well as recommendations, and proposals to build and educate Vietnamese people's standards for Gen Z on the basis of both inheriting traditional values, overcoming standards that are no longer relevant, and building Vietnamese standards suitable for the new context.

Research Results

Through a survey of 500 students from 2 universities, up to 95.8% affirmed that patriotism is the top quality that Gen Z needs to follow in the footsteps of their forefathers; 86.2% of Gen Zers agree that it is necessary for them to inherit the traditional norm of solidarity; 65.6% think that kindness is still a good standard to inherit. In addition, other standards such as honesty, creativity, and self-reliance are also necessary for Gen Z today. The chart also shows that collectivism is one of the traditional standards of the previous generation but not many Gen Z people choose it. This partly shows that they also need to have their own standard values, suitable to their characteristics and the times, such as respecting differences, and paying due attention to the individual instead of collective absolutism.

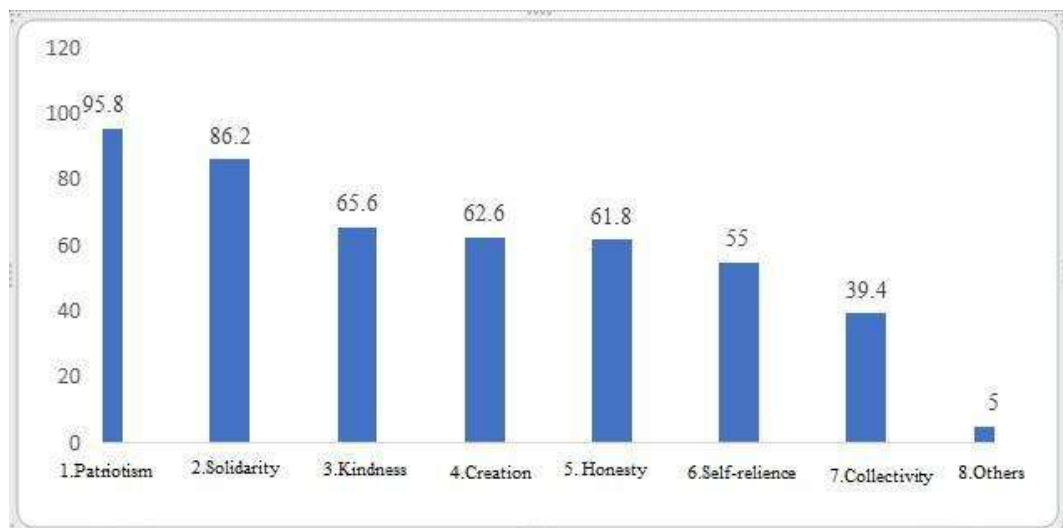


Figure 1.2. Gen Z's traditional values need to be promoted

Through research and survey on ideas and standards that are no longer suitable for Gen Z in the new context, also shows that passive thinking, low self-esteem, and dependence are the characteristics and standards that Gen Z thinks is no longer suitable for them with the rate of 84.8%, 83.8%, and 84%. In addition, local ideology and sentimentalism are also standards chosen by Gen Z that need to be eliminated.

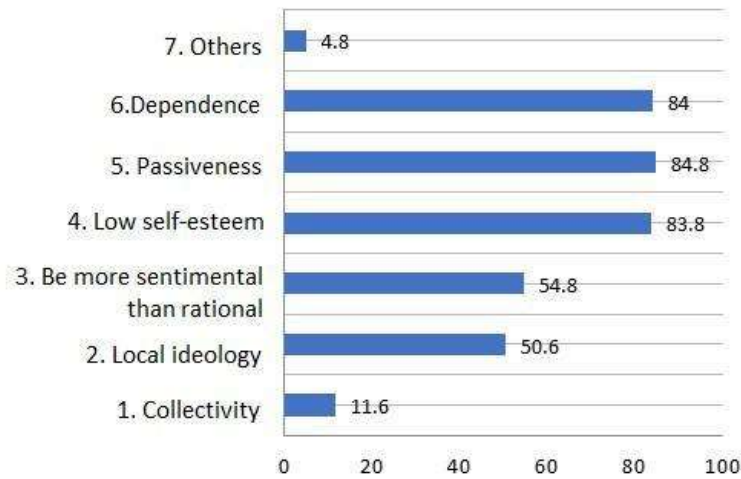


Figure 1.3. Ideas and standards that are no longer suitable for Gen Z (in percentage)

Through a survey of 500 students of Gen Z, the standards selected by them and deemed appropriate to their characteristics in the new context are proactiveness, positivity, eager to learn with 429/500 people selected, accounting for 85.8%; next is the standard of being responsible with 394/500 people choosing, accounting for 78.8%; the third criterion is discipline, progressiveness and respect for cultural diversity which are selected by 371 - 373/500 people.

Standards	Quantity (person)	Ratio (%)
1. Discipline	373	74.6
2. Self-reliance	352	70.4
3. Responsibility	394	78.8
4. Freedom	192	38.4
5. Positivity, eager to learn	429	85.8
6. Progressiveness, respect for cultural diversity	371	74.2
7. Others	12	2.4

Figure 1.4. New standards for Gen Z

When asked, through whom and in what environment you are often educated about Vietnamese people’s standards, most Gen Z answered through family, teachers, friends, social networks, school, practical experiences, and national television channels. When asked, what are the barriers that make the current Gen Z not interested in Vietnamese people’s standards? With this question, it can be summarized into groups of causes such as “due to the tradition itself, there are antiquated, arid and theoretical; due to poor communication, the way of conveying ideas is still too traditional, lacking in attractiveness, not stimulating and attracting Gen Z’s curiosity and studiousness; because activities for young people are too stereotyped, forced, and heavily formal; as Gen Z faces the pressures of personal success, competition, and shaping themselves in an increasingly complex society. This can make them more focused on personal success and less concerned with family values and ethics.

These research results are an important basis for the author to make some recommendations to build and educate Vietnamese people’s standards for Gen Z.

Some recommendations for building and educating Vietnamese human standards for Gen Z

Firstly, building Vietnamese human standards for Gen Z must be based on traditional values

The national traditional values are meaningful and play a very important role in the formation and development of Vietnamese standards because traditional values are the crystallization of all the best things through the flow of national history to create its own identities which are preserved and passed down through generations and built up with new values over time.

Everyone, especially Gen Z, must understand, preserve, inherit, and develop the nation's traditional values because it is considered a bridge between the past and the present. The author Vu Khieu concluded that "tradition is an essential condition of the process of maintaining and developing social life; with tradition, social people can absorb the achievements of their previous generations, shorten the time, and do not have to start over from the beginning. People born in society cannot choose their own way of doing business. People have to go into the orbit of history with the means of production, social relations, ways of living, treating, thinking, acting,... that have been available and passed down from previous generations" .

New context, with the construction of a market economy and the development of science and technology,... requires inheriting traditional values in general, and at the same time developing them to a new height in accordance with current socio-historical conditions. Gen Z with its own characteristics of the era still requires inheriting the traditional standards of the Vietnamese nation such as patriotism, solidarity, and honesty.

The first is patriotism – the leading standard of Gen Z

Patriotism is a traditional value throughout the history of the Vietnamese nation. Patriotism starts from love for the beauty and the pride of the homeland multiplied into love for the people and the country. If patriotism in the past was a struggle for independence, a death decision for saving the Fatherland, then now, patriotism is associated with the will to self-reliance and to creatively build the country out of poverty so that the people can be prosperous, and the country is rich and strong. Patriotism is an immanent strength combined with the external strength of knowledge, technology, and international cooperation which are indispensable factors in the process of national development and integration. For the Vietnamese people, patriotism is a deep and passionate awareness of the right to master their country, knowing how to care, to be sad and joyful, worry and anger and to take responsibility for the country's problems, willing to commit to creating material and spiritual values for the country. For Gen Z with the characteristic of being enterprising and they are the future owners of the country, it is impossible not to give counter-arguments to society in order to find the most suitable decisions for the development of the country. This is also a very good expression of patriotism at a high level. Patriotism helps people become more mature, and live more responsibly towards themselves, their families, society, and the country.

The second is the standard of solidarity.

Solidarity is one of the traditional values of the Vietnamese nation. It is the spirit of national solidarity that has created the strength to help Vietnam overcome many challenges even in the most difficult circumstances. President Ho Chi Minh always upholds the strength of great national unity. He said, "Now there is one very important point, which is like a mother because if this point is done well, good children will be born. That is solidarity" , "Rivers may dry up, mountains may erode but our solidarity never diminishes" . The 13th National Party Congress continued to affirm that "Promoting the strength of the great unity of the whole nation;... Harmoniously settling the beneficial relations between social strata. Ensuring that all ethnic groups enjoy

equality, solidarity, respect, and help each other develop... Strictly punishing all plots and acts of dividing and undermining the great national unity bloc, and hindering the development of the country” .

Gen Z was born and raised in the context of modern society. They have to face global challenges such as epidemics, environment, climate change, energy transition,... and to build and develop the country requires not only national unity but also international solidarity.

The third is benevolence. This is a typical, basic, and proud value of the Vietnamese nation. We can hardly talk about patriotism and love for the people without starting with compassion and love for people. All the virtues and moral lives of people are penetrated by this root and foundation. In daily life, Vietnamese people always attach great importance to the word affection. Every Vietnamese is familiar with the saying “Living for love and affection, no one lives for the full plate of sticky rice (benefit)”. In the family, that affection is the love of parents, children, brothers and sisters, and husband and wife. Vietnamese people have some folk songs and proverbs for this case, for example, “a father’s goodness is higher than the mountain, a mother’s goodness is deeper than the sea”; “brothers as if limbs”,... Broader is the love of neighborliness such as “hàng xóm láng giềng tất lửa tôi đèn có nhau” (Neighbors are ready to help each other in difficult times), “the leaves protect tattered ones”. More widely is the love between people in the homeland: “Nhiều điều phủ lấy giá gương, người trong một nước thì thương nhau cùng” (People within the same country should be loving each other); “Oh gourd, love the pumpkin, though of different species, you share the same trellis”. More than that, it’s people’s love for their fellow human beings regardless of skin color or ethnicity: Love other people as love yourself (or Do unto others as you would have them done unto you).

In the current context, especially when the negative side of the market economy has more or less led to the gap between the rich and the poor in society, the spirit of solidarity, affection for people, and “the leaves protect tattered ones” need to be inherited, promoted and replicated in communities as well as from individuals in society. Gen Z, with its dynamic and creative characteristics, participates in many social activities and has witnessed many challenges of life for modern people, the kindness and love to help people are clearly expressed through activities and social organizations to call for organizations and individuals to take part in volunteer activities for people, the environment, and society.

Secondly, building Vietnamese human standards must limit and eliminate outdated ideas and personality traits that are no longer suitable for Gen Z in the new era.

The standards of the Vietnamese people were formed and developed in association with the small production of a backward agricultural country. In the process of building a market economy and implementing industrialization, there are ideologies and personality traits that reveal limitations and hinder progressive perception.

Through the survey, we found that the standards and ideology that Gen Z considers no longer suitable for them in the new context are valuing emotions over reason such as “One hundred reasons is not equal to a little love”, limited vision, low self-esteem, passiveness, dependence, three obediences, male chauvinism, a closed lifestyle of “going back to hometown to take a bath in the pond, whether the water is clear or opaque, hometown’s pond is still better”, lack of discipline, and personal imposition: “Where do parents put me sitting. These are concepts and ethical standards that are no longer suitable for Gen Z in the new conditions requiring dynamism, positivity, and creativity. The ethical standards formed in the feudal society, in the subsidy mechanism need to be removed and replaced with new moral values suitable for Gen Z in the socio-economic conditions of Vietnam in the integration period.

Thirdly, building a new standard for Vietnamese people must match the characteristics of Gen Z in the new context.

In terms of research and survey, it is possible to mention the standards that Vietnamese people need to build and educate in accordance with Gen Z as well as meet the requirements of the new era, that is, positivity, proactiveness, studiousness, progressiveness, responsibility, and discipline.

First, promoting the proactiveness, positivity, and progressiveness of Gen Z

In the new context, the economy, society, science and technology are constantly changing. Gen Z who was born and raised in this context needs to be proactive, progressive, and eager to learn to research and explore in order to make decisions and actions to adapt. If being dependent and passive, they will fall behind and be outdated with the times.

In the process of self-development and self-improvement, each person not only focuses on professional development but also has to practice the necessary skills, therefore, being proactive, eager to learn, having a sense of exploring, thinking differently than usual, being dynamic, always updating new information, and respecting the difference are extremely necessary for Gen Z to adapt to changes in all circumstances.

Second, responsibility is the necessary standard of the Gen Z

The process of industrialization and modernization not only requires individual dynamism and affirms the individual's freedom but also improves the individual's sense of responsibility for work, collectivity, community, and society. In the production of goods, each new stage of production contributes to the creation of a complete product. Therefore, each individual worker must have a sense of responsibility for each stage of production to decide the quality of the final product.

Responsibility helps individuals not to make excuses for their own mistakes, or to blame others. Instead of being passive and procrastinating, they will actively embark on work in groups or collectivities with the search for optimal solutions that benefit the collective and the community. The sense of responsibility also helps individuals to have principles, a planned work schedule, and achieve goals in the assigned work. It helps individuals connect with colleagues to successfully complete the assigned work despite difficulties and challenges. Having a high sense of responsibility also means that the individual accepts to comply with strict rules and pressures to complete the work. This is a new standard in the market economy that employers are looking for in employees.

Third, building and educating discipline for Gen Z

Gen Z was born and grew up in a modern society where science and technology are increasingly developing, businesses apply new technological processes and use modern machinery and equipment, then labor discipline must be a top priority. Labor is organized in a line, labor activities with high automation and specialization require employees to strictly comply with regulations on labor discipline. Otherwise, it will affect the efficiency of production and business activities, at the same time, easily lead to unsafe incidents in production, causing occupational accidents.

Self-discipline is the most challenging process for an individual. It helps the individual to conquer himself. Self-discipline helps individuals to always work with a plan and also to have backup plans for problems that arise. Therefore, discipline helps individuals to work with a plan proactively, to adhere to the set plan, and to avoid being passive at work when there is no plan. Labor discipline is built from self-discipline. Labor discipline is the basis for scientific and effective labor organization within the employer. Labor discipline trains workers, forcing them to follow certain orders and principles, giving them an industrial style and a civilized lifestyle.

The current context of international integration requires that Gen Z when participating in the international labor market, living and working environment must strictly abide by the principles and discipline of the international environment and the market if they do not want to be fired.

Fourthly, enhancing the application of technology in propagating and educating Vietnamese people's standards for Gen Z

In Vietnam, Gen Z accounts for about 1/7 of the total population, equivalent to more than 14.4 million people. Because of growing up in the information technology age, the indispensable things in the life of Gen Z young people are said to be mobile phones (45%) and the internet (21%). As social media becomes an essential part of their lives, they use these tools for different purposes such as connecting with friends and family (93%) and updating with what is happening around them (73%). Notably, they also use social media channels to express their opinions and beliefs (55%) and report daily activities (42%).

Gen Z is the generation that was born with technology and through a survey of 500 students with the question of which technology applications you often use to follow the news, the technology applications that Gen Z chooses or uses are Zalo, Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, Tiktok, and some reputable online newspaper sites. Therefore, the propagation and education of Vietnamese people's standards for Gen Z need to thoroughly apply technology applications to promote efficiency.

Fifthly, the interest and education of family - school - society in building and educating Vietnamese people's standards for Gen Z

Family, school, and society play an important role in the formation and education of human standards. They are the subjects who evoke, transmit, educate, foster, develop, and promote the value system and human standards. However, in reality, different social subjects have not really brought into play this mission role. In the past, this work was mainly due to family education but today it is often faint while Gen Z's time is mainly in school and society where the school is not ready and actively to educate the value system and Vietnamese people's standards or if there is, it is little or not really effective. Currently, forms of educational methods can be very diverse but social institutions such as families, schools and society still play a leading role. Each individual starts from the family and is educated by the family. The individual culture starts from the family culture and bears the imprint of the family. Family is a person's first social environment from childhood. It is a rich and diverse social institution in terms of generation, gender, occupation, education level, personality, and personal psychology,... It is also where parents step by step lead their children to integrate into society. Family education leads children to adapt to social life and it determines people's attitudes, emotions, and morals.

Gen Z today was born and raised in a digital and social world. Exposure to uncensored online content and media influence sometimes causes an imbalance between traditional and modern values.

So, what policies and activities are needed to educate Vietnamese human standards in accordance with Gen Z? Through the survey, students had many ideas such as "building content about ethical standards in a modern, creative and accessible way to young people, responding to the challenges and values of the modern world, and bringing standard content into subjects; creating a learning environment that encourages Gen Z to think independently, critically and to explore; innovating the way of teaching to catch up with the trends of Gen Z so that they can empathize and thereby create motivation for Gen Z to follow; organizing contests to learn about traditions, enabling Gen Z to develop creativity and discovery through extracurricular activities such as clubs, seminars, and research projects; encouraging Gen Z to participate in international activities, cultural exchanges,

and student exchanges; and communicating through many methods suitable for young people such as MV”.

It can be seen that in the modern social environment and in education under the influence of technology 4.0, Gen Z and the education of Vietnamese people’s standards for them from the school and society are still extremely necessary but require innovation in forms and methods of education and communication.

Conclusion

Currently, building and promoting cultural values and human strength are particularly focused on Vietnam besides economic development. In the process of formation and development, over thousands of years of history, up to now, the Vietnamese nation has created a system of many different value systems such as a national value system, cultural value system, social value system, family value system, ethical value system, and political value system,... In those value systems, the human value system is always the central value system which is expressed as the core value system and contains many contents of other value systems. It can be said that for humans in general, there still need social standards for conception and orientation of behavior adjustment. However, specific subjects also require concrete standards. Gen Z has its own characteristics from being born and growing up in a new context of a strong boom in science and technology, the development of the market economy, and globalization so in the process of building and educating the Vietnamese value system and standards for Gen Z, it needs to have the peculiar requirements besides inheriting some traditional standards of the previous generation.

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