

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES
FOR THE KHMER PEOPLE
IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION
ACCORDING TO HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY**

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INTRODUCTION

1. REGARDING THE URGENCY OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC

Ho Chi Minh's Thought is a comprehensive and profound system of views on the basic issues of the Vietnamese revolution, in which the ideology of implementing national policy is a consistent content in his theoretical thinking and revolutionary practical activities.

Throughout his revolutionary career, Ho Chi Minh always emphasized achieving great national unity, including unity among ethnic groups, to bring independence, freedom, and happiness to the people. He consistently focused on creating conditions to ensure equality, unity, and mutual development among ethnic groups. Ho Chi Minh stated: "Our country is a unified nation comprising many ethnic groups. All ethnic groups living in Vietnam are equal in rights and duties." He frequently reminded the Party and State to pay utmost attention to developing and effectively implementing ethnic policies to ensure the people's material and spiritual well-being, promote national unity, and strengthen the relationship between the Party and the people, creating an invincible source of strength and a solid foundation for the country.

Guided by Ho Chi Minh's ideology, the Party and State have always placed special emphasis on implementing policies for ethnic minority communities, considering this a strategic policy, has profound theoretical and practical significance. This is because ethnic minority communities often reside in areas of strategic importance for national defense and security, and are frequently targeted by reactionary forces for manipulation and incitement to carry out peaceful evolution and subversive plots. On the basis of researching Ho Chi Minh's ideology along with considering the situation and characteristics of ethnic communities in the territory of Vietnam, the Party and State have issued and implemented a series of guidelines and policies towards Vietnam, with ethnic minorities, making an important contribution to the stability and development of ethnic groups.

Currently, ethnic issues are among the most serious concerns in the socio-political factors of many countries worldwide. In Vietnam, implementing ethnic policies is a top priority for the Party and State in the process of building and safeguarding the socialist Vietnamese homeland. In 1991, The Platform for National Construction during the Transition to Socialism identifies one of the fundamental characteristics of society as: "Ethnic groups within the country are equal, united, and mutually supportive in their progress". In recent years, alongside comprehensive reforms, the Party and State have

implemented specific policies to continuously improve the material and spiritual lives of ethnic minority communities and strengthen national unity.

The Southwestern region (also known as the Mekong Delta) currently comprises 13 provinces and cities, accounting for over 18% of the country's population and 21% of its land area. It is a cultural melting pot of various ethnic groups (including Kinh, Khmer, Hoa, Cham, etc.), with the Khmer community being a relatively large ethnic group of nearly 1.3 million people. The Khmer people in the Southwest live interspersed with the Kinh and Hoa ethnicities, mainly distributed in localities such as Soc Trang, Tra Vinh, Kien Giang, An Giang, Ca Mau, Vinh Long, Bac Lieu, Hau Giang, Long An, and Can Tho City. In recent years, the implementation of ethnic policies in general, and policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest in particular, has brought about positive changes in many aspects: The living standards of the people have gradually improved, economic restructuring and new rural development have achieved significant results, traditional cultural values have been preserved and promoted, and the people have become increasingly aware of their rights as citizens. Khmer people always believe in the leadership of the Party Committee and local authorities, well comply with the Party's guidelines, policies and laws of the State, contributing to maintaining political security and order social self-safety. Besides the results achieved, the implementation of policies for the Khmer people of the Southwest still has certain limitations such as: ineffective application of scientific and technological achievements in production, poor structure The economy is moving slowly, the material and spiritual life of a part of the Khmer people is not high; The level of political enlightenment is low, so some people pay little attention to the political situation of the locality and country; The issue of improving the intellectual level of Khmer people has not seen clear changes; Complex social problems, outdated customs and traditions, and superstitions still exist in many places...These limitations have created loopholes for hostile forces to take advantage of to sabotage the Party and State.

Through different periods, the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest has played a crucial role in creating a strong national unity bloc and strengthening the close relationship between the Party, government, and the people. In the new revolutionary period, in the face of extremely complicated developments in the world situation, the cause of industrialization and modernization of the country requires strengthening and promoting the strength of the great national unity bloc, including the Khmer people of the Southwest region. Therefore, the effective implementation of ethnic policies towards the Khmer people in the Southwest according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology will create stability and promote great strength to

comprehensively promote the reform process, bringing "wealth and happiness" to the People, improving the quality of life for the people both materially and spiritually, promoting democracy, strengthening the great solidarity bloc; with the motto of not leaving anyone behind, helping people integrate sustainably with development trends; adapt to the general complex situation of ethnic and religious issues, climate change, natural disasters, epidemics and a number of other difficulties and challenges and to effectively prevent and combat plots and tricks of hostile forces taking advantage of ethnic and religious issues to sabotage our country's revolution.

Therefore, in the coming time, to create favorable and stable conditions for the Khmer people in particular and the ethnic minorities in the Southwest region to build and develop the country, the Khmer people in the Southwest need to be supported. With deeper concern, the Party and State issued many more appropriate and practical policies, and effectively implemented national policies towards the Khmer people of the Southwest according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology. To contribute to clarifying and addressing these issues, the author has chosen "Implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology" as the topic for this doctoral dissertation in Ho Chi Minh Studies.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND TASKS

2.1. Research objectives

On the basis of clarifying Ho Chi Minh's ideology on implementing ethnic policies, the thesis focuses on research and application to assess the current situation and propose solutions to effectively implement ethnic policies for Khmer people in Southwest region.

2.2. Research tasks

To achieve the stated objective, the thesis will undertake the following tasks:

First, reviewing the existing research related to the thesis topic to identify areas that have been studied, highlight gaps and unexplored issues, and build upon previous work.

Second, analyzing and clarifying key concepts relevant to the thesis topic to support the research and development of the thesis.

Third, clarifying the fundamental aspects and value of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on implementing ethnic policies.

Fourth, assessing the current state of ethnic policy implementation for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region from 2018 to the present, identifying issues from the perspective of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts.

Fifth, forecasting factors that may influence the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region, based on Ho Chi Minh's thoughts.

Sixth, proposing directions and solutions to enhance the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region, orienting with Ho Chi Minh's thoughts, for the coming period.

3. RESEARCH SCOPE AND SUBJECT

3.1. Research subject

The implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region, based on Ho Chi Minh's thoughts.

3.2. Research scope

Focus on clarifying the core elements of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on implementing ethnic policies and their application to current ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region.

Geographical scope: The study will examine the implementation of ethnic policies among the Khmer people in the Southwestern region, concentrating on six provinces and one city: Soc Trang, Tra Vinh, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau, An Giang, Kien Giang, and Can Tho City.

Time scope: The research will cover the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region from 2018 to the present. This period was chosen as it marks the beginning of the implementation of Directive No. 19-CT/TW, issued on January 10, 2018, by the Party Central Committee's Secretariat on "strengthening work in Khmer ethnic minority areas in the new situation."

4. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND RESEARCH METHODS

4.1. Theoretical foundation

The thesis is grounded in the theories of Marxism-Leninism, the Party's guidelines and viewpoints, and state policies and laws concerning ethnic policies and their implementation.

4.2. Research methods

Based on the methodology of Marxism - Leninism, the author applies the following general methods, interdisciplinary and specialized methods: Logic - history; analysis, synthesis; statistics, comparison, literature, sociological investigation, and so on.

Methods of analyzing and synthesizing information from sources such as plans and reports on implementing policies of the Party and State towards Khmer people of provinces and cities in the Southwest region; Works published in journals, theses and dissertations related to the topic. Using the sociological survey method, the author uses a set of opinion polls including 12 criteria focusing on two subjects: officials, party

members and people. The author conducted a survey in 7 provinces and cities where many Khmer people live (Soc Trang, Tra Vinh, Bac Lieu, Ca Mau, An Giang, Kien Giang, Can Tho City).

5. NEW SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THESIS

The thesis will provide a clearer understanding of the core elements of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on implementing ethnic policies.

It will contribute to identifying achievements, limitations, and causes, while also highlighting current issues in implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region based on Ho Chi Minh's thoughts.

The thesis will propose directions and solutions for effectively implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region based on Ho Chi Minh's thoughts.

6. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THESIS

6.1. Theoretical significance

The thesis will contribute to clarifying the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region from the perspective of Ho Chi Minh studies. It will also serve as a basis for defending the Party's ideological foundation and refuting misguided views of hostile forces.

The thesis will provide a theoretical foundation for party committees and local authorities in the Southwestern provinces and cities to develop programs and plans related to implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people. This will contribute to achieving unity in perception and action during the implementation process in the current period.

6.2. Practical Significance

The thesis can be used as a reference for research, study, and teaching in colleges, universities, political schools, and political centers in the Southwestern provinces. It will serve as a reference material for research on policies and their implementation for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region.

The thesis will also be a valuable resource for officials, party members, and organizations to innovate and effectively implement Party and State policies for ethnic minorities in general and the Khmer people in the Southwestern region in particular.

7. THESIS STRUCTURE

The thesis is structured as follows: introduction; main content consisting of 4 chapters and 11 sections; conclusion; list of published research works by the author related to the thesis; references; and appendices.

Chapter 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.1.1. Research on Ho Chi Minh's ideology and application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology to national policy and implementation of national policy

In recent years, numerous research works by organizations and scholars have focused on ethnic policies and their implementation in Vietnam and the Southwestern region. Notable contributors include the Institute for Ethnic Policy Research and Mountainous Areas, Phan Van Hung, Pham Minh The, Lam Ba Nam, Vu Thanh Son, Nguyen Dang Thanh, Nguyen Quynh Hoa, Do Xuan Tuat, Pham Dinh Thuc, Hau A Lenh, Truong Minh Duc, Le Quoc Ly, and Huynh Thanh Quang, among others. These works generally demonstrate thorough and serious research, offering comprehensive insights tied to Vietnam's practical conditions and the Southwestern region across various periods. They align with the Party and State's guidelines and policies on ethnic issues and implementation for the Khmer community. These studies affirm the role of such policies in promoting economic, cultural, and social development, ensuring national defense and security, while fostering progress and social equity among the Khmer people.

1.1.2. Research on ethnic policies and implementation of ethnic policies in Vietnam

In recent times, especially in recent years, there have been many research works by organizations and scientists on ethnic policies and implementation of ethnic policies in Vietnam such as the Institute for Ethnic Policy Research. And mountainous areas, Phan Van Hung, Pham Minh The, Lam Ba Nam, Vu Thanh Son, Nguyen Dang Thanh, Nguyen Quynh Hoa, Do Xuan Tuat, Pham Dinh Thuc, Hau A Lenh, Truong Minh Duc, and so on. In general, these works have been meticulously and seriously researched by organizations and authors, clearly demonstrating generality, linked to practical conditions in Vietnam, through stages associated with policies, Party and State policies on ethnic policies and implementation of ethnic policies towards ethnic minorities; affirming its role in promoting economic, cultural and social development, ensuring national defense and security associated with progress and social justice.

1.1.3. Research on Khmer people and policies and implementation of policies towards Khmer people

Research on the economic, cultural and social life of the Khmer people, as well as the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region in recent times, has included many works by authors such as: Le Quoc Ly, Nguyen Thanh Thuy, Nguyen Quoc Dung, Le Tang, Tran Thanh Nam, Huynh Thanh Quang, Huynh Van Long, Dang Tri Thu, and so on. In general, these works have been scientifically researched by the authors, clearly demonstrating their generality and connection to the practical life of the Khmer people in the Southwestern region in association with the guidelines and policies of the Party and State on ethnic policy and implementation of ethnic policy towards Khmer people.

However, to date, there has been no specialized study directly and comprehensively addressing "The Implementation of Ethnic Policies for the Khmer People in the Southwestern Region Today According to Ho Chi Minh's Thoughts" in a systematic manner.

1.2. OBSERVATIONS ON RELATED RESEARCH OUTCOMES AND ISSUES FOR FURTHER STUDY IN THE THESIS

1.2.1. Related research outcomes

The studies have begun to explain Ho Chi Minh's views on education and human resource development in ethnic regions, outlining the basic content and principles of his thoughts on ethnic policies. Key points that emerge include:

Ethnic policies should aim to achieve equality and mutual assistance among ethnic groups to progress together towards socialism.

Unity among ethnic groups is central to patriotism, reflecting Ho Chi Minh's humanitarian thought and the foundation of the Party and State's ethnic policies.

Ethnic policies must consider the unique characteristics of each ethnic group and should stimulate and promote their potential for advancement.

Ethnic policies should begin with cadre work, focusing on selecting, training, nurturing, developing, and caring for the cadre force.

Additionally, the studies emphasize the need to thoroughly grasp Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on great national unity, the relationship between ethnicity and religion, unity among ethnic minorities, building a strong ethnic minority cadre force, respecting and listening to ethnic minorities, and promoting their sense of ownership. They also stress the importance of caring for the lives of ethnic minorities and ensuring fairness and equality among ethnic groups in minority areas.

In general, these studies have clarified some views on "ethnicity" and "ethnic policies," explaining the scientific content of ethnic issues and the Party and State's

ethnic policies. They outline new directions for ethnic policies, identifying their crucial role and specifying the goals, principles, and basic content of ethnic policies focusing on economic, cultural, social, educational development, political ideology enhancement, national defense and security maintenance, and ensuring ethnic equality and unity.

The research highlights the importance of implementing ethnic policies, viewing this as a crucial aspect of the Party and State's leadership and management in promoting all-round social development, contributing to the goal of a prosperous, strong, democratic, equitable, and civilized nation.

A common thread in these studies is that effective implementation of ethnic policies will strengthen national unity, raise educational levels, promote democracy in ethnic minority areas, improve material and spiritual life for ethnic minorities, ensure security and order, and successfully achieve political goals and tasks.

The studies also affirm that implementing ethnic policies is the responsibility of Party committees, authorities, the Fatherland Front, and social organizations at all levels, as well as individual officials and Party members. Consequently, they focus on clarifying the current state of ethnic policy implementation and some practical experiences in various localities. This leads to the requirement for continuous innovation in content and methods to enhance the effectiveness of ethnic policies in the new situation.

The research has evaluated the results achieved in implementing Party and State policies in the Khmer-populated areas of the Southwestern region, covering aspects such as living conditions, education and training, healthcare, religion, and the political system at various levels. Notably, the studies also explore the difficulties and limitations in economic, political, cultural, social, defense, and security realms, as well as the reasons for the challenging living conditions of the Khmer people in the Southwestern region. Some studies have assessed the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region before 2007 from the perspectives of Party history and scientific socialism. These studies evaluate the current situation and propose tasks and solutions to effectively implement ethnic policies in the new context.

The research reveals that, to date, no work has systematically presented the basic content of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on implementing ethnic policies. In particular, no study has focused on implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region according to Ho Chi Minh's thoughts. This is the purpose and task that the author will undertake in this thesis.

1.2.2. Issues for Further Study in the Thesis

From the literature review, it is evident that existing works have focused on various aspects related to the topic, such as concepts of "policy" and "ethnic policy," the importance and content of ethnic policies, and some basic solutions for implementing ethnic policies in the new situation. However, to date, no published research has directly studied and systematically presented the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region according to Ho Chi Minh's thoughts. Therefore, there are several issues that the thesis needs to address:

First, Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on implementing ethnic policies: concepts, content, and value. This forms an important theoretical basis for the evaluation in the subsequent chapter.

Second, achievements, limitations, and causes; issues arising in the process of implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region from the perspective of Ho Chi Minh's thoughts.

Third, factors influencing the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region today.

Fourth, directions and solutions for implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region according to Ho Chi Minh's thoughts.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL ISSUES ON IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES ACCORDING TO HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHTS

2.1. KEY RELATED CONCEPTS

2.1.1. Concept of Ethnicity

Within the scope of this research, the concept of ethnicity is used to refer to "ethnic groups." In this sense, ethnicity refers to a community with basic characteristics such as language, culture, and a shared awareness of a sustainable community throughout historical development. For example, the Thai, Tay, Si La, Ba Na, Cham, and Khmer ethnic groups, etc. Under this interpretation, the population structure of a country may include various ethnic groups, among which some ethnicities are in the majority while others are minorities.

2.1.2. Concept of Ethnic Policies

Ethnic policy is a system of policies that represent an overall set of policies and measures to resolve ethnic issues as well as relationships between ethnic groups in all areas of social life, with the aim of realizing Expressing equal economic, political,

cultural and social rights among ethnic groups, showing deep concern for ethnic minorities with low levels of socio-economic development.

2.1.3. Concept of Ho Chi Minh's ideology on implementing national policies

Ho Chi Minh's ideology on implementing ethnic policies is a system of comprehensive and profound views on the role of implementing ethnic policies; on the content of implementing ethnic policies in all areas of social life, ensuring the principles of solidarity, equality and mutual assistance between ethnic groups, with appropriate implementation methods to change thinking and perception knowledge, lifestyle, production method of people of all ethnic groups, aiming to improve people's lives, raise people's knowledge, promote democracy, preserve and promote national cultural identity, maintain political stability, and ensure social order and safety society, contributing to the building and development of the country.

2.1.4. Concept of implementing ethnic policy according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology

Implementing national policies according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology is the process of implementing specific guidelines and policies of the Party and State into social life, in all fields of economics, politics, and culture. – society and national defense and security, ensuring the principles of solidarity, equality and mutual assistance between peoples, associated with implementation methods through focusing on propaganda, advocacy and promoting the role of ethnic minority officials and their sense of autonomy, self-reliance, self-reliance and self-improvement of ethnic minorities in order to contribute to realizing the Party's views, policies and guidelines on national issues in accordance with the orientations in Ho Chi Minh's viewpoint system.

2.2. HO CHI MINH THOUGHT ON IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL POLICY

Ho Chi Minh's thought on the implementation of ethnic policies is reflected in the following viewpoints:

2.2.1. The role of ethnic policy implementation

2.2.1.1. Implementing Ethnic Policies as the Basis for Achieving Ethnic Equality

President Ho Chi Minh affirmed that “Our ethnic policy is aimed at achieving equality and mutual support among ethnic groups to advance toward socialism together”.

2.2.1.2. Implementing Ethnic Policies to Develop the Economy and Improve the Lives of Ethnic Minorities

According to Ho Chi Minh, the implementation of ethnic policies must always ensure the comprehensive development of the material and spiritual lives of ethnic

minorities. This creates a driving force for the comprehensive development of ethnic regions, with the most important task being the development of the economy and socio-cultural life, continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of ethnic communities.

2.2.1.3. Implementing Ethnic Policies to Contribute to the Strategy of National Unity

Ho Chi Minh emphasized: “Unity is an ethnic policy, not a political tactic. We unite to fight for the unification and independence of our country; we also unite to build the nation. Those who have talent, virtue, ability, and a desire to serve the country and people, we unite with them”.

2.2.1.4. Implementing Ethnic Policies to Maintain Political Stability and Ensure National Defense and Security

Ho Chi Minh affirmed: “The mountainous regions are very important for national defense. Therefore, we must focus on strengthening defense, maintaining law and order, and being proactive in quickly eliminating saboteurs and crushing the schemes of reactionary forces”. Therefore, effective implementation of ethnic policies, stabilizing people’s lives, and uniting ethnic groups are crucial foundations for ensuring national defense, security, political stability, and social order.

2.2.1.5. Implementing Ethnic Policies Reflects the Humanitarian and Revolutionary Nature of the New Socialist System

Ho Chi Minh stated: “The ethnic policy of our Party and State is that all ethnic groups are equal and must unite tightly, love, and help each other like brothers”. This shows that, compared to the policies of colonialists in the previous regime, the ethnic policy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is qualitatively different, free from oppression, exploitation, poverty, and injustice. Implementing ethnic policies is for the people, ensuring the comprehensive development of individuals, and is deeply humane and humanitarian.

2.2.2. Content of Implementing Ethnic Policies

- First, economic development and improving the lives of ethnic communities.
- Second, promoting the self-governance of ethnic communities.
- Third, developing socio-cultural aspects.
- Fourth, strengthening and ensuring national defense and security.

2.2.3. Principles of Implementing Ethnic Policies

Ho Chi Minh identified the principles of implementing ethnic policies as unity, equality, and mutual support among ethnic groups. Unity, equality, and mutual support are strategic orientations based on Marxist-Leninist views on ethnic issues.

2.2.4. Methods of Implementing Ethnic Policies

Firstly, focus on propaganda and advocacy work.

Second, promote the role of ethnic minority officials.

Third, promote the sense of autonomy, self-reliance, self-reliance, and self-improvement of ethnic minorities.

2.3. THE VALUE OF HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHNIC POLICIES

Ho Chi Minh's thought on the implementation of ethnic policies holds profound theoretical and practical value. From theoretical study to practical application, Ho Chi Minh formulated a precise and correct system of arguments regarding ethnic policies, enriching the theoretical legacy of Marxism-Leninism. Vietnam's revolutionary history has proven that Ho Chi Minh's thought on the implementation of ethnic policies has become a "compass" guiding the Party and State to introduce many directives and measures, enhancing the role of ethnic minorities in the struggle, construction, and defense of the country.

Chapter 3

IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES FOR THE KHMER PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION ACCORDING TO HO CHI MINH'S PERSPECTIVE - CURRENT SITUATION AND EMERGING ISSUES

3.1. OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTHWEST REGION AND THE SOUTHWEST KHMER PEOPLE

3.1.1. Natural and Socio-Economic Conditions in the Southwest Region

The natural and socio-economic conditions in the Southwest region, with their specific strengths and limitations, are important factors influencing the implementation of policies in general and ethnic policies in particular. The material foundation, social environment, and culture significantly impact the quality of work; if these conditions are insufficient or inappropriate, the relevant authorities may struggle to ensure the progress of task implementation, and agencies, organizations, and the public may find it difficult to exercise their rights to participate in activities when policies are put into practice. Material resources and the social and cultural environment are always factors to consider in policy planning and must be adequately secured during policy implementation. Otherwise, the beneficiaries of the policies will lose trust, which in turn diminishes their enthusiasm for participating in policy activities.

3.1.2. Characteristics of the Khmer People in the Southwest Region

The Khmer people are one of the 54 ethnic groups in the Vietnamese community. The Khmer are an ancient ethnic group in Vietnam, originating from the Mon-Khmer group, currently ranking fifth among the ethnic groups in Vietnam. The Khmer predominantly reside in the provinces: Soc Trang (361,635 people), Tra Vinh (326,162 people), Kien Giang (230,500 people), An Giang (75,878 people), Bac Lieu (74,743 people), Ca Mau (38,811 people), Vinh Long (22,630 people), Can Tho City (23,691 people), Hau Giang (30,333 people), Tien Giang (744 people), Dong Thap (713 people), Ben Tre (773 people), Long An (9,980 people).

3.2. CURRENT STATUS OF IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES FOR THE KHMER PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION ACCORDING HO CHI MINH'S PERSPECTIVE

3.2.1. The Situation of Implementing Ethnic Policies for the Khmer People in the Southwest Region from 2018 to Present

In implementing the guidelines and policies of the Party and the State, local authorities at various levels in the Southwest region have issued specific programs and plans, leading and organizing the implementation of ethnic policies. This has contributed to a rapid transformation of the social landscape of the Khmer people in the Southwest, with gradual improvements in their material and spiritual lives, an increase in the literacy rate, and the preservation and promotion of the beautiful traditional culture of the Khmer people. In terms of economic development, human resource development, job creation, and ensuring social security for the Khmer people in the Southwest, although the results have not met the directives from the Central Government, significant overall changes have been made, leading to a marked improvement in the living conditions of the Khmer people.

3.2.2. Results of implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology

First, for achievements

Looking at the overall development of the economy and culture of the Khmer people in the Southwest shows, to some extent, the effectiveness of implementing ethnic policies. In recent years, thanks to the implementation of the Party and State's guidelines and policies, as well as the specific programs and plans developed by local authorities in the Southwest region, there has been a significant boost in production and an increased awareness of preserving and promoting the cultural values and religious practices of the Khmer people. Based on the principle of "equality, solidarity, respect, and mutual

assistance for development," local authorities in the regions where the Khmer people reside have always focused on addressing their interests based on the implementation of the ethnic policies of the Party and State, helping the people settle down and actively produce, including policies on housing, production land, and water supply; job creation; infrastructure investment support; and loan and credit policies for near-poor households, etc.

In the field of education, the literacy level of the Khmer people is increasingly being raised. The number of Khmer students, teachers, and educational officials has been steadily increasing. The construction of the Party and political system and training of officials in areas with a large Khmer population has received attention. The number of Party members among the Khmer people has increased annually. The Party organizations and socio-political organizations among the Khmer people have been strengthened in both quantity and quality, becoming increasingly important factors in the cause of national construction and defense.

Causes of achievements:

(1) The renewal of the country has achieved significant successes, with the living standards of the general population, and specifically the Khmer people, improving markedly, thus consolidating the trust of the Khmer people in the Party, the State, and the socialist regime. This is a great advantage for implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region.

(2) Currently, the rapid development of science and technology has directly impacted all aspects of social life in the Khmer regions of the Southwest. This creates many opportunities for the Khmer people to adopt and apply scientific and technological advances in their production and business processes, contributing to increased labor productivity, improved product quality, and enhanced competitiveness of goods in the market.

(3) The Khmer people in the Southwest have a tradition of patriotism and love for their homeland, with a strong belief in the Party and State's guidelines and local government regulations; they have a determined spirit in fighting against the plots and activities of hostile forces and criminals aimed at their community.

(4) The political system in areas with a large Khmer population has been consolidated, and the effectiveness of operations has been enhanced, especially concerning the training of Khmer ethnic officials who serve as the core force in implementing ethnic policies among the Khmer people.

(5) The provinces and cities in the Southwest region have regularly organized the thorough and timely implementation of directives, resolutions, decisions, and programs

from the Central Government, mobilizing collective strength to realize the Party and State's guidelines and policies for the Khmer people. Regular reviews and evaluations of the ethnic work have been conducted to accurately assess the current status, promptly address difficulties, and find appropriate solutions in the implementation process.

Second, limitations:

(1) In the implementation of economic development policies, the efforts to care for economic development, increase income, and improve the material and spiritual lives through support policies and poverty reduction programs for the Khmer people have been focused on by local authorities, leading to improvements in their living conditions. However, difficulties remain, and the percentage of poor and near-poor households is still high.

(2) In implementing cultural and social development policies: Some local Party committees and authorities have not paid sufficient attention to promoting Khmer ethnic culture. Investment in constructing local cultural and sports institutions and social welfare facilities to serve the public has not met the beneficiaries' needs. The preservation of traditional artistic elements among the Khmer people is at risk of fading away. The quality of teaching and learning in schools in the Khmer regions is still low compared to the general standards, with students from poor and near-poor families or those in particularly difficult circumstances often dropping out. The coordination in vocational training has limitations, and the commitment to improving educational conditions for children in some families has not received the proper attention; the regulations for scholarships for Khmer students and learners still have many inadequacies.

(3) The situation of political security and social order in the Khmer regions of the Southwest still harbors many potential concerns; large-scale complaints and grievances among the people persist, though they have not escalated into serious crises.

(4) Regarding the renewal of the content and methods of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and political-social organizations in the Khmer regions: In some areas, the dissemination of the Party's guidelines and the State's laws regarding ethnic work and policies has not been timely, lacks depth, is slow to innovate, and does not engage the Khmer people sufficiently; it remains superficial and scattered, not meeting the requirements of the new situation.

Causes of limitations:

(1) The issuance of guiding documents from the Central Government related to the implementation of policies has sometimes not been timely, leading to some sectors and localities not proactively developing specific plans and solutions for implementation.

(2) Due to the low socio-economic starting point of the Khmer regions, development lags behind many other areas; production activities are primarily agricultural and aquaculture, which depend on natural environmental conditions.

(3) The awareness of various levels, sectors, and officials regarding ethnic issues and policies has not been sufficiently profound and comprehensive. Some ethnic policies have not been specifically tailored to fit the real circumstances of the localities; negative aspects of these policies have fostered a sense of dependency and reliance on government support among some Khmer communities.

(4) Political-social organizations lack regulations regarding the appointment of officials responsible for ethnic affairs, resulting in insufficient understanding of the situation and inadequate data collection.

(5) The Party committees and local governments in some areas have not fully recognized the significance and importance of promoting the role of influential figures; the ethnic work has not been placed as a regular and central task; some officials and Party members' awareness of ethnic work is not deep or comprehensive; leadership and direction in organizing the implementation of ethnic work have not received proper attention in some areas.

(6) Human resources in the Khmer regions have not met the demands of the new situation; a small number of Khmer individuals lack effort in production and economic development; some influential figures have not fully utilized their roles and responsibilities towards their communities.

3.3. SOME ISSUES IN IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES FOR THE KHMER PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHWEST ACCORDING TO HO CHI MINH THOUGHT

First, the issue of improving the living standards of the Khmer people in the Southwest.

Second, the issue of developing human resources among the Khmer people in the Southwest.

Third, the issue of building and promoting culture within the Khmer community in the Southwest.

Fourth, the issue of religion among the Khmer people in the Southwest.

Chapter 4
DIRECTIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE
IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHNIC POLICIES FOR THE KHMER
PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION BASED ON
HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHTS

4.1. FORECASTING IMPACT FACTORS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHNIC POLICIES FOR THE KHMER PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION

4.1.1. Forecasting the domestic situations

Firstly, the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution creates significant changes in the social life of the ethnic communities of Vietnam, including the Khmer people in the Southwest region.

Secondly, advantages and disadvantages in the economic, cultural, and social development of the Khmer people in the Southwest region.

4.1.2. Forecasting the international situations

4.2. DIRECTION FOR IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES TOWARD THE KHMER PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION ACCORDING TO HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHTS UNTIL 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045

Firstly, identifying the implementation of ethnic policies toward the Khmer people as a regular, central, and long-term task of the Party and State. Therefore, the Party committees and authorities must strengthen their leadership and guidance, maximizing the coordination of the government with the efforts of the Fatherland Front and other socio-political organizations to mobilize the power of national solidarity and the entire political system to effectively implement the Party's and State's policies toward the Khmer people. Strengthening the encouragement of the Khmer people to help each other in developing economically, culturally, and socially while maintaining political security and social order.

Secondly, implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region must adhere to the principle of solidarity. The Party and President Ho Chi Minh have always emphasized building a great national unity bloc, considering it a crucial factor for the country's development. The Party's policy of national solidarity aims not only at building a prosperous, democratic, equitable, and civilized Vietnam but also at promoting the valuable traditional values of each ethnic group and member of the great family of Vietnam's ethnic groups. This creates a unified strength of the entire nation, providing a foundation and a strong driving force for successfully implementing the

Party's and State's ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region.

Thirdly, implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region must ensure the principle of equality. Equality among ethnic groups means that all ethnic groups have the same rights, regardless of whether they are a majority or minority, whether their cultural and intellectual levels are high or low. This equality must be reflected in all areas of economy, politics, culture, and society, and be guaranteed by law. Equality among ethnic groups is first demonstrated by ensuring and creating opportunities for all ethnic groups to develop equally. This has been consistently affirmed in the Party's Congress documents during the renovation period. Thus, the Party and State have issued numerous policies for national socio-economic development, while also issuing special policies tailored to the socio-economic development of ethnic minorities and ethnic minority regions, including the Khmer people in the Southwest region.

Fourthly, implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region must ensure the principle of mutual assistance and development. Mutual assistance between ethnic groups has been a consistent policy of the Party during the renovation period, drawing from Ho Chi Minh's ideology. This principle is clearly reflected in the goals of the Party's ethnic policy, which aims to continuously improve the economic, cultural, social, and political life of every ethnic group, ensuring that ethnic minorities, particularly the Khmer people, are developed comprehensively and sustainably. This, in turn, strengthens the great national unity among all ethnic groups.

Fifthly, implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region should focus on the distinct characteristics of each ethnic group. Applying specific policies for each ethnic minority region is a major step forward, demonstrating the Party's renewed understanding of fairness in development among ethnic groups and regions. Based on regional criteria (regions in early development, stable regions, and difficult regions), the State has formulated appropriate investment policies for each group, with the more disadvantaged regions receiving special investment priorities, helping them to catch up with the general development level of the country, including the Khmer-inhabited areas in the Southwest region.

Sixthly, implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region must focus on the practice of democracy. This is a key factor in building social consensus, arousing the patriotic traditions, and strengthening national unity. In practice, whenever and wherever the Khmer people's democratic rights are fully implemented with the motto "the people know, the people discuss, the people do, the people check, the people monitor, the people benefit," the work of uniting the ethnic

groups has been effective, with positive participation in patriotic movements for socio-economic development and maintaining local defense and security.

4.3. SOLUTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES TOWARD THE KHMER PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION ACCORDING TO HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHTS UNTIL 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045

4.3.1. Solutions to raise awareness and strengthen propaganda and advocacy work

4.3.1.1. Raising the awareness of Party committees in implementing ethnic policies toward the Khmer people in the Southwest region

Ho Chi Minh affirmed: “The Party committees must correctly implement ethnic policies.” Strengthening the Party's leadership in implementing ethnic policies is a decisive factor in improving the quality of life of the Khmer people in the Southwest region. It is also the fundamental condition for uniting the ethnic groups in the cause of building and defending the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

4.3.1.2. Raise awareness of officials, party members, people and Khmer compatriots regarding the implementation of ethnic policies

Firstly, raise awareness of officials and party members regarding the implementation of ethnic policies

Second, raise awareness among the Khmer people and compatriots

Third, raise awareness and determination to improve in life in every Khmer household in the Southwest region.

4.3.1.3. Strengthening propaganda and mobilization work

Firstly, attention must be given to renewing the content and adopting appropriate forms and methods for mobilizing the Khmer people.

Secondly, the quality of human resources involved in propaganda and mobilization among the Khmer people must be improved.

4.3.2. Group of solutions on Mechanisms and Policies

4.3.2.1. Reviewing mechanisms and policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region

President Ho Chi Minh emphasized that “the application of policies must be closely aligned with the actual situation in each locality. There must be no rigid imitation, no mechanical application, no rush.” Therefore, to ensure the effective implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region, it is necessary to continue reviewing policies to minimize overlaps and to complete and supplement them. The review process should be carried out at all levels, from the central government to local authorities, with the results being publicly announced in

every locality, especially in the adjusted areas.

4.3.2.2. Enhancing macro policies for developing Khmer human resources

Evaluating and reassessing the effectiveness of the existing policies for supporting Khmer human resources development issued by the government and local authorities. Based on the assessments, these macro policies should be updated and refined for maximum effectiveness. Efforts should be made to attract and invite investors, companies, and enterprises to invest in the provinces and cities of the Southwest region, creating more job opportunities for the workforce, including the Khmer ethnic community. This would gradually solve the issue of workers leaving their families to seek jobs in other provinces, as well as reduce the negative effects of this migration.

4.3.2.3. Promoting the transfer and application of scientific and technological advancements while focusing on market access for Khmer products

In the current process of industrialization, modernization, and proactive international integration, enhancing the transfer of scientific and technological advancements to people, particularly in the Khmer regions, is of paramount importance. Applying scientific techniques in production will help increase labor productivity and improve the quality of products, thereby contributing to the livelihood of the Khmer people. Thus, there is a need for increased budget investment in scientific research and technology transfer, with priority given to the development of new crop varieties, livestock breeds, and improved production processes, creating breakthroughs in productivity and high-quality production.

4.3.2.4. Innovating ethnic policies to ensure the rights of the Khmer people

In the process of implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region, it is essential to ensure the protection of their rights, including freedom of religion and belief, equality, cultural preservation, and state support for overall development, as well as the right to freely express their aspirations.

4.3.3. Group of solutions for Organizing the implementation of Ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region

4.3.3.1. Enhancing the capacity of local governments to implement ethnic policies in the Khmer regions

Firstly, enhancing the organizational capacity of local governments in implementing ethnic policies must be connected with local socio-economic development.

Secondly, increasing the capacity of local governments must take into account the cultural and social aspects and psychology of the Khmer people, promoting their

role in monitoring the activities of grassroots officials and civil servants.

Thirdly, improving organizational capacity must be tied to the training and development of local officials and civil servants.

4.3.3.2. Focusing on socio-economic development and improving the lives of the Khmer people while ensuring national defense and security in the Southwest region

President Ho Chi Minh emphasized: "The Party must have a good plan to develop the economy and culture, aiming to continuously improve the people's living standards". In line with Ho Chi Minh's views, the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwest region should focus on the following aspects:

Firstly, developing the economy, culture, and society.

Secondly, ensuring strong national defense and security in the Khmer ethnic regions of the Southwestern region.

4.3.3.3. Improving the quality of the labor force among the Khmer people in the Southwestern region

Firstly, enhancing the knowledge, educational level, professional qualifications, competencies, and soft skills of the labor force among the Khmer people.

Secondly, improving the ethics, demeanor, and attitudes of the labor force among the Khmer people in the Southwestern region.

Thirdly, maximize the role of monks in Khmer Theravada temples in the area.

Fourthly, improve the quality of vocational education for Khmer people.

4.3.3.4. Strengthening inspection and supervision; implementing preliminary and summary assessments, and drawing lessons in organizing the implementation of ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region

Ho Chi Minh always affirmed the important role of inspection and supervision. He believed that the root of corruption, waste, and bureaucratic tendencies stemmed from a lack of inspection and supervision; from officials preferring to stay behind their desks, detaching from the people, neglecting to investigate and research, failing to monitor the implementation of policies, and not learning from the experiences of the people, etc. Therefore, at this stage, learning and following Ho Chi Minh's ideology on strengthening inspection and supervision linked with effectively implementing the Party's resolutions on inspection, supervision, critique, and mobilizing the people to participate in building the Party and the government will significantly contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region.

CONCLUSION

Implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology is an important aspect that contributes to economic and social development, the stabilization of political security, and social order, aiming to protect and strengthen the great unity of the entire nation, serving the renewal direction and the socio-economic policies of the Party and State; enhancing living standards, promoting the self-management role and strength of the Khmer people in preventing, detecting, and combating the plots, schemes, and activities of hostile forces and criminals. Recognizing this significance, the thesis has carried out specific tasks: (1) conducting an overview of the research situation related to the topic to identify the issues that have been clarified and explained, as well as the gaps that have not been researched, surveyed, or evaluated for further investigation; (2) identifying the theoretical foundation for the research topic, including analyzing and clarifying relevant concepts and some theoretical issues serving the research topic; (3) clarifying the basic contents of Ho Chi Minh's ideology regarding the implementation of ethnic policies; (4) evaluating the current situation of implementing ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region from 2018 to the present, highlighting the issues from Ho Chi Minh's ideological perspective; (5) proposing solutions to effectively implement ethnic policies for the Khmer people in the Southwestern region according to Ho Chi Minh's ideology by 2030, with a vision towards 2045.