

Báo cáo về hành vi đạo văn của ông Phùng Xuân Nhạ

thực hiện bởi Nguyễn Tiến Dũng và các cộng sự

Ngày 27 tháng 2 năm 2018

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1. GIỚI THIỆU

Đây là báo cáo về hành vi đạo văn của ông Phùng Xuân Nhạ. Cụ thể là, hiện tại chúng tôi đã phát hiện có ít nhất ba bài báo sau đây của ông Phùng Xuân Nhạ có hiện tượng đạo văn rõ ràng.

1) (PXN-VNU2004) Phung Xuan Nha, Foreign direct investment in Vietnam: the case of American firms, VNU Journal of Science, Economics-La, T. 22, No. 2, 2004, 16–26.

2) (PXN-LQ-VNU2013) Phùng Xuân Nhạ & Lê Quân, Leadership in Times of Recession: An Empirical Research of Private Enterprise Leadership in Vietnam, VNU Journal of Economics and Business Vol. 29, No. 2 (2013) 75-85.

3) (PXN-LQ-ASS2014) Phung Xuan Nha & Le Quan, Response of Vietnamese Private Enterprises' Leader under Global Financial Crisis: From Theoretical to Empirical Approach, Asian Social Science; Vol. 10, No. 9, 2014, pp26–39.

Các hành vi đạo văn (plagiarism) là các hành vi bị giới khoa học quốc tế đồng lòng lên án. Đối với các chính trị gia trên thế giới, nếu bị phát hiện vi phạm đạo văn thì thường phải từ chức vì mất hết uy tín. Một ví dụ điển hình là ông Schmitt Pál vào năm 2011 đã phải từ chức Tổng thống Hungary sau khi bị cáo buộc đạo văn.

Nói một cách nôm na, đạo văn là sự thiếu thành thật hoặc cố ý gian lận trong tác phẩm/công trình, nhận vợ cái của người khác thành của mình hoặc nhận vợ cái đã có từ trước thành cái mới làm ra. Theo <http://www.plagiarism.org/article/what-is-plagiarism> (trang web về đạo văn), thì những hành động sau đây được thế giới tính là đạo văn:

- Ăn trộm ý tưởng, từ ngữ của người khác làm thành của mình (to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own)
- Dùng mà không trích dẫn (to use (another's production) without crediting the source)
- Ăn trộm văn (to commit literary theft)

- Đem dùng lại một sản phẩm trí tuệ đã công bố từ trước mà giả vờ là nó là mới (to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source).

(Trong trường hợp mà cái có từ trước đó là của chính tác giả, thì gọi là *tự đạo văn*, một trường hợp đặc biệt của đạo văn, nhưng cũng bị lên án).

Có những tình huống cụ thể mà có người này bảo là đạo văn, người khác lại bảo là không đạo văn, do mỗi người hiểu một cách khác nhau về đạo văn. Đặc biệt là những lỗi thuộc loại nhẹ, như là trích dẫn một đoạn nào đó mà không làm thể hiện rõ đó là trích dẫn (như là mở ngoặc đóng ngoặc để người đọc biết rõ đó là trích dẫn), tuy có ghi nguồn sau đó. Theo <http://www.plagiarism.org/> thì trích dẫn kiểu như vậy cũng bị coi là đạo văn. Tuy nhiên, trong báo cáo này, chúng tôi sẽ coi đó là những lỗi kỹ thuật do thiếu chuyên nghiệp, và bỏ qua các lỗi đó, chỉ xét đến các hiện tượng đạo văn rõ ràng hơn, đó là:

- Chép lại nguyên si những đoạn văn của người khác mà không hề trích dẫn nguồn (đạo văn người khác).
- Sử dụng lại các đoạn văn và các kết quả cũ của chính mình và giả vờ đó là mới (tự đạo văn).

Như vậy, những đoạn nào mà ông Phùng Xuân Nhạ sao chép gần như y si từ các nguồn khác nhưng có ghi nguồn cạnh đó, thì ở đây chúng tôi không tính là đạo văn (cho dù mức độ sao chép cao). Còn những đoạn nào mà chúng tôi liệt kê dưới đây là đạo văn là những đoạn lấy từ nguồn khác mà không có ghi nguồn trong bài.

2. HÀNH VI ĐẠO VĂN TRONG BÀI (PXN-VNU2004)

Bài báo (PXN-VNU2004) bằng tiếng Anh dài 11 trang. Chúng tôi phát hiện nhiều đoạn trong đó, tính tổng cộng khoảng 1 trang báo, là được chép gần như nguyên si từ một tài liệu sau đây của Nhật Bản năm 2001, và tài liệu nguồn này không hề được ông Phùng Xuân Nhạ nhắc tới trong bài báo (PXN-VNU2004):

Study on the economic development policy in the transition toward a market-oriented economy in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (Phase 3) : final report ; Vol. 3. -Fiscal and monetary policy.

http://open_jicareport.jica.go.jp/340/340/340_123_11679065.html

Xem các trang 348-349 của tài liệu đó, ứng với văn bản PDF sau: http://open_jicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/11679065_07.pdf

Để làm chứng cứ, chúng tôi chụp lại đây bài hai trang bài báo (PXN-VNU2004) với những đoạn đạo văn được bôi màu vàng.

of goods produced for export, volume of labor etc.); interests are accounted as investment costs... Despite these changes, the revised law failed to get rid of such limitations as: investment forms not being diversified, the absence of the stipulation of the compensation of the Vietnamese Government in case it causes damages to the capital and assets of foreign investors, too strict control on bank account of foreign invested companies, unsuitable project duration... Hence, the National Assembly of Vietnam had to revise the Law on foreign investment for the second time in December 1992. The amendments and supplements cover the following matters: definition of Vietnamese side consisting of one or more businesses of different economic sectors, establishment of export processing zones (EPZ) and business activities in EPZ, the revised law 1992 is more concrete and focusing in some definitions. Particularly, it also provides regulations on new types of attracting and enrolling investment capital. Since 1992, along the course of revising and enacting laws and other documents regarding foreign investment in Vietnam, regulations on the repatriation of investment capital or profits tend to be increasingly strict and complicated. As a result worries have been raised among investors since 1995-1996, and the number of projects approved went down considerably at the end of 1996.

In order to solve the above problems and make the law more attractive, in November 1996, the National Assembly of

Vietnam adopted the new law on foreign investment by basically amending and supplementing the law on foreign investment 1987 and its two revisions in 1990 and 1992. In addition, the National Assembly has also revised and adopted many important laws such as commercial law, company law, law on private companies, etc.

Key amendments made under this revision include the followings: investment privileges are linked with development orientations of the economy, foreign investors are allowed to contribute capital in Dong (Vietnamese currency) which has foreign currency origin, Build-Operation-Transfer (BOT) form is diversified with BTO and Build-Transfer (BT); more autonomy given to foreign enterprises; investment encouragement areas are enlarged (hospital, training...); licensing process is shortened and simplified; state management on foreign investment is more decentralized and concrete regulations on the areas and fields where foreign investment is encouraged; areas and fields where foreign investment is restricted; new regulations on the reduction and exemption of profit tax, for example, profit tax can be exempted for at most 4-8 years; exemption of import duties on machinery and transport vehicles specified for investment projects; reduction and exemption of rents on land, water and sea area used in investment projects under the form of BOT, BTO, BT; investment projects in mountainous, remote and hard-up areas; regulations on

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 diversification of investment forms; legalization of industrial zones; limiting the use of consensus voting in making decisions through the Board of Management; reducing the time for evaluating and licensing to 60 days...

Together with these changes, a raft of decrees and regulations has been announced to provide specific guidance on the implementation of the law.

Recently, under the pressure of a sharp drop in FDI in Vietnam and of an increasing competition from improvements of investment environments in regional countries, the foreign investment law has been revised for the fourth time in June, 2000. The latest revision has included two new articles and revised 20 articles in the light of developing and expanding the stipulation of the prevailing investment law. The revision mainly deals with three issue areas. Firstly, it includes the regulations which help to minimize difficulties, troubles and operation risks of foreign invested companies. The revisions are on such issues as foreign currency balance, opening of bank account in foreign countries, use of land as collateral for bank loans, land clearance, without recourse principle, guarantee by the government and application of foreign laws. In this revision, the law has been revised in a way that enlarges the autonomy of foreign invested capital. The direct intervention of the government on day-to-day operations of enterprises is removed, setting up a legal framework for both domestic and foreign enterprises to be

suitable with international practice. Changes are also made on consensus principle, a transform between investment forms, suspending operation and closing of foreign invested enterprises and expansion of business cooperation contact, allocation of various funds and reserves, minimization of investment procedures. Third, the revision also deals with three issues regarding import tax exemption, remittance of profit abroad and loss transfer. However, there have not been any further guiding circulars since then. Thus, investors are still not much interested in investing in Vietnam. The traditional worry is that the law is fair, open and clear, while sub-laws try to limit incentives and make it difficult to implement the law.

In brief, the legal framework for foreign investment in Vietnam is characterized with the following distinguishing features: temporary favor, inconsistency, fast variable regulation, discrimination (between foreign firms and local companies), non-transparency, local enforcement, inconsistency with international laws and practices. The constraints have eclipsed investment incentives and discouraged foreign investment capital flowing into Vietnam.

2. Overseas - based strategies of American firms

Firms have been able to sustain rapid sales growth, reduce product costs and improve quality by entering new markets and setting up operations on abroad. The firms have to choose the most effective

Cụ thể là, 04 đoạn đạo văn trong bài (PXN-VNU2004) với độ dài tổng cộng khoảng một trang báo so sánh với tài liệu gốc (LVD-JICA2001) như sau:

1a) Đoạn văn trên (PXN-VNU2004):

Hence, the National Assembly of Vietnam had to revise the Law on foreign investment for the second time in December 1992. The amendments and supplements cover the following matters: definition of Vietnamese side consisting of one or more businesses of different economic sectors, establishment of export processing zones (EPZ) and business activities in EPZ, the revised law 1992 is more concrete and focusing in some definitions. Particularly, it also provides regulations on new types of attracting and contributing investment capital. Since 1992, along the course of revising and completing laws and other documents regarding foreign investment in Vietnam, regulations on the repatriation of investment capital or profits tends to be increasingly strict and complicated. As a result, worries have been raised among investors since 1995-1996, and the number of projects approved went down considerably at the end of 1996. **Cột trái, trang 3**

1b) Đoạn văn trên (LVD-JICA2001):

The National Assembly of Vietnam revised the Law on Foreign Investment for the second time in December 1992. The amendments and supplements cover the following matters: definition of Vietnamese side consisting of 1 or more businesses of different economic sectors, establishment of export processing zones (EPZ) and business activities in EPZ, regulations on BOT contracts. In comparison with the first revision, the revised law 1992 is more concrete and focusing in some definitions. Particularly, it also provides regulations on new types of attracting and contributing investment capital. Since 1992, along the course of revising and completing laws and other documents regarding foreign investment in Vietnam, regulations on the repatriation of investment capital or profits tends to be increasingly strict and complicated. As a result, worries have been raised among investors since 1995-1996, and the number of projects approved went down considerably at the end of 1996. **Đoạn cuối trang 348 và đoạn đầu trang 349**

2a) Đoạn văn trên (PXN-VNU2004):

... November 1996, the National Assembly of Vietnam adopted the new law on foreign investment by basically amending and supplementing the law on foreign investment 1987 and its two revisions in 1990 and 1992. In addition, the National Assembly has also revised and adopted many important laws such as commercial law, company law, law on private companies, etc. **Đoạn cuối cột trái và đoạn đầu cột phải trang 3**

2b) Đoạn văn trên (LVD-JICA2001):

... November 1996, the National Assembly adopted the new Law on Foreign Investment by basically amending and supplementing the Law on Foreign Investment 1987 and its two revisions in 1990 and 1992. In addition, the National Assembly has also revised and adopted many important laws such as Commercial Law, Company Law, Law on Private Companies... **Đoạn 1, mục 4, trang 349**

3a) Đoạn văn trên (PXN-VNU2004):

... concrete regulations on the areas and fields where foreign investment is encouraged; areas and fields where foreign investment is restricted; new regulations on the reduction and exemption of profit tax, for example, profit tax can be exempted for at most 4-8 years; exemption of import duties on machinery and transport vehicles specified for investment projects; reduction and exemption of rents on land, water and sea area used in investment projects under the form of BOT, BTO, BT; investment projects in mountainous, remote and hard-up areas; regulations on diversification of investment forms; legalization of industrial zones; limiting the use of consensus voting in making decisions through the Board of Management; reducing the time for evaluating and licensing to 60 days... **Cuối cột phải trang 3 và đầu cột trái trang 4**

3b) Đoạn văn trên (LVD-JICA2001):

New contents of the 1996 Law include: concrete regulations on the areas and fields where foreign investment is encouraged; areas and fields where foreign investment is restricted; new regulations on the reduction and exemption of profit tax, for example, profit tax can be exempted for at most 4-8 years; exemption of import duties on machinery and transport vehicles specified for investment projects; reduction and exemption of rents on land, water and sea area used in investment projects under the form of BOT, BTO, BT; investment projects in mountainous, remote and hard-up areas; regulations on diversification of investment forms; legalization of industrial zones; regulations on the use of Vietnamese currency by the foreign parties; limiting the use of consensus voting in making decisions through the Board of Management; reducing the time for evaluating and licensing to 60 days... **Đoạn 2, mục 4, trang 349**

4a) Đoạn văn trên (PXN-VNU2004):

However, there have not been any further guiding circulars since then. Thus, investors are still not much interested in investing in Vietnam. Their traditional worry is that law is fairly open and clear, while sub-laws try to limit incentives and make it difficult to implement the law. **Cuối đoạn đầu, cột phải, trang 4**

4b) Đoạn văn trên (LVD-JICA2001):

However, there have not been any further guiding Circulars since then. Thus, investors are still not much interested in investing in Vietnam. Their traditional worry is that Law is fairly open and clear, while sub-laws try to limit incentives and make it difficult to implement the Law. **Mục 5, trang 349**

3. HÀNH VI TỰ ĐẠO VĂN

Như chúng tôi đã viết trong báo cáo sơ bộ ngày 18/02/2018 về sự giả khoa học của ông Phùng Xuân Nhạ, bài báo (PXN-LQ-ASS2014) là tự đạo văn từ bài báo (PXN-LQ-VNU2013). Phần mềm tra cứu *turnitin* cho thấy 48% của bài báo (PXN-LQ-VNU2013) được sao chép y nguyên (đúng từng chữ) sang bài báo (PXN-LQ-ASS2014). Nếu kể cả các đoạn văn đã được thay đổi câu chữ và thứ tự sắp xếp nhưng vẫn với các ý như cũ thì tỷ lệ giống nhau giữa hai bài có thể đạt đến gần 100%, tùy theo cách tính. Sau đây là một hình ảnh ví dụ minh họa:

According to many authors, SMEs have less control over their external environment when compared with larger firms (Smallbone, D., North, D. and Kalantaridis, C., 1999) and SMEs perceive recessions as “an externally controlled condition over which they have no control”. To be able to overcome a crisis, SMEs must have a strategy. A literature review shows that SMEs’ strategies could be divided in two main groups: One strategy is cost-cutting to survive the recession and focus on growth to retain capacity when the recession is over. A cost-cutting approach is evident in the construction and manufacturing sectors and includes downsizing the workforce, reducing products, reducing stock, and freezing pay. The other strategy is a growth approach which means offering new or improved products, competing on price, and acquiring other firms that have been weakened by the recession (Stone, 1975). Regarding the growth strategy, a study of SMEs’ responses to the 2008-2009 recession showed that product diversification, including the introduction of new goods/services and attraction of new customers, was one of the most effective way to help SMEs respond to recession (Kitching, J., Smallbone, D. Xheneti, M., Kasperova, E., 2011).

3. Seizing opportunity from crisis

Economic history teaches that after every recession there is a recovery and there is always opportunity in crisis. The word “crisis” in Chinese is composed of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity⁽⁴⁾.

Question: How to seize opportunity from crisis?

⁽⁴⁾ John F. Kennedy quote.

The economist Drucker always sees crisis as providing great opportunities. According to him, doing nothing (or not enough) in a time of crisis may sink companies. Indeed, he states that there are no risks, only opportunities (Drucker, 1973) and in order to transform the risk into an opportunity the first step is to decide what to divest, meaning to make a clear decision on what to withdraw and on what to concentrate.

One of the most important things to help to seize opportunity from crisis is confidence in economic conditions and expectations about the future. These are considered as two key drivers for SMEs to continue to invest in and grow their business (Chow, M.J., and Dunkelberg, W.C). Our research shows that during a recession, business owners are considerably more optimistic than employees (Storey, 2011) and there is always the potential for entrepreneurial spirits to pursue opportunities counter-cyclically by creating their own confidence and bootstrapping resources (Rae, D., Price, L., Bosworth, G. and Parkinson, P, 2012).

4. Developing leaders in times of recession

Leadership is different to management. Management is often known as a maintenance activity, concerned with technical implementation of policies and procedures while leadership often links with shaping others’ goals, broader values and sense of purpose, especially in relation to change and mobilizing staff effort by engaging, inspiring and supporting individual and team performance (Cuban, 1988). Leadership can be conceptualized as a collective phenomenon where different individuals contribute to the

Hình ảnh này là trang 77 của bài (PXN-LQ-VNU2013) được máy tính đánh dấu tất cả những khúc chép nguyên si sang bài (PXN-LQ-ASS2014) (gần như là cả trang).

Chúng tôi xin lưu ý một thông tin sau liên quan hai bài báo nói trên:

Sau khi có nghi vấn về hiện tượng tự đạo văn liên quan tới hai bài này, một Giáo sư của Đại Học Quốc Gia Hà Nội (mà Hội đồng Chức danh Giáo sư Nhà nước biết là ai, vì có gửi email chung đến cho nhiều nha khoa học trong đó có những người thuộc Hội đồng) có viết thư tới tạp chí ASS (Asian Social Science) yêu cầu làm rõ hiện tượng tự đạo văn này, và sau đó có nhận được thư trả lời chính thức thứ hai từ ASS như sau (Thư thứ nhất nói là họ sẽ liên lạc với cá tác giả để giải quyết. Xin phép vị GS ở ĐHQGHN cho chúng tôi đăng lại bức thư thứ hai này; đây không phải thông tin mật hay riêng tư gì vì nó đã được công bố lên một diễn đàn khoa học):

Dear Dr. ***

Thank you for reporting this case of duplicate papers.

The editorial board has concluded that the paper "Response of Vietnamese Private Enterprises' Leader under Global Financial Crisis: From Theoretical to Empirical Approach" in Asian Social Science, Vol. 10, No. 9, 2014 contains duplication with the paper in the VNU Journal of Economics and Business.

The VNU Journal of Economics and Business is the local journal and we did not find the similiary when received the submission.

The author has retracted the paper in the VNU Journal of Economics and Business and revised the paper at

<http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ass/article/view/36570>

Please find the author's reply as following.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any question.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Jenny Zhang

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Bức thư trên cho thông tin là trong tháng 02/2018 ông Phùng Xuân Nhạ đã rút bài báo năm 2013 đi nhưng vẫn giữ bài năm 2014 ở trên ASS và có sửa bài năm 2014. Điều này đặt ra thêm mấy nghi vấn:

a) Tại sao lại có thể rút một bài đã đăng chính thức từ cách đây 5 năm để thế ?! Bài đó biến mất trên server bài báo của ĐHQGHN, nhưng nó vẫn còn được lưu trữ nhiều nơi khác, không thể xóa dấu vết.

b) Việc nộp bài thứ hai trên ASS năm 2014 là trái ethics khi nội dung đã được đăng, tại sao không rút bài từ ASS, mà lại là *sửa bài*? Một tạp chí khoa học nghiêm túc nói chung sẽ không cho phép sửa chữa bài đã đăng, mà chỉ cho phép gửi đến bản thông báo các lỗi trong bài, hoặc là tuyên bố hủy bài khi bài có những sai phạm nghiêm trọng, nhưng vết tích và nội dung của bài cũ thì vẫn luôn còn.

c) Các hành động trên có phải là nhằm lấp liếm che giấu đi sự tự đạo văn không?

4. HÀNH VI ĐẠO VĂN TRONG BÀI PXN-LQ-ASS2014

Bài báo (PXN-LQ-ASS2014) (bản đăng chính thức năm 2014, mà chúng tôi có lưu trữ để làm chứng cứ và kiểm tra đạo văn, chứ bản mới nhất trên trang web của ASS có thể đã bị tác giả sửa đi để che lấp các chứng cứ), ngoài chuyện tự đạo văn từ bài (PXN-LQ-VNU2013), còn có những biểu hiện đạo văn của người khác rõ ràng.

Trường hợp cụ thể tiêu biểu nhất là trang 29 của bài báo đó, được chụp lại ở đây, cùng với những chỗ do máy tính đánh dấu là tương tự như các tài liệu khác (mỗi màu ứng với một tài liệu gốc khác nhau).

Tất nhiên, không phải chỗ nào tương tự cũng là đạo văn: có những chỗ ngán tương tự là do trùng hợp ngẫu nhiên, và những chỗ dài tương tự do trích dẫn. Nhưng đáng chú ý nhất ở đây là những chỗ tô màu nâu đỏ đánh số 1. Toàn bộ hai khúc sau trong trang 29 của bài (PXN-LQ-ASS2014) là chép nguyên si từ một bài báo năm 2009 của các tác giả nước ngoài http://www.asiaentrepreneurshipjournal.com/2009/December_2009.pdf, và không có nhắc đến bài báo đó khi sao chép:

The empirical evidence in support of Hofer's (1980) framework is somewhat mixed. Irrespective of the depth of the economic recession, some scholars have found costcutting strategies to dominate the strategic response of entrepreneurs (Beaver 2007; Beaver and Ross 1999; Churchill and Lewis 1984); others have found revenuegenerating strategies to be the preferred response (for example, Latham 2009); and, others still have found combination effort strategies to be a marker of high performing firms (for example, Kambil 2008).

Lovelock (1997), on the other hand noted two strategies emerging from a psychological perspective, rather than being defined by action: (i) reactive strategies- common reaction is panicky cost-cutting, and price promotions to recover lost sales; (ii) proactive strategies - basing on the philosophy that the best time to prepare for a recession is during a time of prosperity, or at least in the period before the business becomes a loss-making venture, these strategies are revenue-generating, and designed to, firstly, imbue resilience in potential adversity, and secondly, to take advantage of emerging opportunities when recession arrives (Shama, 1993). The empirical evidence linking proactive strategies to improved performance across the economic cycle is substantial (see, for example, Lester et al., 2008; Pearce & Michael., 2006; Srinivasan et al., 2005).

nothing (or not enough) in a time of crisis may sink companies. Indeed, he states that there are no risks, only opportunities (Drucker, 1973) and in order to transform the risk into an opportunity the first step is to decide what to divest, meaning to make a clear decision on what to withdraw and on what to concentrate.

One of the most important things to help to seize opportunity from crisis is confidence in economic conditions and expectations about the future. These are considered as two key drivers for SMEs to continue to invest in and grow their business (Chow & Dunkelberg, 2011). The research shows that during a recession, business owners are considerably more optimistic than employees (Storey, 2011) and there is always the potential for entrepreneurial spirits to pursue opportunities counter-cyclically by creating their own confidence and bootstrapping resources (Rae et al., 2012).

However, recession could have negative psychological impacts on leaders and thus lead to inadequate actions. Egan & Tosanguan (2009) indicated that entrepreneurs may 'overreact' in times of economic uncertainty because of the psychological stress of the uncertainty itself.

2.4 Coping Strategies in Recession

According to many authors, SMEs have less control over their external environment when compared with larger firms (Smallbone et al., 1999) and SMEs perceive recessions as "an externally controlled condition over which they have no control" (Stone, 1975). To be able to overcome a crisis, SMEs must have a strategy.

SMEs' strategies could be divided in two main groups: One strategy is cost-cutting to survive the recession and focus on growth to retain capacity when the recession is over. A cost-cutting approach is evident in the construction and manufacturing sectors and includes downsizing the workforce, reducing products, cutting stock, and freezing pay (Liz Price et al., 2013). The other strategy is a growth approach which means offering new or improved products, competing on price, and acquiring other firms that have been weakened by the recession (Stone, 1975; Judd & Lees, 1981). Regarding the growth strategy, a study of SMEs' responses to the 2008-2009 recession showed that product diversification, including the introduction of new goods/services and attraction of new customers, was one of the most effective way to help SMEs respond to recession (Kitching et al., 2011).

A framework provided by Hofer (1980) suggests four possible actions to cope with economic duress: (i) cost-cutting strategies (Note 11); (ii) combination effort strategies (Note 12); (iii) revenue-generating strategies (Note 13); (iv) asset reduction strategies (Note 14). The empirical evidence in support of Hofer's (1980) framework is somewhat mixed. Irrespective of the depth of the economic recession, some scholars have found cost-cutting strategies to dominate the strategic response of entrepreneurs (Beaver, 2007; Beaver & Ross, 1999; Churchill & Lewis, 1984); others have found revenue-generating strategies to be the preferred response (for example, Latham, 2009); and others still have found combination effort strategies to be a marker of high performing firms (for example, Kamath, 2008).

Lovelock (1997), on the other hand noted two strategies emerging from a psychological perspective, rather than being defined by action: (i) reactive strategies - common reaction is panicky cost-cutting, and price promotions to recover lost sales; (ii) proactive strategies - basing on the philosophy that the best time to prepare for a recession is during a time of prosperity, or at least in the period before the business becomes a loss-making venture, these strategies are revenue-generating, and designed to, firstly, imbue resilience in potential adversity, and secondly, to take advantage of emerging opportunities when recession strikes (Shama, 1993). The empirical evidence linking proactive strategies to improved performance across the economic cycle is substantial (see, for example, Lester et al., 2008; Pearce & Michael, 2006; Srinivasan et al., 2005).

2.5 Research Gap

The above researches have pointed out the importance of the leader and the leadership in an organization, particularly in times of recession, as well as the possible strategy options for leaders to choose from and competencies needed to be further developed in tough times. The findings in those researches, therefore, are of significance as to which strategies and psychological approach that business leaders should adopt to overcome the adverse situation. Those findings could be good suggestions for all leaders including the Vietnamese ones, although practical application could vary in form for different situations.

Since there has not been any research investigating the response of Vietnamese private enterprise leaders in times of recession, this study aims to provide an insight into response and performance of Vietnamese business leaders in the recession 2008 -2009 and thus, make a suggestion for the leaders about the leadership competencies needed in Vietnam under recession's impacts.

This study was to answer the following questions: