

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

DANG NGOC MAI

**IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHNIC POLICIES IN
ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT IN
THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS
REGION OF VIETNAM TODAY**

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INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the Study

The ethnic question and the implementation of ethnic policies constitute an important component of Ho Chi Minh's thought, developed through the inheritance of the Vietnamese nation's tradition of solidarity and the assimilation and creative application of Marxism-Leninism. Ho Chi Minh consistently affirmed that all ethnic groups within the Vietnamese national community are equal in rights and duties and must unite, respect and support one another, and work together towards shared development. He paid particular attention to improving the material and spiritual well-being of people of all ethnic groups, while emphasising the need to formulate and implement sound ethnic policies to foster and promote solidarity and patriotism among ethnic minorities. He stated: "Our ethnic policy aims to ensure equality and mutual assistance among ethnic groups so that they may advance together towards socialism." These views provide the ideological foundation for the Party and the State to formulate and implement ethnic policies throughout the various stages of the Vietnamese revolution.

Guided by Ho Chi Minh's thought on the implementation of ethnic policies, the Party and the State have adopted numerous guidelines and policies to promote comprehensive development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas. Prominent among these are Resolution No. 24-NQ/TW, dated 12 March 2003, of the Ninth Party Central Committee on ethnic affairs; and Resolution No. 88/2019/QH14, dated 18 November 2019, of the Fourteenth National Assembly, approving the Master Plan for Socio-economic Development in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas for the 2021-2030 period. Regarding the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region, Resolution No. 11-NQ/TW, dated 10 February 2022, of the Politburo affirms the need for rapid and sustainable development that harnesses the region's potential and advantages while ensuring national defence and security and improving the living standards of its ethnic communities. These documents reflect the application and development of Ho Chi Minh's thought under new conditions. They also provide an important political and legal basis for implementing ethnic policies, promoting socio-economic development, strengthening the great national unity bloc, and advancing sustainable development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas.

During the 2015-2025 period, the implementation of ethnic policies in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region achieved positive results. The system of guidelines and policies was progressively refined, essential infrastructure was strengthened, and programmes and projects supporting production development, poverty reduction, education, healthcare, domestic water supply, and cultural preservation were implemented. These efforts gradually improved living conditions, supported the preservation and promotion of ethnic cultural identities, and strengthened the grassroots political system. They also contributed to greater solidarity among ethnic groups and to maintaining national defence and security in the region.

Nevertheless, measured against the requirements of rapid and sustainable development, the implementation of ethnic policies in the region continues to face limitations and shortcomings. In some localities, the translation of certain guidelines and policies into specific measures remains slow. Implementation in some areas lacks

coordination and is insufficiently adapted to the circumstances of particular localities and ethnic groups, while investment resources and efforts to integrate policies remain fragmented. Poverty reduction gains in some areas are not yet sustainable. Human resource quality and access to education, healthcare, employment, and basic social services remain limited among some ethnic minority communities, while substantial development disparities persist between remote areas and the overall level of development. Shortages of residential and production land, spontaneous migration, natural disasters, climate change, the risk of erosion of cultural identities, and emerging social issues continue to demand improvements in the quality and effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation. These limitations and shortcomings underscore the need for further research into the application of Ho Chi Minh's thought on ethnic policy implementation to improve the effectiveness of translating policies into specific measures and organising their implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region in the current period.

The Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region holds particular importance in economic, political, cultural, and social terms, as well as for national defence, security, and external relations. It has complex terrain, a long international border, and a high proportion of ethnic minority residents. The effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation in the region therefore directly affects the livelihoods, rights, and legitimate interests of its people and is closely linked to strengthening the great national unity bloc, maintaining socio-political stability, and safeguarding national sovereignty and border security.

In the current context, effective ethnic policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region is significant both for socio-economic development and improved living standards and for consolidating public trust, strengthening the great national unity bloc, and maintaining socio-political stability. Given the region's strategic location, extensive border areas, and large ethnic minority population, proactive efforts are required to prevent, counter, and thwart schemes and activities involving "peaceful evolution", insurrection aimed at overthrowing the government, the incitement of demonstrations, and "secession and autonomy", while maintaining political security, public order and safety, national defence and security, and sovereignty over the national borders.

The Fourteenth National Congress of the Party reaffirmed the following objective: "Ensure equality, solidarity, mutual assistance, and shared development among ethnic groups. Promote the initiative, self-reliance, and resilience of ethnic communities in socio-economic development, enabling them to rise out of poverty and achieve sustainable multidimensional poverty reduction." This orientation, together with the requirements for green, sustainable, and inclusive development in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region, the narrowing of development disparities, and the integration of socio-economic development with national defence and security, calls for the continued translation of ethnic policies into specific measures and their effective implementation in the region through 2030, with a vision to 2045.

In light of the foregoing, the study entitled "Implementing Ethnic Policies in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous

Region Today” is urgent and significant in both theoretical and practical terms. Theoretically, it contributes to clarifying the conceptual content, criteria, and factors influencing the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought under new conditions. Practically, it objectively assesses the achievements, limitations, underlying causes, and issues arising from the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 period. In policy terms, it provides a scientific basis for refining mechanisms and solutions for translating ethnic policies into specific measures and organising their implementation in the region through 2030, with a vision to 2045. On this basis, the doctoral candidate has selected ***“Implementation of Ethnic Policies in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s Thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region of Vietnam Today”*** as the topic of a doctoral dissertation in Ho Chi Minh Studies.

2. Research Aim and Tasks

2.1. Research Aim

This dissertation aims to clarify the theoretical foundations and assess the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 period. On this basis, it proposes directions and solutions for implementing ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought in the region through 2030, with a vision to 2045.

2.2. Research Tasks

To achieve this aim, the dissertation focuses on the following tasks:

First, to review studies relevant to the dissertation topic; identify findings on which the dissertation can build, research gaps, and issues requiring further clarification.

Second, to clarify the theoretical foundations for implementing ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought, including key analytical concepts, the content of Ho Chi Minh’s thought on the ethnic question, and criteria for evaluating ethnic policy implementation in accordance with his thought.

Third, to analyse the natural, economic, cultural and social, national defence and security, and ethnic characteristics of the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region; and to clarify the factors influencing the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought in the region.

Fourth, to assess the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 period, identifying achievements, limitations, their underlying causes, and issues arising from implementation.

Fifth, to forecast the factors that will influence implementation; establish directions and propose key solutions to improve the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region through 2030, with a vision to 2045.

3. Research Object and Scope

3.1. Research Object

The implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

3.2. Research Scope

Content scope: The dissertation focuses on the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought, analysing how this thought is applied in practice by Party organisations and government authorities at all levels in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

Geographical scope: The Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region. Before the administrative reorganisation, the region comprised 14 provinces: Ha Giang, Cao Bang, Lang Son, Bac Giang, Phu Tho, Thai Nguyen, Bac Kan, Tuyen Quang, Lao Cai, Yen Bai, Lai Chau, Son La, Dien Bien, and Hoa Binh. Following the reorganisation, the region comprises nine provinces: Thai Nguyen, Cao Bang, Dien Bien, Tuyen Quang, Phu Tho, Lai Chau, Lao Cai, Lang Son, and Son La. The dissertation conducts surveys in selected representative localities within the region: before 1 July 2025, in five provinces (Ha Giang, Tuyen Quang, Hoa Binh, Lang Son, and Dien Bien); and after 1 July 2025, in three provinces (Tuyen Quang, Dien Bien, and Lang Son).

Temporal scope: The dissertation focuses on the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 period. Based on an assessment of implementation and the issues arising during this period, it proposes directions and solutions to improve the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation through 2030, with a vision to 2045. To ensure that the research remains up to date, the dissertation also draws on selected statistics and reports published up to April 2026 to substantiate, cross-check, and clarify its observations and assessments. These supplementary data serve solely to update the information and do not alter the dissertation's temporal scope.

4. Theoretical Foundations and Research Methods

4.1. Theoretical Foundations

The dissertation is grounded in the perspectives of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought, the Party's guidelines and orientations, and the State's policies and laws concerning ethnic groups, ethnic policies, and ethnic policy implementation.

4.2. Research Methods

The dissertation adopts the methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism. It also employs historical and logical methods, analysis and synthesis, and comparison and cross-checking to fulfil its research tasks. Specifically:

Chapter 1: Relevant documents and studies from Vietnam and abroad are collected, processed, and evaluated. Logical and historical methods are combined to review and assess the existing research relevant to the dissertation topic.

Chapter 2: Logical and historical methods are employed alongside generalisation, systematisation, comparison, abstraction, and textual analysis to clarify concepts and explain the content and value of Ho Chi Minh's thought on ethnic policies.

Chapter 3: Analysis and synthesis, the review and synthesis of practical experience, statistical methods, and comparison are employed to assess implementation and identify issues arising from the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

Chapter 4: Analysis and synthesis, comparison, and expert consultation are employed to explain the influencing factors and propose solutions to improve the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

In addition to drawing on secondary data, the dissertation employs a sociological survey method to collect quantitative data for the research.

5. Scholarly Contributions of the Dissertation

First, the dissertation contributes to clarifying and systematising Ho Chi Minh's thought on ethnic policy implementation and provides additional scholarly grounds for understanding and applying his thought in the current context.

Second, the dissertation assesses the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 period, clarifying the achievements, limitations, underlying causes, and issues arising in practice.

Third, the dissertation proposes directions and solutions to improve the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region through 2030, with a vision to 2045, thereby contributing to strengthening the great national unity bloc and promoting the country's sustainable development.

6. Theoretical and Practical Significance of the Dissertation

6.1. Theoretical Significance

The dissertation contributes to systematising and clarifying the fundamental content of Ho Chi Minh's thought on the ethnic question and his guiding views on ethnic policy implementation, particularly the principles of equality, solidarity, respect, mutual assistance, and support for shared development among ethnic groups. On this basis, it helps clarify the theoretical foundations for applying Ho Chi Minh's thought to the organisation and implementation of ethnic policies in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region today.

6.2. Practical Significance

The dissertation contributes to providing a scientific basis for applying Ho Chi Minh's thought to ethnic policy implementation in Vietnam today. Its research findings, proposed solutions, and synthesis of practical experience in ethnic policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region serve as reference material for local Party committees and government authorities in formulating and implementing ethnic policies and developing and implementing socio-economic development strategies. They may also be applied in localities with similar conditions.

The dissertation's findings may be used as reference material for research, study, and teaching on Ho Chi Minh's thought, ethnic affairs, and ethnic policies at institutions providing education and training for officials, both within and outside the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics system.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

In addition to the introduction, conclusion, list of the author's publications related to the dissertation, references, and appendices, the dissertation comprises four chapters and ten sections.

Chapter 1

REVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC

1.1. RESEARCH RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION

1.1.1. Studies on Ho Chi Minh's Thought on the Ethnic Question and Ethnic Policies

Studies on Ho Chi Minh's thought on the ethnic question and ethnic policies, including books, articles, and dissertations, have provided a rich and relatively comprehensive body of scholarly arguments concerning his thought on these issues. Many studies adopt multidimensional approaches, combining theory and practice and contributing to a deeper understanding of the content and value of Ho Chi Minh's thought in the current development context.

1.1.2. Studies on the Application of Ho Chi Minh's Thought and the Implementation of Ethnic Policies in Accordance with His Thought

Studies in this area have examined relatively comprehensively the application of Ho Chi Minh's thought to the formulation and implementation of ethnic policies. They have clarified the theoretical foundations, principles, and substance of implementation across various fields, including education, personnel development, poverty reduction, socio-economic development, and the strengthening of the great national unity bloc. In addition, many studies provide data, empirical evidence, and specific proposed solutions, contributing to a relatively comprehensive picture of ethnic policy implementation in Vietnam today.

1.1.3. Studies on Ethnic Policies and Their Implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region

Studies on ethnic policies and their implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region have provided a rich theoretical and empirical foundation, clarifying various aspects, including culture, education, livelihoods, national defence and security, and the strengthening of the great national unity bloc.

1.2. OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH FINDINGS RELATED TO THE TOPIC AND ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION IN THE DISSERTATION

1.2.1. Overview of Research Findings Related to the Topic

Existing studies have clarified the particular importance and role of the ethnic question and ethnic policies in Vietnam's revolutionary cause, while affirming the foundational role of Ho Chi Minh's thought in ethnic affairs. His thought encompasses equal rights among ethnic groups, solidarity, opposition to oppression and exploitation, and specific views on improving the lives of ethnic minorities, training ethnic minority officials, harnessing communities' internal resources and capacities, respecting positive customs and practices, and combating harmful, outdated customs. These studies show that Ho Chi Minh's thought on the ethnic question both creatively builds on Marxism-Leninism and is grounded in Vietnamese realities, thereby providing enduring guidance for the formulation and implementation of ethnic policies throughout the various stages of the revolution. Alongside theoretical research, many studies have investigated and assessed ethnic policy implementation in ethnic minority areas, emphasising its

contribution to consolidating public trust in the Party and the State, strengthening the great national unity bloc, and maintaining socio-political stability in strategic areas. Regarding the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region, many studies affirm that effective ethnic policy implementation is an important condition for improving the effectiveness of state administration, strengthening the grassroots political system, and preventing the exploitation of ethnic and religious issues to cause instability.

An analysis of existing studies indicates that, although research on ethnic policies and their implementation in Vietnam has produced significant findings, notable gaps remain. Most studies approach the subject from individual disciplinary perspectives and therefore lack an interdisciplinary and systematic approach, failing to connect theoretical depth fully with the complexities of practice in ethnic minority and mountainous areas. Many studies are limited to describing and assessing existing conditions or proposing general solutions, without examining in depth the relationship between the Party's ideological foundations, particularly Ho Chi Minh's thought, and the mechanisms, substance, and effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation in specific contexts. This research gap is particularly evident in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

1.2.2. Issues Requiring Further Investigation in the Dissertation

The dissertation focuses on further clarifying, supplementing, and systematising Ho Chi Minh's thought on ethnic policy implementation on a sound scholarly basis. It concentrates on analysing the implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 period, examining influencing factors, and forecasting domestic and international trends that will affect implementation through 2030, with a vision to 2045. Based on theoretical research, an analysis of implementation, the identification of influencing factors, and forecasts of development trends, the dissertation proposes directions and a comprehensive set of solutions for implementing ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region through 2030, with a vision to 2045.

Chapter 1 Summary

Chapter 1 has systematically reviewed studies from Vietnam and abroad concerning ethnic policies, Ho Chi Minh's thought on the ethnic question, and the application of his thought to ethnic policy implementation in Vietnam. The literature review shows that these studies have produced significant theoretical and practical findings, while identifying scholarly gaps that require further investigation. Most studies adopt broad approaches or focus on individual sectors, localities, or aspects. Meanwhile, systematic, in-depth research on ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in relation to the specific conditions of the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region remains limited. Accordingly, the dissertation establishes a research direction centred on systematically clarifying ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the region. It thereby contributes additional scholarly grounds for refining ethnic policies and improving the effectiveness of their implementation to meet the requirements of sustainable development in the region and the country in the current period.

Chapter 2

IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT: SELECTED THEORETICAL ISSUES

2.1. BASIC CONCEPTS

2.1.1. Concepts Related to Ethnic Policies

The Concept of "Ethnic"

According to the *Vietnamese Encyclopaedia*, the term "*Ethnic*" is commonly understood in two distinct senses:

First, "*Ethnic*", understood as a nation or nation-state, refers to a large political and social community organised and governed under the authority of a state within a defined territory. Historically, a nation initially emerged from the aggregation of tribes and tribal alliances, followed by the integration and unification of ethnic communities. The formation and development of a nation are associated with specific historical conditions, primarily the development of the mode of production and of economic, political, cultural, and social life in each period.

Second, "*Ethnic*" understood as an ethnic group (*ethnie*), refers to a community whose members are connected by relatively enduring characteristics such as language, culture, psychology, customs, practices, and, particularly, ethnic self-awareness. Such a community may constitute the principal ethnic group or a minority within a nation-state. In many cases, members of the same ethnic group may reside in different countries while remaining connected by fundamental similarities in language, culture, and awareness of their shared origins.

These two concepts are closely and organically interrelated. Whereas the nation-state meaning emphasises political and social dimensions, territorial unity, and state organisation, the ethnic-group meaning emphasises the cultural and historical dimensions of a community and the self-awareness of a particular group of people. In practice, a nation-state often comprises multiple ethnic groups living together, with each group contributing to its diversity and unity. Clearly distinguishing between these two meanings is therefore important, both theoretically and practically, in studying national and ethnic issues.

From the Marxist-Leninist perspective, the nation is the product of a prolonged process of historical and social development associated with the development of productive forces, changes in social relations, and the gradual refinement of forms of human community organisation. In this process, human history has successively passed through forms of community organisation from lower to higher levels, such as clans, tribes, and tribal peoples, before developing into the higher form of community known as the nation. Although nations may emerge under different historical, economic, cultural, and social conditions in different countries and regions, their formation is, in essence, a universal process in human historical development.

In creatively applying the Marxist-Leninist perspective to Vietnam's specific conditions, Ho Chi Minh did not formulate a complete definition of "*Ethnic*" in formal academic terms. Nevertheless, his theoretical and practical legacy shows that he used the concept in two fundamental senses, consistent with general theory while suited to the realities of the Vietnamese revolution.

First, “*Ethnic*” is understood in the sense of a nation or nation-state. In this sense, it denotes a large, stable political and social community living within a shared territory, possessing historical traditions, a cultural life, and a sense of attachment to the homeland. This understanding is clearly reflected in many of Ho Chi Minh’s speeches and writings. For example, in his *Letter to Students on the Occasion of the Opening of the New School Year in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam*, he wrote: “Whether Vietnam becomes a beautiful and prosperous country, and whether the Vietnamese nation attains glory and stands alongside the great powers of the five continents, depends on your efforts in studying.” Here, “the Vietnamese nation” is used in the nation-state sense, referring to the entire Vietnamese community united within an independent country and sharing a historical destiny and aspirations for development.

Second, “*Ethnic*” is understood in the sense of an ethnic group. In this sense, it denotes communities with relatively enduring characteristics of language, culture, customs, practices, and community consciousness. In speeches, writings, and documents concerning ethnic communities, Ho Chi Minh used expressions such as “people of all ethnic groups” and “ethnic minorities”. Such usage demonstrates his clear recognition of the existence of different ethnic communities within the Vietnamese national community, alongside his consistent affirmation of equality, solidarity, and close ties among ethnic groups. This spirit is clearly expressed in his *Report on the Draft Revised Constitution at the Eleventh Session of the First National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam*, in which he stated: “Our country is a unified country comprising many ethnic groups. All ethnic groups living in Vietnam are equal in rights and duties. The fraternal ethnic groups in our country share bonds of kinship within a common territory and have, throughout a long history, worked and struggled together to build a beautiful homeland.” In this passage, “many ethnic groups” clearly refers to ethnic communities living together within a unified country and maintaining relations of equality, solidarity, and close attachment.

This dissertation uses “*Ethnic*” in the second sense, namely “ethnic group”, to establish a clear scholarly perspective, ensure theoretical precision and relevance to the research object, and maintain consistency in analysing the ethnic question, ethnic policies, and ethnic policy implementation in Vietnam today.

The Concept of Policy: Policy is a system of objectives, perspectives, decisions, and courses of action adopted by an authorised actor to guide, regulate, and address issues arising in social life within a defined scope and timeframe.

The Concept of Ethnic Policy: Ethnic policy is a system of objectives, decisions, instruments, and measures adopted by the State in accordance with the Party’s guidelines and orientations to influence ethnic communities and interethnic relations; ensure equality, solidarity, respect, mutual assistance, and support for shared development; and thereby harness the potential and promote the cultural identities of ethnic groups, improve people’s living standards, strengthen the great national unity bloc, maintain socio-political stability, and promote the country’s sustainable development.

2.1.2. Concepts Related to Ethnic Policy Implementation

The Concept of Policy Implementation: Policy implementation is the process through which authorised actors and relevant stakeholders organise the translation of

policy objectives, content, decisions, and measures into practice through specific activities to achieve policy objectives and address the issues targeted by the policy.

The Concept of Ethnic Policy Implementation: Ethnic policy implementation is the process through which authorised actors organise the implementation of ethnic policies in practice through specific activities to realise their objectives, content, and proposed solutions; ensure equal rights and strengthen solidarity, respect, and support for shared development among ethnic groups; promote economic, cultural, and social development; narrow development gaps among ethnic groups and regions; strengthen the great national unity bloc; maintain political stability; and promote the country's sustainable development.

2.1.3. Concepts Related to Ho Chi Minh's Thought on Ethnic Policy Implementation

The Concept of Ho Chi Minh's Thought on Ethnic Policies: This refers to his comprehensive and consistent system of views on addressing the ethnic question, which provides guidance for the formulation and implementation of ethnic policies in Vietnam. Its core content is to ensure equality, solidarity, respect, and support for shared development among ethnic groups; protect the rights and legitimate interests of people of all ethnic groups; strengthen the great national unity bloc; and mobilise the strength of all ethnic groups for national construction, protection, and development.

The Concept of Ho Chi Minh's Thought on Ethnic Policy Implementation: This refers to his system of views guiding the organisation and implementation of ethnic policies in practice, based on ensuring equality, solidarity, respect, and mutual assistance among ethnic groups. It combines State support with the promotion of self-reliance and resilience among ethnic minorities to improve living standards, narrow development gaps, and strengthen the great national unity bloc.

2.1.4. Concepts Related to Ethnic Policy Implementation in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region

The Concept of Ethnic Policy Implementation in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought: This is the process of organising the practical realisation of the Party's orientations and guidelines and the State's policies and laws concerning the ethnic question, guided by Ho Chi Minh's system of views. It ensures the principles of equality, solidarity, respect, and mutual assistance among ethnic groups and combines the mobilisation of communities' internal resources and capacities with State support to improve living standards, narrow development gaps, and strengthen the great national unity bloc.

The Concept of Ethnic Policy Implementation in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region: This is the process of organising the practical realisation of the Party's orientations and guidelines and the State's policies and laws concerning the ethnic question within the region, guided by Ho Chi Minh's system of views and based on ensuring the principles of equality, solidarity, respect, and mutual assistance among ethnic groups. It combines the mobilisation of communities' internal resources and capacities with support from the State and society as a whole, in a manner suited to the region's natural and socio-economic conditions and its multiethnic character, to improve people's material and

spiritual well-being, narrow development gaps among ethnic groups and regions, strengthen the great national unity bloc, and promote sustainable development in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

2.2. HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT ON ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

2.2.1. Ho Chi Minh's Views on the Importance of Ethnic Policy Implementation

2.2.1.1. Ethnic Policy Implementation Provides an Important Basis for Achieving Equality among Ethnic Groups

In Ho Chi Minh's thought, equality among ethnic groups must begin in the economic sphere, primarily by ensuring the people's right to ownership and control of the means of production. Sound ethnic policies also contribute to preserving and promoting cultural identities, consolidating political trust, and strengthening social consensus. Equality concerns not only resource allocation but also respect for differences and the right of each ethnic group to development.

2.2.1.2. Ethnic Policy Implementation Promotes Economic Development

According to Ho Chi Minh, ethnic policy implementation must seek comprehensive improvements in the people's material and spiritual well-being, with economic development and improved living standards as its central tasks. He emphasised linking the development of production with improvements in educational attainment and public knowledge, healthcare, and cultural life.

2.2.1.3. Ethnic Policy Implementation Strengthens the Great National Unity Bloc

According to Ho Chi Minh, solidarity provides the basis for achieving equality among ethnic groups, since only within a united community can ethnic groups build close ties and trust, support one another, overcome difficulties together, and develop. From this perspective, ethnic policy implementation aimed at strengthening the great national unity bloc must proceed in a coordinated manner across three dimensions: ensuring equality and respect among ethnic groups; taking the people's tangible interests as its immediate objective; and recognising people of all ethnic groups as active participants in policy implementation, respecting community self-governance, and promoting internal resources and capacities, self-reliance, and resilience, while paying attention to developing ethnic minority and grassroots officials.

2.2.1.4. Ethnic Policy Implementation Contributes to Maintaining Political Stability and National Defence and Security

According to Ho Chi Minh, effective ethnic policy implementation lays the foundation for socio-political stability by safeguarding the people's rights and interests, improving living standards, narrowing development gaps, and consolidating public trust. It is also an important condition for establishing a strong national defence and security posture from the grassroots level. When the people are united, trust the authorities, and maintain close ties with them, a durable "people's hearts-and-minds posture" is established. This provides effective support for monitoring developments and preventing, detecting, and promptly addressing activities involving sabotage, incitement, manipulation, and the exploitation of ethnic and religious issues.

2.2.1.5. Ethnic Policy Implementation Contributes to Affirming the Humane and Revolutionary Nature of the New Regime

According to Ho Chi Minh, ethnic policy implementation contributes to affirming the humane and revolutionary nature of the new regime because it directly rejects the inhumane forms of domination exercised under feudalism and colonialism. At the same time, it establishes a people-centred development path founded politically and socially on equality and solidarity among ethnic groups. On this basis, ethnic policy under the new regime is revolutionary in transforming the objectives and methods of governance from imposition and division towards human emancipation and development. Its humane character is reflected in the orientation of all guidelines, programmes, and measures towards improving the material and spiritual well-being of ethnic communities, progressively overcoming historical legacies of injustice, and narrowing development gaps between mountainous and lowland areas and between ethnic minority areas and more developed regions.

2.2.2. Ho Chi Minh's Views on the Actors Responsible for and the Target Groups of Ethnic Policy Implementation

2.2.2.1. Actors Responsible for Ethnic Policy Implementation

According to Ho Chi Minh, the actors responsible for ethnic policy implementation comprise the entire political system and the social forces involved in organising and implementing policies in practice. The Party exercises comprehensive leadership, guiding and organising policy implementation by establishing guidelines appropriate to each period, safeguarding the rights and interests of ethnic groups, and ensuring balanced development across regions.

2.2.2.2. Target Groups of Ethnic Policy Implementation

According to Ho Chi Minh's thought, ethnic policies target all ethnic groups within the Vietnamese national community. In a multiethnic country, properly addressing the ethnic question concerns not only individual ethnic groups but also directly affects the country's stability, unity, and development.

2.2.3. The Content of Ethnic Policy Implementation

2.2.3.1. Developing the Economy and Improving the Living Standards of Ethnic Communities

Ho Chi Minh held that building socialism in mountainous areas must begin in the countryside, with agriculture serving as the initial breakthrough to lay the foundations for subsequent industrialisation. For ethnic communities, the most immediate needs are sufficient food, warm clothing, and stable housing. Agriculture therefore plays a foundational role in meeting essential needs and promoting development. Accordingly, he advocated developing agriculture, forestry, and industry while emphasising the responsibilities of officials and Party members working in mountainous areas. He also advocated policies suited to the characteristics of each locality, with particular attention to infrastructure investment, the establishment of labour-exchange groups and cooperatives in mountainous areas, and the promotion of solidarity and mutual assistance in economic development.

2.2.3.2. Promoting Cultural and Social Development

According to Ho Chi Minh, culture is an indispensable part of the life of every ethnic group. Cultural development requires both the preservation of traditions and creativity and renewal, alongside stronger solidarity among ethnic groups and the removal of cultural barriers to shared development. In the social sphere, he paid particular attention to education, healthcare, and the training of officials in mountainous areas. His views on education in ethnic minority areas were comprehensive and aimed to narrow development gaps among ethnic groups. Policies prioritising education contributed to substantial improvements in educational attainment and human resources among ethnic minorities, producing the first contingents of intellectuals, officials, and armed forces personnel and laying the foundations for socio-economic development in ethnic minority areas. In healthcare, Ho Chi Minh affirmed that health is a precious asset for individuals and society. He therefore called on the Party and the State to care for the health of ethnic communities by developing healthcare networks and training local healthcare personnel, while conducting awareness-raising and mobilisation activities to eliminate harmful, outdated customs and build a new cultural life.

2.2.3.3. Strengthening and Ensuring National Defence and Security

Ho Chi Minh emphasised the strategic importance of mountainous areas in safeguarding the homeland. To build and strengthen national defence, he advocated establishing autonomous regions for ethnic minorities to counter schemes by hostile forces to exploit the issue of autonomy to undermine the Party's and the State's policy of great national unity. He also frequently urged ethnic communities to remain vigilant, maintain solidarity, and stand ready to cooperate with and support the armed forces and the police in combating activities that sow ethnic division and disrupt the people's peaceful lives.

2.2.3.4. Building the Political System, Promoting the People's Right to Mastery, and Developing Ethnic Minority Officials

According to Ho Chi Minh, the grassroots political system and its officials must remain close to the people, understand and respect them, and rely on them. Party organisations, government authorities, the Fatherland Front, and mass organisations are responsible for informing, mobilising, and bringing people of all ethnic groups together, and enabling them to participate in common affairs. Building the grassroots political system must therefore be linked to strengthening implementation capacity, preserving solidarity, combating bureaucracy and commandism, and ensuring close ties between the Party, the State, and the people.

Ho Chi Minh consistently regarded the people's right to mastery, including that of ethnic minorities, as a fundamental feature of the new regime. He proposed the early organisation of a general election based on universal suffrage, whereby "all male and female citizens aged eighteen have the right to stand for election and to vote, regardless of wealth, religion, or ancestry". He further affirmed: "In the general election, all those who wish to serve the country have the right to stand for election; all citizens have the right to vote." These views reflect the guarantee of equal citizenship rights and the right

of all Vietnamese people, regardless of ethnicity, to participate in governing the country. The right to mastery and equality of ethnic communities was also enshrined in the Constitution. The 1946 Constitution stipulated: “All Vietnamese citizens have equal rights in all spheres: political, economic, and cultural”, and “are equal before the law and may participate in government and national construction according to their abilities and virtues”. In his *Report on the Draft Revised Constitution* in 1959, Ho Chi Minh emphasised: “Our country is a unified country comprising many ethnic groups. All ethnic groups living in Vietnam are equal in rights and duties.” Thus, promoting the right to mastery of ethnic communities must be linked to guaranteeing citizenship rights, equality, and participation in social governance, alongside the full discharge of duties towards the country.

Alongside promoting the people’s right to mastery, Ho Chi Minh attached particular importance to personnel work. He explained: “Officials are those who explain the policies of the Party and the Government to the people so that they understand and implement them, while also reporting the people’s circumstances to the Party and the Government so that they can formulate sound policies. Officials are therefore the foundation of all work. Training officials is therefore a fundamental task of the Party.” This view provides the basis for prioritising the training, professional development, succession planning, and deployment of ethnic minority officials, as well as strengthening the capacity of grassroots officials. These officials directly undertake communication, mobilisation, and implementation activities while promptly conveying the concerns and aspirations of ethnic communities to the Party and the State.

2.2.4. Principles of Ethnic Policy Implementation

2.2.4.1. *Solidarity among Ethnic Groups*

According to President Ho Chi Minh, although Vietnam’s ethnic groups differ in their levels of development, customs, practices, and languages, they share historical origins, a common destiny, and common interests within a unified country. This constitutes an objective and enduring foundation for ethnic solidarity and for generating the strength of the entire nation in the revolutionary cause. Solidarity provides not only the basis for mobilising forces to defend national independence and sovereignty but also a prerequisite for building a new society and ensuring prosperity, freedom, and happiness for all ethnic groups.

2.2.4.2. *Equality among Ethnic Groups*

The principle of equality in Ho Chi Minh’s thought on the ethnic question originates in the affirmation of fundamental human rights as universal values of foundational significance to all countries and peoples. Ho Chi Minh creatively applied this understanding to Vietnam’s historical and social conditions, making it an important theoretical basis for establishing equal relations among ethnic groups within the Vietnamese national community.

2.2.4.3. *Mutual Assistance and Support for Shared Development among Ethnic Groups*

According to President Ho Chi Minh, mutual assistance among ethnic groups must be grounded in sincerity, reflecting bonds of compatriotship and shared responsibility within a unified country. To achieve substantive equality, solidarity, and

mutual assistance among ethnic groups, it is necessary to resolutely overcome misguided attitudes and actions; eliminate feelings of inferiority, friction, and suspicion left by imperialism and feudalism; and build solidarity on the basis of equal rights and duties. Ho Chi Minh also emphasised the responsibility of Party committees, government authorities, mass organisations, and officials to overcome misguided attitudes such as majority-ethnic chauvinism, narrow ethnic particularism, and ethnic inferiority complexes. In his view, equality, solidarity, and mutual assistance among ethnic groups must extend beyond awareness or stated guidelines. They must be organised and realised through a broad national united front and linked to comprehensive economic, cultural, and social development in ethnic minority areas.

2.2.5. Methods of Ethnic Policy Implementation

2.2.5.1. Communication, Mobilisation, Education, and Persuasion of the People

Communication, mobilisation, education, and persuasion are important components of ideological work. According to President Ho Chi Minh, these constitute a unified activity encompassing three dimensions: first, a sound understanding of the purpose and role of communication; second, communication methods; and third, the requirements for those undertaking communication work. These three dimensions must remain integrated, organically connected, and mutually reinforcing. Those undertaking communication work must thoroughly understand their intended audiences.

2.2.5.2. Training and Professional Development of Ethnic Minority Officials and Promotion of Their Role

Ho Chi Minh attached particular importance to training and developing ethnic minority officials. In his view, these officials play an important role because they understand the realities, cultures, and psychology of ethnic communities and directly inform and mobilise the people to implement the Party's orientations and the State's policies and laws in ethnic minority and mountainous areas. In training ethnic minority officials, Ho Chi Minh required that learning be linked to practical tasks, that political and general education be combined with labour and production, and that unnecessarily lengthy approaches to learning be avoided.

2.2.5.3. Promoting Initiative, Self-Reliance, Resilience, and the Determination of Ethnic Communities to Improve Their Circumstances

According to Ho Chi Minh, effective ethnic policy implementation and improvements in the people's living standards require more than preferential policies from the Party and the State. Ethnic groups must also continually strive to improve their circumstances, remain united, care for and assist one another, and participate actively, consciously, and voluntarily in national construction and development. This is a necessary factor in ethnic policy implementation in Vietnam and an important condition for the country's sustainable development.

2.2.5.4. Formulating and Implementing Ethnic Policies Suited to the Characteristics of Each Region and Ethnic Group

According to Ho Chi Minh, effective ethnic policy implementation and the promotion of ethnic solidarity require a thorough understanding of mountainous areas,

their inhabitants, and ethnic communities, since each ethnic group has its own diverse and distinctive ways of life, psychology, identity, and language. Advancing the revolutionary cause in general and ethnic affairs in particular requires studying and understanding the customs and practices of each locality. In ethnic minority and mountainous areas, identifying policy content, measures, and implementation steps appropriate to specific circumstances is important and determines the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation. Policies must therefore be suited to the distinctive characteristics of each region and ethnic group and respect the interests, cultures, traditions, scripts, languages, customs, and practices of ethnic communities. During implementation, particular attention must be paid to the specific characteristics of each ethnic group arising from differences in psychology, beliefs, culture, customs, practices, and levels of socio-economic development, so that appropriate measures can be devised for each region and ethnic group.

Chapter 2 Summary

Chapter 2 clarifies the fundamental theoretical issues concerning ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought, providing a scholarly foundation for analysing implementation and proposing solutions for the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region. As the chapter establishing the theoretical foundations, it defines key analytical concepts and explains the core content of Ho Chi Minh's thought on ethnic policies and the methods of organising their implementation in practice, ensuring a connection between theory and empirical investigation. First, the chapter clarifies the concepts of ethnicity, ethnic policy, and ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought, providing a methodological basis for the dissertation's approach and conduct. By relating these concepts to the conditions of the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region, the chapter establishes that ethnic policy implementation is a comprehensive, continuous, and organised political and social process linked to the region's historical characteristics, natural conditions, level of economic development, cultural and social life, and multiethnic composition. It also analyses Ho Chi Minh's thought on ethnic policy implementation, clarifying the strategic importance of the ethnic question in Vietnam's revolutionary cause. According to Ho Chi Minh, ethnic policy implementation seeks not only to ensure equality, solidarity, and mutual assistance among ethnic groups but also to promote comprehensive development, improve the living standards of ethnic communities, strengthen the great national unity bloc, maintain political stability, and enhance national defence and security. On this basis, the chapter identifies the objectives, responsible actors, target groups, and priority areas, and clarifies the guiding principles of solidarity, equality, and mutual assistance for shared development as foundational values and methodological standards for ethnic policy implementation. The chapter also analyses implementation methods, including communication, mobilisation, and education; promoting the role of officials, particularly ethnic minority officials; fostering self-reliance and resilience; and formulating policies suited to each region and ethnic group.

Chapter 3

CURRENT STATE AND ISSUES ARISING IN ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT IN THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS REGION

3.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS REGION AND ITS ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

3.1.1. Characteristics of the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region

The region's geographical location and its natural, economic, cultural and social, and national defence and security conditions provide opportunities for development, cultural preservation, the strengthening of the great national unity bloc, and the enhancement of its defence posture. At the same time, they pose numerous challenges to ethnic policy implementation. Rugged terrain, harsh climatic conditions, limited infrastructure, and constraints relating to income, human resource quality, and disparities in education and healthcare have reduced policy effectiveness and sustainability and restricted ethnic communities' access to policies and their benefits. These conditions also place considerable demands on national defence and security governance. Ethnic policy implementation must therefore be linked to ensuring border security, consolidating trust among ethnic communities, and maintaining socio-political stability from the grassroots level.

3.1.2. Characteristics of Ethnic Communities in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region

In 2024, the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region had a population of 13.3389 million, accounting for approximately 15.2% of the national population. However, its population density was low, at 140.1 people per square kilometre, exceeding only that of the Central Highlands. The region has the highest proportion of ethnic minority residents in the country, with 31 ethnic communities; in several provinces, ethnic minorities account for more than 80% of the population. Its diverse cultural and social characteristics and ethnic composition directly influence ethnic policy implementation in a context where educational attainment and access to information and legal knowledge remain limited. Some residents continue to rely passively on external support because they do not fully understand the policies. Ethnic policy implementation must therefore be flexible and recognise ethnic communities as active participants, combining material support with capacity building while respecting and promoting cultural identities to strengthen the great national unity bloc.

3.2. CURRENT STATE OF ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT IN THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS REGION (2015-2025)

3.2.1. The Adoption and Implementation of Ethnic Policies in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 Period

During the 2015-2025 period, the Party and the State adopted a relatively comprehensive system of guidelines and policies to promote development in ethnic

minority areas, reflecting continuity with and the application of Ho Chi Minh's thought on ethnic affairs. These policies focused on economic development, sustainable poverty reduction, improvements in educational attainment and public knowledge, national defence and security, and the preservation and promotion of ethnic cultural identities, thereby gradually improving the living standards of ethnic communities.

Regarding the institutional framework, the system of ethnic policies continued to be refined through the 2013 Constitution and 97 laws and codes containing nearly 300 articles related to ethnic affairs. The Government and the Prime Minister issued 188 policies that remain in force, including 136 ethnic policies. However, policy coverage across sectors remained uneven, particularly in healthcare, culture, and national defence and security, indicating that the objective of human development in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought had not been fully realised.

Regarding strategic orientations, important Party resolutions, including Resolution No. 24-NQ/TW (2003), Resolution No. 37-NQ/TW (2004), and Resolution No. 11-NQ/TW (2022), established an approach to regional development centred on harnessing potential, ensuring equity among ethnic groups, and linking economic development with stronger national defence and security. In the new period, the adoption of Resolution No. 88/2019/QH14, Resolution No. 120/2020/QH14, and Decision No. 1719/QĐ-TTg (2021) provided an important legal framework for the National Target Programme for Socio-economic Development in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas. Regional planning and coordination mechanisms were also further refined, although some sectors, such as forest management, protection, and development, continued to face constraints in resources and implementation mechanisms.

At the local level, provinces in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region proactively translated central guidelines into resolutions, programmes, and plans suited to local realities. These focused on sustainable poverty reduction, socio-economic development in ethnic minority areas, social protection, stronger national defence and security, and the promotion of great national unity. Localities such as Ha Giang, Tuyen Quang, Hoa Binh, Dien Bien, and Lang Son adopted numerous thematic resolutions, accelerated administrative reform and the decentralisation of management, and implemented the National Target Programme in accordance with local conditions.

3.2.2. Achievements, Limitations, and Their Causes in Ethnic Policy Implementation in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 Period

3.2.2.1. Achievements and Their Causes in Ethnic Policy Implementation in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 Period

Achievements

First, Party committees, government authorities, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, and mass organisations in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region gradually developed a greater understanding of the position, role, and significance of ethnic

policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the cause of national renewal.

Second, ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region achieved positive results in several respects, including the actors responsible for implementation, beneficiaries, and the participation of social forces. These results clearly reflected the principle of "taking the people as the foundation" and the mobilisation of the strength of great national unity.

Third, positive results were achieved in safeguarding and promoting the right to mastery of ethnic communities, progressively affirming the people's role as active participants in local socio-economic development.

Fourth, different groups of ethnic policies contributed to comprehensive development in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region, reflecting a substantive application of Ho Chi Minh's thought. Accordingly, socio-economic development in ethnic minority areas was situated within the overall national development strategy and linked to improving the people's living standards and harnessing local resources and capacities.

Fifth, positive results were achieved in understanding and implementing the principles of solidarity, equality, and mutual assistance among ethnic groups, as reflected in improved social relations and stronger trust and consensus among ethnic communities.

Sixth, important innovations were introduced in methods of implementing ethnic policies for ethnic communities, contributing to greater policy effectiveness and efficiency and positive changes across multiple dimensions.

Causes of the Achievements

First and foremost, the results achieved in ethnic policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the period under review stemmed from the resolute, unified, and consistent leadership and direction of the Party and the State, from the central to the local level.

Second, mobilising the strength of the great national unity bloc while enhancing the role of ethnic communities as active participants provided an important enabling condition and endogenous driving force for ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought.

Third, the organisation of ethnic policy implementation was increasingly improved towards clearer responsibilities, closer alignment with practical conditions, and greater effectiveness.

Fourth, progress in economic development and the increasingly effective utilisation of the region's potential and advantages contributed to these achievements.

Fifth, positive results were also associated with increasingly coordinated infrastructure investment and improvements in the investment and business environment.

Sixth, achievements were supported by the coordinated implementation of social protection policies and ethnic affairs activities suited to the cultures, livelihoods, customs, and needs of ethnic communities.

Seventh, achievements were underpinned by efforts to ensure national defence and security, maintain socio-political stability, and build borders characterised by peace, friendship, and cooperation.

3.2.2.2. Limitations and Their Causes in Ethnic Policy Implementation in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region during the 2015-2025 Period

Limitations

First, the translation of ethnic policies into specific measures and the organisation of regional linkages and implementation coordination remain limited. Some policies are not fully suited to interregional and interprovincial characteristics or the specific conditions of individual localities.

Second, shortcomings in officials' capacity and the resources available for organising ethnic policy implementation directly affect the quality, progress, and effectiveness of policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

Third, the outcomes of policies promoting economic development, poverty reduction, and the narrowing of development disparities are not yet sufficiently sustainable. Economic restructuring remains slow in some localities, while substantial disparities in income and living standards persist among population groups.

Fourth, the outcomes of ethnic policy implementation in cultural and social fields remain uneven. Efforts to preserve and promote the traditional cultural values of ethnic groups face difficulties, while the quality of education, training, and healthcare remains limited in some localities.

Fifth, strengthening solidarity, consolidating trust, and ensuring political security and public order and safety in some ethnic minority areas continue to present issues requiring further attention. The linkage between ethnic policy implementation and national defence and security needs to be strengthened.

Sixth, shortcomings remain in the methods of organising ethnic policy implementation, particularly in policy communication and dissemination. Mobilisation methods in some localities are not fully suited to ethnic communities' languages, cultures, and conditions of access to information.

Causes of the Limitations

First, harsh natural conditions and highly fragmented terrain constitute important objective factors constraining socio-economic development in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

Second, the region's low initial level of socio-economic development directly contributes to numerous limitations in ethnic policy implementation.

Third, barriers associated with social conditions, population characteristics, and customary ways of life constitute another important cause.

Fourth, insufficient initiative and political determination among some local Party committees and government authorities are also notable causes.

Fifth, an attitude of passively awaiting and relying on support from the central authorities and the State persists among some officials and residents.

Sixth, shortcomings remain in the direction, administration, and organisation of policy implementation.

Seventh, communication and mobilisation methods and the quality of officials responsible for ethnic affairs remain limited.

Eighth, domestic and international circumstances also exert additional pressures on ethnic policy implementation.

Ninth, shortcomings in institutions, administrative reform, and the application of information technology also reduce the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation.

3.3. ISSUES ARISING FROM ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT IN THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS REGION DURING THE 2015-2025 PERIOD

3.3.1. Issues Concerning Awareness and Methods of Organising Ethnic Policy Implementation in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Thought

3.3.2. Issues Concerning the Coordination and Consistency of the Policy System and Implementation Coordination Mechanisms

3.3.3. Issues Concerning Resources, Procedures, and Progress in Ethnic Policy Implementation

3.3.4. Issues Concerning Sustainable Development Linked to Livelihoods and the Narrowing of Gaps in Access to Public Services

3.3.5. Cultural and Social Issues, Human Resources, and the Requirements for Maintaining Political Stability and National Defence and Security

Chapter 3 Summary

Chapter 3 systematically analyses ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region from 2015 to the present. The findings indicate that the implementation of ethnic policy guidelines and policies has produced numerous achievements in socio-economic development. Nevertheless, policy implementation in practice continues to reveal significant limitations. Based on an analysis of achievements, limitations, and their causes, Chapter 3 identifies issues arising from the continued implementation of ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought. It focuses on the need to deepen understanding, reform mechanisms and policies, and improve the effectiveness of state administration and methods of organising implementation in ways suited to the new context and the region's distinctive characteristics. This provides the basis for the directions and solutions proposed in Chapter 4 to improve the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation and promote sustainable development in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

Chapter 4

DIRECTIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT IN THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS REGION IN THE COMING PERIOD

4.1. FORECAST OF FACTORS INFLUENCING ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS REGION

4.1.1. Impacts of the International Situation

First, the impacts of trends towards peace, cooperation, competition, and conflict in international relations on the resources and environment for ethnic policy implementation.

Second, the impacts of globalisation and international integration on socio-economic development, cultural preservation, and the strengthening of solidarity among ethnic groups.

Third, the impacts of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on methods of organising ethnic policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

4.1.2. Impacts of the Domestic Situation

First, climate change, natural disasters, and environmental degradation directly affect livelihoods, living conditions, and the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation.

Second, the reorganisation of administrative units and the establishment of a two-tier local government system affect the actors responsible for implementation, coordination mechanisms, and methods of ethnic policy implementation at the grassroots level.

Third, ethnic and religious issues, together with activities exploiting these issues, continue to affect ethnic policy implementation.

Fourth, economic restructuring, industrialisation, modernisation, and regional linkages affect the content, resources, and requirements for ensuring equity in ethnic policy implementation.

Fifth, the orientation towards developing tourism into an important economic sector creates new opportunities while also requiring cultural preservation and sustainable livelihoods for ethnic communities.

Sixth, the orientation towards developing a green economy and a circular economy and protecting the environment places new demands on ethnic policy implementation.

4.2. DIRECTIONS FOR ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT IN THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS REGION THROUGH 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045

4.2.1. Linking Ethnic Policy Implementation to the Tasks of National Construction, Development, and Firm Protection of the Homeland in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region

4.2.2. Implementing Ethnic Policies on the Basis of Strengthening and Harnessing the Great National Unity Bloc and Ensuring the Principles of Solidarity, Equality, Mutual Assistance, and Support for Shared Development

4.2.3. Linking Ethnic Policy Implementation to the Promotion of Independence, Autonomy, Self-Reliance, and Resilience and the Preservation and Promotion of Ethnic Cultural Identities

4.2.4. Ensuring That Ethnic Policy Implementation Is Suited to the Specific Characteristics of Each Region and Ethnic Group, with a Focus on Sustainable Socio-economic Development, Effective Poverty Reduction, and the Narrowing of Development Gaps

4.2.5. Linking Ethnic Policy Implementation to Improvements in Educational Attainment and Public Knowledge, the Gradual Elimination of Harmful and Outdated Customs and Practices, and the Promotion of Gender Equality

4.3. SOLUTIONS FOR ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S THOUGHT IN THE NORTHERN MIDLANDS AND MOUNTAINOUS REGION THROUGH 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045

4.3.1. Raising Awareness among Actors Responsible for Implementation and Promoting the Active Role of Target Groups in Ethnic Policy Implementation

4.3.2. Refining Mechanisms and Policies to Improve the Effectiveness of Ethnic Policy Implementation

4.3.3. Effectively Organising Ethnic Policy Implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region

4.3.4. Strengthening Inspection and Oversight, Conducting Interim and Final Reviews, and Drawing Lessons from Ethnic Policy Implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region

4.3.5. Strengthening the Capacity of Ethnic Communities in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region to Adapt Proactively to Climate Change

4.3.6. Promoting Self-Reliance and Resilience among Ethnic Communities

Chapter 4 Summary

Chapter 4 focuses on forecasts concerning the international and domestic contexts and the factors influencing ethnic policy implementation in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region under new conditions. It also establishes directions and proposes solutions for translating his thought into practice. In doing so, the dissertation affirms the particular importance of strengthening and harnessing the great national unity bloc for the region's stability and sustainable development.

Drawing on theoretical and practical analysis, the chapter identifies the principal directions for ethnic policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region. These include linking implementation to the strategy for national construction and protection; strengthening the great national unity bloc on the basis of solidarity, equality, and mutual assistance for shared development; promoting self-reliance and resilience alongside the preservation of cultural identities; ensuring suitability to the

specific characteristics of each region and ethnic group; promoting sustainable socio-economic development, poverty reduction, and the narrowing of development gaps; and linking implementation to improvements in educational attainment and public knowledge, the elimination of harmful and outdated customs, and the promotion of gender equality.

To translate these directions into practice, the dissertation proposes six main groups of solutions: raising awareness and responsibility among the actors involved and promoting ethnic communities' role as active participants in ethnic policy implementation; refining mechanisms and policies to improve implementation effectiveness; effectively organising ethnic policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region; strengthening inspection and oversight, conducting interim and final reviews, and drawing lessons; strengthening ethnic communities' capacity to adapt proactively to climate change; and promoting their self-reliance and resilience. These solutions are closely interrelated and place ethnic communities' participation, access to benefits, and capacity for autonomous action at their centre. They link State support with the mobilisation of communities' internal resources and capacities, sustainable development, and the safeguarding of national defence and security.

CONCLUSION

Based on systematic theoretical and empirical research, the dissertation has contributed to clarifying the conceptual content, methods, and enabling conditions for organising and implementing ethnic policies in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's thought in the current context.

Through a selective review of studies from Vietnam and abroad, the dissertation has identified existing research findings and gaps, particularly concerning the application of Ho Chi Minh's thought to ethnic policy implementation in specific regions.

The dissertation has also investigated and assessed ethnic policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region, revealing significant achievements in transforming socio-economic conditions, improving the living standards of ethnic minorities, strengthening the grassroots political system, and maintaining socio-political stability. Nevertheless, implementation continues to face limitations, including development disparities among localities, the limited effectiveness of some policies, and implementation practices in some areas that remain perfunctory and insufficiently adapted to the specific characteristics of each region and ethnic group. Based on an analysis of implementation and influencing factors, the dissertation identifies five directions and proposes six main groups of solutions to improve the effectiveness of ethnic policy implementation in the Northern Midlands and Mountainous Region.

In the country's new development context, continued research into, application of, and development of Ho Chi Minh's thought on ethnic policies are particularly important. Through its findings, the dissertation contributes to expanding and deepening scholarly understanding and provides important grounds for policy formulation and implementation in practice.

LIST OF THE AUTHOR’S PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION

1. Dang Ngoc Mai (2024), “Applying Ho Chi Minh’s Thought on Cultural and Educational Development for Ethnic Minorities in Ha Giang Province”, *Journal of Ho Chi Minh Studies*, No. 63, pp. 91-97.
2. Dang Ngoc Mai (2024), “Applying Ho Chi Minh’s Thought to Ethnic Policy Implementation in Ha Giang Province”, *Political Theory Journal*, Special Issue, Fourth Quarter, pp. 174-181.
3. Dang Ngoc Mai (2025), “Principles of Ethnic Policy Implementation in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s Thought in the Cause of National Renewal”, *Youth Magazine*, No. 87, pp. 6-8.