VIETNAM ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY

NGUYEN TAI DONG - CAO THU HANG
(Editors)

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF MARKET ECONOMY

INTERNATIONAL AND VIETNAMESE

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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Published with the support of the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung
Southeast Asia-Hanoi Office

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 11

Part 1

SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON "JUSTICE"

Judith Dellheim.....15

THEORY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE - FROM MARX TO LENIN AND ITS APPLICATION BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM

Ho Trong Hoai, Nguyen Anh Tuan, Le Xuan Tung.....36

FROM MARXISM TO VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY'S THOUGHT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN CONDITIONS OF SOCIAL-ORIENTED MARKET ECONOMY

Nguyen Minh Hoan.....54

DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM'S THEORY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE SOCIALIST-ORIENTED MARKET ECONOMY CONDITION

Nguyen Dinh Bac.....67

Part 2
REALITY AND PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN CONTEMPORARY VIETNAM

SOCIAL EQITY IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT OF SCIENTIFIC-TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION IN VIETNAM

Luong Dinh Hai 83

IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL EQUITY IN THE RELATIONSHIP WITH ECONOMIC GROWTH, CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND SOCIAL PROGRESSION IN VIETNAM IN RENOVATING PERIOD

Dang Huu Toan 98

THINKING WITH HO CHI MINH ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES AND CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKET ECONOMY IN VIETNAM

Do Thi Kim Hoa 116

Part 3
IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF MARKET ECONOMY

BETWEEN THE NATIONALIZATION OF INDUSTRY AND CODETERMINATION: A CASE STUDY ON THE SOCIALIZATION OF MEANS OF PRODUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

Kim Sang Bong 133

THE CHALLENGE OF IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN A DEVELOPING MARKET ECONOMY: THE CASE OF SLOVAKIA

Michal Valco 153

SOLVING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL EQUITY AND REDUCE POVERTY IN VIETNAM

Nguyen Thi Lan Huong 175

SOME QUESTIONS POSED FOR VIETNAM FROM THEORIES OF ETHIC AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Nguyen Anh Tuan 195

ECONOMIC EQUITY AND SOME ECONOMIC EQUITY PROBLEMS IN VIETNAM RECENTLY

Nguyen Tai Dong 211

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OWNERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION JUSTICE IN CONDITIONS OF DEVELOPING SOCIALIST-ORIENTED MARKET ECONOMY IN VIETNAM TODAY

Tran Hai Minh 227

SOCIAL JUSTICE SEEKING FROM ETHICS AND ECONOMY, ABILITY TO APPLY IN VIETNAM TODAY

Nguyen Thi Tho, Le Cong Su 233

INCOME INEQUALITY IN VIETNAM: THE SITUATION AND SOLUTIONS

Lam Ba Hoa, Nguyen Thi Thu Ha, Phan Kim Tuan, Nguyen Duc Tien 246

COMPLETING PRODUCT DISTRIBUTION RELATIONSHIP THROUGH SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM FOR THE SAKE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN VIETNAM TODAY

Nguyen Thi Nhu Hue 262

Part 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN CULTURE, EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENT

EDUCATIONAL INJUSTICE IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION: REFLECTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Wang Shang-Wen 275

GENDER EQUALITY IN ACCESSING TO EDUCATION IN VIETNAM - ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Vo Van Thang,Thai Huynh Phuong Lan 285

DEALING WITH THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY IN VIETNAM TODAY: CURRENT SITUATION AND PROBLEMS
Doan The Hung, Nguyen Tuan Anh.....295

EQUALITY AND EQUITY IN VIETNAM'S EDUCATION SYSTEM
Hoang Thi Thuy An.....307

SOME ISSUES OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN VIETNAM
Pham Van Duong.....322

ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY IN THE CURRENT MARKET ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
Pham Van Hung.....344

Part 5

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS

SOCIAL JUSTICE AMONG ETHNIC MINORITIESIN VIETNAM NOWADAYS
Bui Thi Ngoc Lan.....361

EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES IN VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD OF DOI MOI
Nguyen Thi Luyen.....377

SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE POOR: CONSULTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MGNREGA PROGRAM IN INDIA AND SOME PROPOSALS FOR SUSTAINABLE POVERTY REDUCTION IN VIETNAM
Vu Thi Thu Hang, Shreekant Sharma ,Preetish Sharma.....394

Part 6

STATE'S ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL JUSTICE

THE ROLE OF STATE ENSURING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKET ECONOMY: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE
Nguyen Duy Loi.....423

THE STATE'S ROLE IN ENSURING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKET ECONOMY
Tran Van Phong, Ngo Thi Nu 431

THE STATE'S ROLE IN ENSURING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKET ECONOMY IN VIETNAM TODAY
Do Minh Hop 445

THE STATE IN ENSURING SOCIAL EQUALITY IN VIETNAM TODAY
Le Huu Ai, Le Van Thao 457

THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE OF VIETNAM IN RESOLVING THE ISSUES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE TODAY
Le Thi Thanh Ha 473

INTRODUCTION

Social equity is an essential and legitimate aspiration of human and the core value of socialism.

For over 30 years, along with the economic growth, social equity has become one of the important and prerequisite requirements in Vietnam. In the first few years of the country's comprehensive renovation, the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) has clearly and doubtlessly asserted that the economic growth should not be implemented at all costs. The Vietnamese people under the leading of the CPV have to effectively and simultaneously implement social goals such as eliminating hunger and reducing poverty, ensuring opportunities, and improving the living conditions of remoted areas and regions for the next generations. Vietnam should be consistent with the pathway to socialism. To achieve those goals, it is necessary to fight for social equity, make it the priority of social development. Social equity is not less important, but at least equal to the goal of economic growth. It is the core factor that ensures the stability of the country and the sustainability of the development. At the same time, it shows the advantage of Vietnam society that put humanity at the center of economic – social development.

This monograph is the result of the international workshop held by the Institute of Philosophy, Vietnam Academy of Social Science, and the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung Southeast Asia - Hanoi Office in 2019. This is

not the first international workshop of the Institute of Philosophy about this topic, but the continuation of the workshops about the related topics which were implemented three years ago. The first workshop was about equity in distribution, held in Buôn Mê Thuột, Đắc Lắc in 2017. The second workshop was about the relationship between social equity and democracy, held in Vĩnh Yên, Vĩnh Phúc in 2018. This seminar continues to contribute to clarifying the realistic problems of implementing social equity with international and Vietnamese experience. This is an open forum for scientists, policymakers, and managers to have a chance to present, introduce, and share different approaching methods as well as research results about social equity and the implementation of social equity.

We would like to thank the Vietnam Academy of Social Science and Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung Southeast Asia - Hanoi Office for the support to publish this monograph. We would also like to show our gratitude towards Mr. Philip Degenhardt, Ms. Triệu Tuyết Mai Hương, Ms. Nguyễn Thuý Hà, Dr. Trần Tuấn Phong, and many other partners in RLS and the Institute of Philosophy for their encouragement, and support. Especially, we would like to send our most sincere thanks to the Vietnamese and international scholars, who have shared their knowledge, experience, and passion in their articles. Although there are still some differences in the articles that need to be discussed and clarified, with the spirit of science, we respect and try to preserve the original opinions of the contributors of this monograph to introduce to our readers. Hopefully, this book will inspire those who are interested in the theories of social equity.

Institute of Philosophy

PART 1

SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON "JUSTICE"

Judith Dellheim[1]

"Justice" is a contested term. The crucial question is, who wants to mobilize whom by means of the term "justice" for which goal and against [under] which social conditions, and why? So "justice" is a term made use of to activate people, to change concrete living conditions in a concrete society. This is often or normally connected with a change of ruling political actors. So the term "justice" should be taken seriously by the supporters of the socialist idea.

"Justice" has to do with interests, with the confrontation with the inequality of individuals in a society. This inequality can be connected with different characteristics of an individual, e.g. being musical. But it is already another issue of reality if a musical child will be discovered and promoted. In many countries a highly musical child in a poor rural family has significantly worse chances for getting the possibility to develop its talent than an "urban kid" in a well-equipped school. This is not just. But this unjustice is different one if the hegemonic group in the society is aimed at dealing with this unjustice, when it knows that the society is still not just, but wants to make it just.

1 Dr., Rosa – Luxemburg – Stiftung, Berlin.

"Justice" can be demanded also for racist reasons. Unfortunately there are very many examples of this: Last year in Germany, an opinion poll on justice was discussed. Relatively many people supported a position on justice like: "Social justice is when Germans don't have to stand behind. Now first the refugees come, then nothing for a long time, then the Germans"[1]. But the people who spoke so, haven't experienced a situation they explained to the sociologists to be unjust. In reality, they demand a discriminating, antisolidarity behaviour in relation to others. Many others have declared: "Justice is an objective norm. It has nothing to do with the personality of the person. So one could say that "justice would be given when only the work performance decides about the salary"[2]. But the wage is only one of the many questions in people's lives that can be discussed as "wage justice". Another question is: "How much tax one must pay from his or her wage?" Here one speaks of "distributive justice". But another question is: "Does everyone have the same prerequisites at all for being able to realize a concrete work performance?" No, they do not have the same prerequites, because the social origin, the living conditions, the concrete place of birth decide about work performances. So the question is again: is the hegemonic group in the society aimed at dealing with existing unjustice, does is want to make the society just?

So "justice" is a moral term an evaluative term made use of in moral and in political debates] and it is no coincidence that Karl Marx and Rosa Luxemburg use it in political debates, but not in their political-economic analyses of societal reproduction, of the reproduction of power relations, of social domination, exploitation, oppression. So we also should use the *term* to activate people for dealing with social problems and changing the society towards a society of free and equal people.

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1 https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/gerechtigkeit-ein-begriff-viele-facetten.1148.de.html?dram:article_id=388791

2 https://www.you-fm.de/lifestyle/gerechtigkeit---was-bedeutet-das-ueberhaupt,ist-das-gerecht-100.html

This paper starts with making clear the issue by using Marx's "Critique of the Gotha Programme", the programme of the German social democrats. From here it turns to the issue of classes and ends with some conclusions for research and practical politics" in an understanding of Marx.

I.

In the discussion about "justice" we must *first* clarify why we are discussing justice with whom? What is our goal? *Second*, in this context, we need to clarify what "justice" refers to. And *third* – what is connected with the first question: Do we deal with structural unjustice?

In order to make the problem clearer, I shall discuss a debate which we have often had in the German Democratic Republic and which also has to do with the fact that the German Democratic Republic no longer exists and that we now live in Germany, a country with a capitalist mode of production. Maybe many readers in Vietnam are familiar with the "Critique of the Gotha Programme" by Karl Marx. I would like to mention two well-known passages: The first one makes clear, that human labour cannot realised without metabolism. The second one discusses the issue of justice.

1) "Labor is *not the source* of all wealth. *Nature* is just as much the source of use values (and it is surely of such that material wealth consists!) as labor, which itself is only the manifestation of a force of nature, human labor power. the above phrase is to be found in all children›s primers and is correct insofar as it is implied that labor is performed with the appurtenant subjects and instruments. But a socialist program cannot allow such bourgeois phrases to pass over in silence the *conditions* that lone give them meaning. And insofar as man from the beginning behaves toward nature, the primary source of all instruments and subjects of labor, as an owner, treats her as belonging to him, his labor becomes the source of use values, therefore also of wealth"[1].

1 https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1875/gotha/ch01.htm

And

2) "What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally, and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges. Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society – after the deductions have been made – exactly what he gives to it. What he has given to it is his individual quantum of labor. For example, the social working day consists of the sum of the individual hours of work; the individual labor time of the individual producer is the part of the social working day contributed by him, his share in it. He receives a certificate from society that he has furnished such-and-such an amount of labor (after deducting his labor for the common funds); and with this certificate, he draws from the social stock of means of consumption as much as the same amount of labor cost. The same amount of labor which he has given to society in one form, he receives back in another … But one man is superior to another physically, or mentally, and supplies more labor in the same time, or can labor for a longer time; and labor, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard of measurement. This *equal* right is an unequal right for unequal labor. It recognizes no class differences, because everyone is only a worker like everyone else; but it tacitly recognizes unequal individual endowment, and thus productive capacity, as a natural privilege. It is, therefore, a right of inequality, in its content, like every right. Right, by its very nature, can consist only in the application of an equal standard; but unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are measurable only by an equal standard insofar as they are brought under an equal point of view, are taken from one definite side only – for instance, in the present case, are regarded *only as workers* and nothing more is seen in them, everything else being ignored. Further, one worker is married, another is not; one has more children than another, and so on and so forth.

Thus, with an equal performance of labor, and hence an equal in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right, instead of being equal, would have to be unequal.

But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby.

In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-around development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly – only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"[1].

Maybe at this stage of our argument the purpose of the first quotation in a discussion on justice is a bit difficult to grasp. Because of this the second quotation should be discussed first. But before doing so, a remark on principle seems to be unavoidable: we have to re-read Marx critically. He was a human being who also was mistaken. He was born more than 200 years ago and could not foresee the real development we have to face. But Marx is a good reference for a global debate among scientists which aim a society of free and equal people who live in mutual solidarity and in respect to nature. And he helps us to understand the problem we discuss as a complex societal one.

Here Marx stated that "justice" is a dynamic social issue. Its understanding depends on concrete conditions. But the crucial question is: does the development of the society go in the direction of a society

1 Ibid.

of free and equal people who live in mutual solidarity and in respect to nature? This is not a matter of mere declarations of principle, but of real poliitcs and policy and so of real development. Only when the majority of the society and above all the socially weakest people in it can perceive concrete attempts and efforts of the ruling forces, of the administration, of the political and social actors, to change social conditions in the direction indicated, we could speak about a just policy and a development towards justice. So "justice" depends on concrete criteria and is relative. Formally it is just to regard and to treat the members of the society as equals, but a formal equality does not automatically mean a real equality. Here firstly justice is related to an exchange of equal values among equal individuals. The same scale, the same criterion is used for all of them. But then the real inequality of really existing people is regarded and the question of balancing real differences is discussed. This is fair, and just, because the different individuals have different abilities and skills, different living conditions, different social origins, different biographies. The three crucial questions are:

1) Is the balance and its concrete form discussed and decided democratically?

2) is the accompanying practice of compensation at the same time a policy pursued that consistently realises concrete steps towards real social equality?

3) is this policy itself democratically discussed and decided? It is therefore a matter of dealing politically with objective social contradictions and with their subjective reflection.

The GDR and other so-called state-socialist countries ceased to exist or reintroduced the capitalist mode of production because they were unable or unwilling to answer on these three questions with "YES!

The ruling forces feared the political confrontation with differences of interest and therefore pursued a policy that allowed these differences of interest to grow instead of fighting them. They sought compromises that were not aimed at creating real democratic equality because,

firstly, they feared democratic discussion, *secondly*, they did not or inconsistently conduct the required political debate, and *thirdly*, they were incapable of pursuing a social and economic policy that gradually made real equality possible. Thereby they have demotivated the real and gainful supporters of a socialist vision and strengthened those who have not made real social equality and solidarity with the weaker their individual and political priorities. The ruling forces in the GDR could not and did not want to mediate between formal and real equality in such a way that labour productivity is increased and that production, distribution and consumption can be shaped in such a mode that the living conditions of all are improved and yet all are getting more and more socially equal.

People's living conditions ultimately express themselves in their well-being. They determine in a relevant way the physical and mental constitution of people as well as their interests. In addition, "interests" depend on the position of people in society. And their understanding of "justice" has to do with their interests, with their understanding and dealing with social hierarchies. People's living conditions are always at the same time concrete metabolism between people and nature and relationships between people, their way of living together. And this is where Marx's first quote comes into play in three ways:

Firstly, the concrete natural conditions determine the work results of the people, which are evaluated according to a formally equal measure. *Secondly*, they determine the physical constitution and thus the concrete working capacity of people who cannot make fully sovereign decisions about it. *Thirdly*, the behaviour of people towards nature determines the living conditions of people who cannot influence their natural and social conditions at all, or only hardly at all. The term "environmental justice" refers in particular to this last dimension.

II.

So it is necessary to ask about "classes" and about "class politics" and the ecological dimension connected with them. Five reflections seem to be useful here:

(1) "Society" as a whole complex of individuals may be explained., in their relations with each other The individuals as social beings and the society as a whole move in metabolic processes with nature. The individuals differ from each other or have similarities according to their gender and sexual orientation, their physical and mental constitution, their ethnic, social and cultural origins, their place of birth and the centre of gravity of the lives, their position in the societal work and in their leisure environment and in their reproduction processes, their world view, their political orientation, their habitus, their position in the life of societies. The two issues which for the individual are crucial interrelated issues in social life:

- Who can and may why command whom to work under which conditions – with which individual, social and ecological consequences? (a);

- who, how and why can appropriate, compare, evaluate and reward whose work results with what individual, societal and ecological consequences)? (b).

These are the questions about the social hierarchies in the system of work of a given society, in gender relations and in the family, in trans- and international relations. At the same time, such hierarchies determine concrete metabolism between individuals and societies with nature. A society with such hierarchies cannot be just. A society where the ruling policy and the real development are oriented towards overcoming hierarchies can be understood as „relatively just". To force and evaluate progress in this development evaluative terms like social justice, gender justice, distribution justice, wage justice, ethnical justice, cultural justice, ecological justice can be used.

This approach differs e.g, from the discussion on identities in that it talks about individuals, that there are indeed social hierarchies according to personality traits and takes them seriously, but puts them into the context of the the complexity of the relations of power. I.e. the social hierarchies. Personality traits are determined on the basis of their relationship to the two key questions, because (a) and (b) are questions

about the materielle existence. But often in the criticised debate on identities the terms gender justice, distribution justice, wage justice, ethnical justice, cultural justice, ecological justice are also used. So one questions is to ask about the understanding of „social justice" and the relation of these terms to the decisive questions (a) and (b).

(2) A critical analysis in the Marxian understanding of "society" asks

How and what causes unjustice – and why these hierarchies and with which individual, societal and ecological development consequences emerge, how they interact with each other (a),

which actors interact with each other and how, why and with which consequences it is possible to deal with these hierarchies (b),

and what the emancipative-solidarity-oriented actors can learn from it (c).

A critical analysis of the society is the basis for a socialist transformation research and a component of socialist transformation research as the basis for socialist policy.

With a view to the history, in particular, whether concrete developments could have gone differently,

- concrete actors had, within the scope of their possibilities, changed at specific points in time traded (a),

- but why they traded the way they traded (b),

- what the emancipative-solidary actors can learn from this (c).

Looking to the future, the following two questions are of interest to socialist transformation research concerning the past, as well as the present:

(I). Which social developments are going on and which scenarios for the future can be derived from them? What do they mean for the realization of a the desired transformation to a society of the free and equal, which is based on solidarity live together, maintain and improve their natural living conditions? One such transformation would be the

progressive structural repression and ultimately the overcoming of all socially and ecologically destructive processes. People as individuals and organized into collectives and institutions would thus deal with their social relationships and their metabolic processes with nature in a way that they are progressively dismantling social hierarchies and at the same time, gaining control of their living activities, especially their economic life, with its impact on the biosphere step by step. While this is maintained and improved, the people will be increasingly free, socially equal and in solidarity with one another. The people can learn so and act so motivating themselves and each other with politics and ideologies having the term "justice" as a cornerstone or a pillar.

(II). What can today's actors who are striving for such a socialist transformation and who are willing to enter into different scenarios of future societal development, do in order to preserve, use and sustainably increase opportunities – in order to initiate, promote and advance social-ecological transformation? What does this mean for their actions, their political strategies and their practices of self-change in short, medium and long terms? "justice" can again become an activating term in these political strategies.

(1) The formation and development of classes go hand in hand with the movement of hierarchies in the societal labour and work processes and with the examination of these hierarchies. Specific similarities and differences between the members of society arise in their relationships with each other in relation to their position in societal work, the appropriation of the results of the work and the discussion of them with regard to these relationships as with the metabolic processes with nature. Social groups are forced to take joint social and political action to ensure that they will be able to claim members as individuals. To constitute oneself as a class means, to differentiate oneself from others, to be distinguished and at the same time to be part of the group to encourage each other to act together. Terms such as "lumpenproletariat" or "workers' aristocracy" stand for the fact that there is no automatism between the general position in the labour of

society and in the reproduction process and the individual and collective engagement with this position, the social hierarchies and the metabolic process with nature. Marx described the formation of the working class as the workers' confrontation with their competition as the owners of the commodity labour force. The historical role of the working class, he connected with the tendency of the capitalist mode of production to generalize the most modern means of production and with the fact that in order to exist, they must sell their labour force. Class is therefore a historical category in many respects: the places where the most modern means of production change, as does the context in which they are used have a societal impact: The societal working process, the socialisation of work, the social division of labour are developing and with it the ecological consequences and the interests of the workers are developing as well. In addition, there are changes in their way of life: when housing, education, medical care and pension also and in particular depend more and more on the participation in the financial markets, workers cannot think „only" as workers, but have also tot hink as investors and speculants. This makes their political organisation even more complicated. The political system also plays a highly relevant role in the constitution process of the class – in relation to the possibilities of political self-organization. And again "justice" is an essential term for self-organisation of workers becoming aware of commonalities and differences in interests, in their conceptions of individual and social life.

(2) As radical historical thinking, modern materialist thinking cannot end itself? ahistorical generalizations, but also always takes into account the historical specificity of the societal and political issues examined or addressed in political practice. Here, the distinction between pre-modern – economic and social relations of personal dependency – and modern effectively mediated relations of domination is central. So e.g. a man who forbids his wife to apply for a job at a factory can be an active member of a trade union and regard himself as „left". But he cannot be a left one and his left colleagues may not ignore his brutal relation to his wife. So the needed destinction is particularly evident in the difficulties to which the politics of emancipative-solidary actors comes up in our

heterogenous societies. The solution to these problems has proved to be more complicated than this in the theory formation called "Marxism" was mostly accepted. In addition, historical observation forces us to be aware of the complexity of the social formations examined in this study including the gender and identification relationships realized in them, and including their socio-ecological conditions of reproduction – instead of falling into "class reductionism" that discredits class analysis, as it is, indeed, necessary. But in the discussion about these issues, again "justice" is a keyword.

(3) Since classes are formed in social conflicts, "class politics" should be understood as a double search process: *on the one hand*, it should be structured according to the common interests, possibilities of action and options for solving the problem social, ecological and global problems, *on the other hand* it should follow the reference to the interests and problems concerning the change and reorganization of the societal working process in its metabolic process with nature. This means in particular, that the individual problems and social hierarchies according to personality traits in relation to the "two decisive factors" mentioned under (1) Who commands/dominates whom, why and with which individual, societal and ecological consequences (a), who can and may approriate, evaluate and reward whose results of work with which individual, social and ecological consequences can and may become determinant (b). Also in dealing with these issue „justice" remains a significant issue.[1]

III.

Since the end of the Second World War, the spiral of violence has reached a climax worldwide and also in Europe and threatens to increase even further. In Europe, wars have once again become reality. The ecological kipping points (limits for the carrying capacity of natural systems) have in part already been exceeded and a global ecological collapse – in the sense of irreversible damage to the entire terrestrial

1 https://ifg.rosalux.de/2018/01/11/ueberlegungen-zu-klassen-klassenpolitik/

biosphere and its effects on human living conditions – is becoming more and more probable. With expanded and expanding social contrasts, the dangers of a new global financial crisis or a "new wave" of the financial crisis that has persisted since 2008 are growing. The left is in a situation of a consolidated political defensive, which has continued to intensify since 2008, despite occasional successes. On the other hand, the number of people and social groups who are convinced that despite the "collapse of state socialism" (or the failure of previous socialist attempts) "capitalism" or bourgeois societies with their destructive capitalist mode of production cannot and must not be the last word in history has grown, especially in Europe and even worldwide, since 2008. Similarly, references to Marx are becoming more and more frequent in public debates, even if his work is not progressively reflected upon or even taken up and continued. The left should therefore make use of that as an opportunity to critically appropriate his legacy (for the first time or once again), to update it for today and to make it relevant in practice. So we need a broad debate among the Left wing forces in order to achieve greater clarity, particularly on the following issues:

- Why are the left wing forces so weak and unable to take advantage of crises in power structures to get out of their strategic situation of defensive?

- Why is there not even a serious international debate among socialists on this issue?

- To what extent does this weakness have to do with the ways of dealing with the theoretical legacy especially of Marx and Luxemburg within the left wing forces, and therefore what needs to be learned anew in reading them?

- What are the additional challenges of a contemporary re-reading especially of Marx's writings as they are now fully available for the first time?

- How can the most recent (and still unresolved) financial and economic crisis be understood as such in its reality, and to what extent can it turn (or be turned) into a crisis of the capitalist mode of production?

- Which are the current possibilities for the left to act politically in an effective way – and which are the conditions for successfully making use of them? To what extent can our making a productive use of Marx's legacy be of help to improve these conditions? To what extent can the reference to a concept of justice be helpful for socialist policy? What does such a new approach to Marx's theoretical achievements actually mean for present theorizing and political practice?

Rosa Luxemburg has appropriated the method and principles of Marx's critique of political economy, of ideology and of politics:

* Doing science to become more politically effective.

* Invite the real and potential allies, in particular the politically active and interested workers, to a joint deliberation (collective discussion) on the analysis of the political conditions of impact, in order to form themselves politically in these debates.

* To combine this deliberation and this analysis with activities for the solidarity among the workers (and among and with the other social categories which are exploited and discriminated against), in order to organize them politically.

* To clearly distinguish between scientific, ideological-cultural and political activities, respecting the specific ‚logic' of each of them, and yet at the same time organically combine research, individual and collective political education and political commitment.

- To consciously look at the regional, national, European and global structures of society, in order to become capable to build (counter-)power from the bottom up in a global and internationalist way, and finally to become capable of ruling and governing a process of liberation;

- To understand and realize critique as a comprehensive practice: to criticize reality, to criticize the theories and ideologies that explain it, to deal radically with reality, to critically reflect on one's own political actions and experiences, to continue scientific analysis and political strategies, to qualify one's own political practice.

To pay tribute to Marx, to follow Luxemburg, Gramsci and those who have effectively learned from them – also, and especially, in the (former) colonies – and to win new partners requires also and especially such a new effort of new reading: to read Marx's and thus also Engels's works – as they are now largely authentically available (still not completely, but mostly for the first time), and to acquire the "treasures" opened up and processed by the researchers of the MEGA², as well as the materials they made accessible for the first time. In so doing it will be important critically to overcome all tendencies towards a historical determinism and materialist mechanicism, as well as towards a content-related and methodological narrowing operated by the Marx interpretations that have set the tone of the debate so far. This requires Marx to be read and understood both as a "strict scientist" and in his activity of political-strategic interventions. His statements are not to be read as a "self-revelation of capitalism". In the history of Marxism, the narrow focus of Marx's theoretical work on the investigation of the overall process of the "domination of the capitalist mode of production in modern bourgeois societies" has led above all to the underestimation or marginalization of ecological problems, of gender and family relations, of hierarchies in trans- and international relations for social development. Such reductionist and distorting interpretations of Marx have further lead to a supposedly ‚strictly Marxist' disregard and ignorance of intellectual and emancipative-solidary activities – not least outside Europe and the USA.

Having learned nothing from him in this respect, the left wing forces in Europe have ultimately been unable to activate and to bring together the productive socio-critical potential of the real diversity of emancipative actors and movements in a politically effective way. Accordingly, they were ultimately no longer in a position to renew the workers' movement and the socialist movement in the face of the dramatic turns of the last decades of the 20th century – which would have been the historical condition for building a strong left wing alternative. Such destructive tendencies within the dominant interpretations of

Marx have had, of course, to do with the tragic-dramatic history of the left wing, especially of the socialists. At the same time they have been the effect and consequence of the further development of ways of thinking and practices which Marx and Engels have already critically dealt with, individually and jointly. In historical "Marxism" (or in the chaotic diversity of "Marxisms" of the 20th century) these tendencies often go back to an unreflected relationship of allegiance and thus to a far from ‚sovereign' relationship to a projectively idealized Marx: His real, theoretical and political work is therefore not pursued in its contradictoriness and dynamics, in Marx's questions, doubts, mistakes or distortions or corrections. The contributions to a critique of Marx, made by his opponents, friends, but also and especially in the writings of his later real and (supposed) Marx opponents, have not been taken up seriously enough. The socialists should therefore win over the other emancipative-solidary actors, especially from the exploited and oppressed classes and social groups, for an exchange on the respective insights and perspectives and for a common critical analysis of present global society. The participants should endeavour (above all) to understand their own social situation – following the example of Marx – in a way that is relevant to action and to process it [their findings] deliberatively. Such a work should be a (renewed) beginning for the organization of a collective will to emancipate and to work for the future solidarity improvement of one's own social position and for sustainable perspectives of good living. This means that raising one's own social position follows or goes hand in hand with strengthening the social situation of the socially weakest, as well as with the maintaining and improving ecological systems. Marx has explained that because of the unity of the socialization of work and the development of competitive relationships, wage earners have always been divided. Gramsci then has shown that with the creation of a workers' state this division can be eliminated and that the state can become the participative affair of the wage earners – in which, however, the really existing, self-procaimed "workers' states" have in no way followed him.

We should not least critically acknowledge Marx as a politician and thus also as a functionary of the International Workers' Association: He has pursued, analysed and often actively supported or even initiated the emancipatory efforts and solidarity actions especially of the workers. Seeing their contradictoriness and often also their ambivalence, he has examined where their generalization could attain strategic relevance; i.e. where a commonality recognized in the interests could and should become politically effective, or precisely where their impulses threatened to get stuck, as it were particular interests. This begins with the recognition of one's own substance and the contradiction of emancipative struggles against violence against people and nature, for justice, self-determination and co-determination. Such a recognition would be required to be combined with the political and theoretical reaffirmation of repressed and denied anticapitalist struggles (e.g. squatting of houses by migrants). And again and again, those connections would have to be pointed out and attacked in which capital domination, destruction of natural bases of life, gender-hierarchical division of labour and the exploitation of dependent peoples and countries in experiencing complex reality combine to a "consumption norm" or an „everyday norm". It would therefore be necessary to critique one's own way of life and to actively fight for a "solidarity-based economy" "so that it is good enough for everyone – in our country and worldwide".

The discussions on Marx should be promoted and used by the left in such a way that those ways of thinking and expression (which had been fixed and fetishized by forgetting about history) will become fully alive and present again. This will require, among other tasks, with an equal urgency, the discussion of 'critical caesuras' and 'critical scenarios' in the history under discussion, which must be based upon a radical critique and overcoming of historical determinism, mechanicism and of the other arbitrary narrowings of science, politics and philosophy, as they have been dominant in the interpretation of Marx's legacy in most of the 20th century.

In conclusion, this means to ask everybody: See for yourself where you can act in everyday life against heteronomy, competition, solidarity, racism, nationalism, fundamentalism and all phobias, as well as against ecological destruction, because you have individual leeway – and also do it! It requires everybody to look around, where people actively act together in order to live peacefully, self-determined, in solidarity, socially and ecologically, in order to join them and to strive for communication and co-operation with other collectives. To help those who also want to live in a self-determined way, in peace, dignity, solidarity and within a healthy nature, and who strive to organize themselves for that purpose. To concretely support a sustained effort of local, regional, supra-regional, EU-wide, European and global networking of all those who are active in this sense. This can only be achieved by a process of elaborating short-, medium- and long-term goals and, then, conceiving of (as well as realizing) concrete, specific projects. They will have to be directed towards peace, self-determination and democratic co-determination, towards meaningful (therefore ecologically responsible) and life-sustaining work, towards an effective protection from poverty and social exclusion, towards a reasonable kind of education, health care, dignified living, mobility and a meaningful, sustainable leisure time. These goals will have to be realized by an alternative social and ecological local and regional development – which will not be oriented towards competition between locations, but by a struggle for the preservation, democratisation and expansion of the public sphere, as well as for the defence and extension of democratic, social and ecological standards in everyday social life at all levels, from the local to the global level. Such activities will always be based on respecting human and civil rights, they will push for adequate political decisions to be made, especially on the public budget and public investments, on common and public goods, and thus also and especially on natural living conditions and property situations, guaranteeing help for the needy and support for those who conduct a specific struggle of more general significance for themselves and others. The struggle for human rights and freedoms could thus be a struggle for social property in

overcoming social divisions. It could be linked to the development of communist, i.e. radically communal and self-determined, foundations for future class-less societies. This can only succeed, if the practical experiences gained in everyday political life are, effectively and openly, reflected upon in common broad deliberations, and at the same time brought together with the critical analysis of society by those who are reproducing it continuously. These very forces, and the very individuals who constitute the underlying multitudes, are also called upon to participate in the work on left-wing socio-political strategies and to critically update social theory in a continuous way.

Marx and Luxemburg have been theorists and practitioners of revolution, but we should not forget that they have seen ‚revolution' as a unity of evolutionary and revolutionary (transformational and fragile) elements. The ability of the working class (or of whichever reconfigured revolutionary-emancipative subject) to shape society "before the revolution" and the long-term nature of the search for new political, economic and social forms "after the revolution" for them have been moments of a unified (search) process that must unavoidably contains setbacks, detours and new beginnings. The revolution itself has to be grasped as a process of becoming and learning, a process in which different possibilities are being tried out, and in which new habits of living have to develop. Parties and organisations cannot anticipate this very newness oft he revolutionary process. However, their structures must be structured in such a way that they develop an awareness of the contradictions of the new as well and that they provide space for discussions about the diversity of paths towards, as well as after the revolution. Here the Bolshevik party concept historically has met a decisive limitation. Likewise, it is to be acknowledged that the 'question of organization' cannot be answered primarily on the basis of the demands of parliamentary logic (or the logic of the respective system of party financing) and/or by administrative and government actions, but also not simply and only by actions and the strengthening of interesting social movements. The left wing forces will have to bring

together parliamentary, extra-parliamentary, administrative, as well as mobilizing practices from the point of view of their ability to transform, i.e. to shape and to change society.

Marx has experienced and thought about the proletarian movement globally from its very beginnings. The wage earners could objectively become capable of changing society, because they occupy a specific position within society as a class. If they were to develop and to put into practice their very capacity for solidarity – first in the factory, then within the framework of the nation-state and further in the international framework, or, finally, worldwide – the possibility of overcoming the domination of the capitalist mode of production and therefore also the bourgeois form of society could be realized. The idea of transforming society by the activity of a solidarity based global proletariat comes to bear in Marx's work at the IWA, in the positions on emancipative movements in Ireland, Russia, Poland, or in the attitude to the civil war in the USA and the colonial question he has made possible and supported by his work in this work. This effective solidarity can only be worked out on the basis of a full and critical political consciousness. History has painfully confirmed this: Any relapse into a mere national consciousness has always lead to a political and cultural subordination to the international competition of capital, to colonial and neo-colonial endeavours. For Luxemburg, and her comrades, the nationalist wave of 1914 and the abandonment of the principle of international solidarity by the majority of the parties of the Second International have been the most bitter defeats. The inability of the international, especially the German, proletariat to show effective solidarity has also been a decisive cause for the enormous contradictions of the October Revolution and for the developments that followed it. The Left wing is international and in solidarity – or it is not.

The "functionary-based internationalism" coming from the Second International (via the Communist and the Socialist Internationals) has, however, has made the Left largely incapable of action. The location-based nationalism, which was at the same time imposed by force in

practice and yet has profoundly affected all social strata, has made it even more difficult to overcome this inability to act with a view to international solidarity. Therefore, the question must be asked to what extent the structures and the self-image of left-wing organizations and especially of left-wing political parties are capable of progressively shaping the ability for an active, politically effective solidarity. To develop the understanding of solidarity and the will to practice it, to build the capability to a practice of solidarity that becomes, increasingly, politically effective, especially by the development of forms of organization helping to build and to reinforce it, while, at the same time, to pursue a critical analysis of our societies which will provide support for a common search for possibilities of political action and their further build-up and expansion![1].

1 https://www.academia.edu/37728327/The_Marx_Anniversary_Opportunity_and_Challenge_for_Socialists

THEORY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE – FROM MARX TO LENIN AND ITS APPLICATION BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM

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1. K. Marx's views on social justice

First, social justice in Marxism has been understood in a broad sense as the equality of all the individuals in a wide range of social aspects. In this approach, social justice is characterised by humanity, class and history[4].

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4 In this article, we use a part of findings concluded from the paper *The relationship between social justice and democracy in Critique of the Gotha Programme – The content and contemporary significance*, publised in the Proceedings of the International Conference titled *The thought of K.Marx on social justice with democracy and its contemporary significance*, Social Sciences Publishing House, 2018, pp. 25-40.

In ancient times, in the clans and tribes of societies with primitive communism, means of production had been subjected to community's ownership; all community members had the rights to own and dispose of common properties, to be equal and to seek cooperation on labour in a natural way, to work together and to enjoy benefits equally. Here, justice is regarded as *a natural right and an inherent right* of all community members. That is the equality of all the individuals in social aspects, first and foremost in terms of interests and obligations based on the communal ownership of means of production.

However, when the slaveholders' state was established, all benefits and powers were acquired by slaveholder class; the majority of working people were enslaved, "speaking tools", and deprived of all *natural and inherent rights*. Hence, social justice has been perceived and carried out according to the stance and interests of the dominant class.

F. Engels wrote: "Justice of Greek and Roman people meant that slavery was equality; while bourgeoisie's justice in 1789 required to abolish feudalism since it was inequality"[1]. Thus, in the class-divided society, struggle for liberty, democracy, justice,... has become one of the history's driving forces. According to historical and natural laws of human development, every step forward in history is accompanied by certain advancements with respect to social justice. In this movement, social justice values following multiple *negation, roundabouts* and *evasions* driven by various interests, positions of the dominant class, unavoidably will come back to its initial state based on a higher, deeper, more popular and lively level. This is the inevitable logic of the pathway to a social union in which freedom for every person is a condition of freedom for everyone[2].

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 18, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.379.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 4, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.628.

Secondly, Marxism argues that the birth and development of capitalism has promoted social justice and further created new paradoxes, injustices, but at the same time, generated the conditions and premises necessary for eliminating those paradoxes, injustices.

The birth and development of capitalism have advanced productive forces, creating facility conditions for implementing the more progressive and equal policies as opposed to that of feudalism. However, the capitalist private ownership regarding productive forces has been the cause of and the condition for paradoxes, injustices associated with the relationship between capitalists and their hired workers. The *primary facility conditions* of production are in the hands of bourgeioisie in the form of the capital ownership and the ownership of land, while the masses as primary productive forces are the owners of the *human conditions* pertaining to production, i.e. labour power[1]. The masses, notably workers, possess labour power, but have to be slaves for those who have these facility conditions. The economic dependence is the foundation on which exist oppression, exploitation, subjugation, political and social dependence of workers (the oppressed) in relation to their oppressors. K. Marx argued: "...labour produces marvellous things for the rich, but it also brings about impoverishment of workers. It builds castles, but also generates slums for workers...It produces intellectuality, but also entails stupidity, foolishness for workers"[2]. Nevertheless, this state of injustices and paradoxes cannot be endless. The more capitalism develops, the more it enables conditions, premises, pathways, solutions for erasing injustices and implementing social justice for the majority.

Thirdly, conditions, pathways and solutions for removing injustices under the capitalism are to *carry out the socialist revolution* in any form in order to build successfully communism in every single country and

1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.37.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 42, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2000, p.131.

worldwide. First and foremost, the working class and its Party lead the society in the fight to overthrow the old state, seizing the goverment; then, making productive forces into common properties, organising the society and production according to the principle of collectivism, building the communist society. K. Marx ascertained: "the process of building communist society should have two basic stages: early stage and advanced stage[1]. However, there has not yet been the perfect form of social justice as soon as the working class seizes power. In every stage of building communist society, there are ways, measures and degrees of implementing social justice suitable to objective conditions and requirements set out by history. K.Marx stated: "Rights can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby"[2].

Fourthly, in accordance with logic of the development of productive forces and economic regime in every stage of the process of establishing communist society, K. Marx outlined basic contents, principles pertaining to the implementation of social justice. *In the transition and the early stage* of communist society, as just newly born of capitalist society in all aspects - economic, moral, spiritual – it still contains traces of the old society from which it was brought into the world.[3] That are the traces of capitalist rule of law and capitalist order, including the implementation of social justice. Accordingly, an appropriate distrubution of gross social product should be understood as follows: after all discounts[4], the principle of equality in labour (equal contribution, equal distribution) will be applied to everyone.

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, pp.33-36.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.36.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.33.

4 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, pp. 31-32.

This principle still results in *shortcomings* such as *one gets more than the other one, one is richer than the other one* due to the fact that every person has different conditions, circumstances and they are different one to another with regard to their talents and natural rights[1]. Nevertheless, K. Marx opined that these are *unavoidable shortcomings* in the transition and the early stage of communist society.

At the high stage of communist society, "when the slavish dependence of human beings on their division of labour no longer exists and along with it, the opposition between intellectual labour and manual labour disappears; when labour becomes not only a means of livelihood, but per se the highest need of life; when with the full development of individuals, their labour power also grows and hence, all social wealth is abundant – only then people can go beyond the narrow limits of capitalist rule of law and the society as a whole can write this slogan in its flag: from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs!"[2]. At that time, "with the abolition of differences of classes, all social and political unequalities arising from these differences will dissappear themselves"[3]. Hence, social justice in a broad, full and real sense will be implemented.

2. V.I. Lenin's views on social justice during the transition to socialism

In the 1917-1924 period, Lenin basically addressed the revolution's issues, including social justice, according to two socio-economic models: The Policy of War Communism and the New Economy Policy (NEP).

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.35.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.36.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.44.

First, implementing social justice following the model *"The Policy of War Communism"*.

In reality, after the victory of the October Revolution, in parallel with the reinforcement of the Soviet government, V.I.Lenin and his Party progressively made naturalization of all land areas occupied by landlords, retaining a part of it to build state-owned farms while using the majority of it to distribute to farmers; naturalization of railroads, mines, foreign trade, post offices, large banks and industries; all large and medium-sized enterprises in the the most important areas of industry, trade and finance established Worker's Control Committees. In early 1918, Lenin put forward a plan of restoring the economy and economic development in the short term – the plan for building socialism.[1]

However, this plan had to be postponed in late 1918 due to the occurence of civil war and allied intervention, invasion by the alliance of 14 imperialist countries. In practice, the Soviet government had control over only one quarter of former Tsardom of Russia's territory and lost the most important areas of food, materials and fuels of the country. In this extremely dangerous context, since summer 1919, the young Soviet Russia forced to turn to the policy of *"War Communism"* which included: Requisition of the farmer's leftover food, maintaining the State's monopoly in procurement of wheat for supplying to armed forces and urban areas; the State's control over production and distribution of products not only for large, medium and small industries; naturalization of the medium and small-sized industrial enterprises; prohibition of trade and exchange of products in the market, notably wheats; the implementation of coupon-based goods' distribution, direct distribution in kind for consumers according to the egalitarian principle; carrying out the forced labour system for all citizens according to the principle: "No work, no benefits"; The Supreme Council of National Economy is

1 Vu Van Phuc, "From the policy of War Communism to the New Eonomy Policy", http://www.tapchicongsan.org.vn/Home/Nghiencuu-Traodoi/2010/1591/Tu-chinh-sach-Cong-san-thoi-chien-den-chinh-sach-kinh-te.aspx.

the central authority for management and administration with regard to the industry as well as the whole national economy[1], and so on.

V.I.Lenin argued that in the context of war and devastating economy, if private ownership and free trade is carried out, then that is freedom of restoring the capitalist power[2], a crime for the State, a massacre of millions of people for the sake of capitalism[3], probably resulting in the death of the Soviet Republics. The mission of *War Communism* was maximum mobilisation and proper use of all resources of the country, provision of essential needs for armed forces, urban and rural people, at the service of the supreme mission of struggle against internal and external enemies. Social justice, hence, was driven by the objective rule of war. Consequently, the relationship between devotion and enjoyment, between rights and obligations/duties; between short-term, current and long-term interests, between private, collective interests and national interests; between political accountability and moral obligation; was dealt with by the whole country pledging all kind of efforts, creativity, resilience, courage, sacrifice in the fighting against and defeating enemies. In fact, because of this policy the Soviet Russia progressively overcame harch difficulties, challenges; exploiting and making the best of all the resources, the people and the country's strength to uphold the Soviet government, asserting the autonomy and independence of the Nation. Therefore, *War Communism* is a proper solution for securing social justice in the context of war, although this policy had certain limitations as it did not fully follow the economic rule.

Secondly, the implementation of social justice following the model *"The New Economy Policy"*.

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1 Nguyen Anh Thai (ed), *History of the Modern World (1917-1995, the fifth edition),* Education Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, pp. 34-36.

2 V.I.Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol. 38, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, p. 426.

3 V.I.Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol. 39, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, p. 507.

Since late 1920, early 1921, when the war ended, the Soviet Russia entered into the period of peace and building the country. However, 4 years of imperialist war and 3 years of allied intervention – civil war left heavy wounds on the young Soviet republic[1]. In this context, *War Communism* quickly became a hindrance to the socio-economic development of the country. Stagnant production, hunger and epidemic occurred seriously. Injustice, discontent, dissatisfaction increased among the masses, leading to the risk of social instability and wreck of farmers and workers' alliance. Exploiting this situation, domestic anti-revolutionary forces madly operated nationwide, provoking people to rebel in localities, even seizing the government in some places. Within the Bolshevik Party some members had unstable positions and raised voice against guideline, policies of the Party. Again, socio-economic crisis and glooming political crisis of the country emerged to challenge intellectuality and consistency of V.I.Lenin and his Party.

Since the 10th Congress (3-1921), V.I.Lenin and the Party decided to change from the *Policy of War Communism* to the *New Economy Policy* (NEP) which had the contents as follows: Replacing food requisition system with the policy of food taxation; progressively cải tạo farmers, leading them to socialism through the road of cooperatives; reorganising leadership and management to restore the heavy industry, permitting the private sector to hire and purchase small-seized enterprises, allowing foreign capitalists to hire some enterprises in the form of tô nhượng; the majority of enterprises turned to the economic accounting system, improving the salary system, issuing the reward system to enhance production and increase productivity; allowing to extend trade of goods between urband and rural areas, between industry and agriculture, giving to businessmen the freedom of business; reinforcing monetary circulation domestically, focusing on the relation between goods and money, developing the commodity economy for the

1 Nguyen Anh Thai (ed), *History of the Modern World (1917-1995, the fifth edition),* Education Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, p. 41.

sake of socialism[1]. The NEP also included the application of economic accounting, paying attention to the best interests of every individual, encouraging private interest, all of which were considered to be small bridges leading to socialism.[2] Consequently, *the* NEP was a way and a mechanism to address economic, political issues and social justice in both short and long terms of Russia during the transition to socialism.

When *the NEP* was carried out, some people were skeptical and concerned about it, regarding it as a "compromise" with capitalism. They thought this would restore capitalism in Russia, treated the revolutionary cause and brought the people back to the status of being oppressed, exploited and subject to further injustices. However, V.I.Lenin opined that the multi-sectoral economic structure[3] was inevitable in a country where small farmers were the majority of the population. He furthered that the Soviet government should not be afraid of capitalism, because economically, landlords and bourgeoisie were deprived of ownership and politically, the government of workers and farmers was relentlessly reinforced[4]. The multi-sector economy should be developed under the Party's leadership, the Soviet state's contingent management, and the tight control of all citizens.

Because of the implementation of *the NEP*, in 1926 Soviet Union completed major tasks pertaining to the period of economic restoration. The area of crops and wheat output of this period were much higher than that of the pre-war time. The plan of electrification of the country were successfully accomplished; the electricity output doubled while manufacture, metallurgy, light industries and food production were

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1 Nguyen Anh Thai (ed), *History of the Modern World (1917-1995, the fifth edition),* Education Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, pp. 41-43.

2 V.I.Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol. 44, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, p.189.

3 V.I.Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol. 43, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, p. 248.

4 V.I.Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol. 43, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, pp. 252, 278-279.

much better than in pre-war period. The material and spiritual life of people was improved; salary, working and living conditions of workers, civil servants were enhanced; expenditures for social insurance, health care and worker's housing were all increased[1], and so on. Obviously, *the NEP* set out by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party was a right solution, paving good ways for addressing economic, political issues and implementing social justice in Soviet Union during the transition to socialism.

Consequently, V.I.Lenin applied and developed K. Marx's theory on social justice in a creative manner, suitable to the Russia's revolutionary practice in the first years of the transition to socialism. Accordingly, dependent on specific historical circumstances, a planned (non-market) economy or a multi-sector (market) economy based on the public ownership with regard to essential productive forces might be built. Nevertheless, V.I.Lenin emphasized that the planned economy (non-market) or *War Communism* was only a temporary policy or measure[2]; while *the NEP* – the multi-sector economy (market economy) was a long-term strategic policy which was inevitable for small agricutural countries on the pathway of transition to socialism. This was initially useful theoritical base and practical experience for communists in Soviet Union and other countries to study, apply for addressing theoritical, practical issues of the revolution, including the implementation of social justice in the transition to socialism as well as the whole process of socialist revolution.

3. The Communist Party of Vietnam's application of Marxism – Leninism in implementing social justice in Vietnam

During the process of leading Vietnam's revolution, Ho Chi Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam have always considered

1 Nguyen Anh Thai (ed), *History of the Modern World (1917-1995, the fifth edition),* Education Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, pp. 47-48.

2 V.I.Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol. 43, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, p. 265.

Marxism-Leninism as the ideological foundation, kim chi nam for all revolutionary actions. For this reason, the Party led Vietnam's revolution to many successes. However, during the process of leadership, the Party sometimes made mistakes, shortcomings, including serious ones due to dogmas, subjectivity, violations of objective rule.[1]. With regard to the implementation of social justice, several points should be emphasised as below:

Firstly, the August Revolution 1945 was a great liberation with respect to all injustices and laid foundations on which were built good prospects for the process of implementing social justuce in a social direction[2].

Before 1945, in a colonial and half-feudal sociey, in a context of "losing the country, losing home", the majority of Vietnamese people were living in slavery, poverty, misery, injustice, oppression and exploitation. The victory of the August Revolution 1945 broke the colonial and feudalist domination and oppression, leading Vietnam from a colonial territory to an independent country with republic democracy, helping Vietnamese people escape from being slaves to become the owners of the country and the masters of the society. Right after the Independent Day, President Ho Chi Minh and the temporary government of Vietnam's Democratic Republic implemented immediately urgent tasks in order to realise freedom, equality, equity and democracy for Vietnamese people. For example, saving people from hunger by launching a campaign for increasing production and asking for donations for the poor; conducting a campaign for eradicating illiteracy; organising a general election and develop a democratic Constitution; putting a ban on inhaling drugs, removing some kinds of taxes; realise freedom of belief and religion as well as solidarity between religious and non-religious people, and

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p. 64.

2 Do Huy, "Social Justice in Vietnam: Idendification and Solutions", available at: http://philosophy.vass.gov.vn/nghien-cuu-theo-chuyen-de/Chinh-tri-Xa-hoi/Cong-bang-xa-hoi-o-Viet-Nam-Nhan-dien-va-giai-phap-thuc-hien-522.html.

so on[1]. This was really a great turning-point in the implementation of social justice for Vietnamese people and nation. Hence, social justice has been conducted in the direction of socialism, national liberation associated with liberation of class, society and human beings; national independence associated with socialism[2].

Secondly, the period of the Anti-French Resistance War (1945-1954), realising social justice in the context of "Prolonged war and construction of the country".

In order to accomplish this task, it was required to enhance and extend the national solidarity, build and reinforce the country in all aspects such as political, military, economic, cultural, social, foreign affairs; fighting against aggressors associated with battling against illiteracy; realising national liberation associated with human liberation and human development. Accordingly, decisions, policies, measures had to guarantee social justice in both tasks of conducting prolonged war and building the country. For example, in the economic area, this included requisition of land owned by the imperialists and unfaithful Vietnamese people for distribution to poor farmers; reductions of fees, eradication of unacceptable taxes, conducting land tax exemption in the regions devastated by natural disasters; lauching a movement of increasing production, providing the poor and disadvantaged peope with food and clothes; building military and civil enterprises on a proper scale in free regions and military bases, and so on. In the political, cultural and social areas, education and culture were established on the basis of the principles of respecting national, scientific and popular characteristics; realising freedom of belief and religion, solidarity between religious and non-religous people; ensuring freedoms and democratic rights of citizens in nomination and election for the establishment of the

1 Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, Vol. 4, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, pp. 6-8.

2 Dinh Xuan Lam (ed), *Overview of the Vietnam's history, vol. II* (the 13th edition), Education Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p. 371.

National Assembly (Parliament) and the Government as well as local governments in accordance with the principle "all powers and forces belong to people". With regard to the task of conducting a prolonged war, social justice was expressed in the guideline of resistance war with the slogans *"participation of all people, comprehensive, long-term, self-reliant"* and "Any man, woman, old or young, without discrimination of religions, political parties, ethnic groups have to stand up against the French colonisation to save the country. Those who have any kind of weapons should use the weapon they own to fight against aggressors. Everyone needs to contribute to the struggle against the French colonisation for saving the country"[1]. In the context of "resistance war and construction of the country", contribution to the Nation was regarded as a standard of social justice. Competition for labour and production in the rear as opposed to competition for fighting enemies in the front line were considered as justice, honour and sacred mission of every Vietnamese person for the sake of successful contruction of the country and victory of the resistance war.

Thirdly, realising social justice in the context of economic recovery in the North (1954-1958) after the victory of the Anti-French Resistance War.

Following liberation in the North, the Party and the State of Vietnam put forward many decisions, policies to establish and implement social justice as well as restore the economy and stabilise political, social situations. Among these, outstanding was the policy of land reform, which completely followed the slogan "farmers have land", recognising the ownership of land and accepting the multi-sector economy. This aimed to utilise the economic potentiality with all the society's human resources for the economic recovery. Here, social justice was not only shown in the relationship between rights and obligations, between devotion and enjoyment, but also in the relations between ownership of productive forces, equality of opportunities and conditions for

1 Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, Vol. 4, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, pp. 534.

development. In *An appeal to the Vietnamese people on the occasion of the Capital's liberation day* (10 October 1954), President Ho Chi Minh emphasised: "We must implement properly the public and private policies so that masters and workers could be beneficiaries. Workers will ardently engage in production while businessmen will be enthusiastic in trading. We must maintain and revive all the activities of production, trade, finance, and so on"[1]. The principle of equal and reasonable distribution should be applied as follows: "More work more gains, less work less gains, no work no gain. The weak elderly people or disabled people will be cared for by the State"[2]. It followed that with detection and correction of errors in the land reform as well as oppression of the anti-revolutionary actors on tiem, accepting the multi-sector economy quickly helped the North heal its wounds of war, revive the economy and stabilise the socio-political activities. Consequently, this was the policy of ensuring social justice accompanied by economic stability and growth in Vietnam.

Fourthly, realising social justice in the process of socialist transformation and building socialism from 1958 to 1986.

Following common experiences learnt from other countries of the socialist system, in 1958, the Party and the State of Vietnam affirmed: the period of economic recovery ended and the period of developing and reinforcing the North began, enabling the North to progressively move towards socialism while conducting the struggle for unification of the country. The 14th conference of the Party Central Committee decided to carry out a socialist renovation to the private economy of farmers, craftsmen, small businessmen and the private capitalist economy, among which farmers' private economy was given a priority. In parallel with the renovation, it was necessary to develop a state-run

1 Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, Vol. 9, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p.80.

2 Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, Vol. 11, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p.404.

economy, making it into the leading force of the national economy. Accordingly, social justice with respect to labour, education and health care was implemented. The health care system was established in state agencies, enterprises, villages, communes, districts, provinces and cities, ensuring health care services for all citizens. Every school aged child was entitled to the right to free education. All training institutions provided trained people with appropriate jobs. All the working-age population found their job in co-operative societies or state agencies and enterprises, and so on...[1]

In the context of both producting and struggling with countless difficulties, sacrifices for unification of the country, the Party and the State decided to implement the egalitarian subsidy distribution system. In the context of war, the advantages of these polices were promoted, making a considerable and decisive contribution to the great victory of the Anti-American Resistance War, to the unification of the country and to the success of two patriotic wars in the South West and Northern borders. However, the shortcomings of these policies had also been shown in the beginning and became more clearly visible when the war ended. Everyone had been regarded as the master of the country, but no owners seemed to be visible everywhere. Socio-economic potentialities and resources were not utilised. The egalitarianism dominated; workers became passive, dependent, working half-heartedly, paying no attention to the quality and effectiveness of the production. The qualified workers had no chance to promote their capabilities. In spite of peace, independence, unification, the country had to suffer the stagnation of production, falling into socio-economic crisis, living standards of the people went down considerably in both material and spiritual aspects. At that time, the planned, non-market economy and the centrally planned subsidized mechanism did not ensure social justice while nurturing and creating new shortcomings and injustices.

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1 Do Huy, "Social Justice in Vietnam: Idendification and Solutions", available at: http://philosophy.vass.gov.vn/nghien-cuu-theo-chuyen-de/Chinh-tri-Xa-hoi/Cong-bang-xa-hoi-o-Viet-Nam-Nhan-dien-va-giai-phap-thuc-hien-522.html.

Fifthly, realising social justice in the period of reform, developing country in the direction of socialism.

After a long time of exploration, experimentation, theoritical research and synthesis of practice, the Party and the State affirmed that comprehensive renovation of the country is a vital issue for socialism and the pathway to socialism in Vietnam. Consequently, social justice should be implemented by developing a multi-sector commodity economy, eradicating the bureaucratic apparatus, turning to the market mechanism with the socialist state's management – currently called the socialist-oriented market economy and the socialist rule-of-law state. The Party's theoritical views on social justice in the context of the market economy and the rule-of-law state were reflected in some essential points as follows:

- Ensuring equity, equality of citizen's rights and obligation; combining coherently and reasonably economic development with cultural and social development, implementing progress and social justice in every step and policy; fostering harmony between material and spiritual lives, relentlessly enhancing living standards of all member of society in terms of food, housing, movement, education, health care and physical strength improvement, associating obligations with rights, devotion with benefits, individual interests with collective, social and communal interests.

- Enabling all workers to have jobs and better incomes. Establishing the policies of salary and treatment with motivation for development; regulating reasonably social incomes; encouraging legal enrichment associated with sustainable poverty reduction; progressively reduction of the gap between the rich and the poor in different regions, locations, populations, and so on[1].

- Allocating resources in accordance with strategies, plans for socio-economic development; implementing the distribution system

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p. 79.

mainly based on labour outcomes, economic efficiency, according to degrees of contribution with other resources and allocations through social security and social benefit system.

- Adopting the policies of socio-economic development, paying adequate attention to disadvantaged and vulnarable populations in the society, ethnic minorities in mountainous and isolated areas; controlling the trend of increasing the gap between rich and poor, ensuring social stability and sustainable social development. Effectively implementing the policy of caring for national devotees on the basis of mobilisation of all social resources in a combination with the State's resources, ensuring them an average (or higher) living standard[1].

In spite of shortcomings and limits, the great historical achievements of the country over 30 years of Renovation, including achievements in implementing social justice, have shown that the implementation of social justice following the model of socialist-oriented market economy and socialist ruul-of-law state of the people, from the people, for the people is a right and creative choice of the Party. Without the market economy there would be no conditions for economic growth and the implementation of social justice. However, it is the market economy that has generated social stratification and injustices. It is impossible for the state to handle everything, but without the democratic state's regulation social justice would never been brought to the majority of the people. Therefore, harmoniously handling the relationship between enterprises, the State and the market is the pivotal issue for the implementation of social justice in the transition to socialism in Vietnam. That's a spirit of science, revolution and creativity of Marxism-Leninism as well as a crystallization of diverse practices in implementing social justice in Vietnam, of international experiences in the 20th century and the first two decades of the 21st century.

In summary, social justice is a goal, a motivation and the nature of socialism. In order to implement effectively social justice in the direction

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, , 2016, pp. 135-136.

of socialism in Vietnam, an *objective and impartial assessment* of ideological history, theory and practice in the implementation of social justice. In this regard, reviewing ideology, theory of Marxism-Leninism, reviewing the Party's points of view, practice of the Party's leadership in implementing social justice in the context of war as well as in the period of peace and international integration is useful. This will help us have a better and more comprehensive understanding of the Party's role, responsibility, intellectuality, reconising more clearly difficulties and advantages, successes and shortcomings in the implementation of social justice in Vietnam. Obviously, there were not only mistakes and failures before the Renovation; there were not only successes during the Renovation. It was not in the Renovation that the Party recognised a multi-sector economy; it was not development of the market economy that eradicated and invalidate the State's role. The process of implementing social justice in Vietnam has had ups and downs with certain shortcoming and failures, but after all, it can be regarded as basically rightful. The secret of success is that the Party have always acted for the sake of the majority of the people, understanding, applying and creatively developing Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh ideology properly based on particular conditions of the country and the objective context of the epoch.

FROM MARXISM TO VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY'S THOUGHT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN CONDITIONS OF SOCIAL-ORIENTED MARKET ECONOMY

Nguyen Minh Hoan[1]

The Marxist conception of social justice in capitalism and the transition to socialism

Marx believed that in capitalist production, in terms of the exchange of par value, especially in the commodity of labor, capitalists always regards the purchase and sale of labor as a fair relationship. Because they believe that the par value exchange principle divides the added value obtained after the production cycle into the wages of the workers and the capitalist profits in proportion to the effort and the capital that parties are involved in the production. But in fact, a labor commodity is characterized in that after use, it produces greater value than before. Therefore, workers only receive back their "wages labor", and the added value created by the labor force is unpaid and converted into capitalist profits. This has made the par value relation not considered fair. This is the unjust nature of the capitalist distribution system.

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F. Engels affirmed that the so-called "fair remuneration for a fair working day[1]" is unfair, and outlined the nature of the so-called fair distribution system under the principle of par value exchange. He believes that this principle is not good for the working class, that is, the "fair value" exchange between the labor spent by workers and the wages paid by capitalists. The injustice here is that "workers spend a lot, capitalists spend less"[2]. He said sarcastically: "This is a very special kind of justice.[3]" But why is it possible? Bourgeois economists believe that wages and working days are determined by competition and that the two parties reach an agreement based on the principle of par value, that is amicable sale. So that's very fair. But as F. Engels pointed out: "It's not true. If the capitalist disagrees with the workers, then he has the conditions to wait and live on his capital. The worker cannot do that (…). The workers were at a disadvantage in the struggle from the beginning. Hunger puts him in a very disadvantaged position. However, according to the political economy department of the capitalist class, this is the pinnacle of justice"[4]. Therefore, according to Marx and Engels, to have real social justice, it is necessary to implement the principle of labor distribution, in which the distribution must be proportional to the value of the labor force.

In addition to criticizing bourgeois economists for the realization of social justice under the principle of "par value exchange", Marx and Engels also criticized the application of Ricardo's theory according to the average method. That is, in a socialist way.

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 365.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 366.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 366.

4 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 36.

According to Ricardo's theory of value: 1) the value of each commodity is unique and depends on the amount of labor required to produce the commodity, 2) the products of all social labor are divided into three categories: landlords (land rent), capitalists (profits) and workers (salaries)"[1]. From these two viewpoints, as early as 1821 in Britain, Engels wrote: "Someone who knows more or less about the political and economic development in England know that, at different times, most of the socialists in this country suggest to apply Ricardo's theory according to the average method (that is, according to the socialist way)[2]. What is the content of that offer? According to Marx, bourgeois economists made the following arguments against Ricardo: "If the exchange value of a product is equal to the labor time involved in the product, then the exchange value of one working day will be equal to the product of one working day. In other words, wages should be equal to the product of labor. However, "the actual situation is opposite". Socialists later supported this argument. They admit that this formula is theoretically correct, so they (socialists) condemned that practice contradicts the theory. They called on bourgeois society to make in practice an imagined conclusion drawn from their theoretical principles. Marx pointed out: "At least, British socialists have followed that way to use Ricardo's formula of exchange value against the faculty of political economics"[3]

26 years later, Marx's comment was published in the preface written for "The poverty of Philosophy." Engels wrote about (the socialist) to adopt Ricardo's theory as follows: "The aforementioned application of Ricardo's theory-all products of society, the products of workers belong to them, the only true producer-directly leads to the Communism". But

1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 21, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 26.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 21, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 26.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 13, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 6.

as Marx pointed out in the above lines, from an economic point of view, this form of the conclusion is wrong because it is only the application of morality in political economy. According to the laws of bourgeois political economy, the largest part of the product does not belong to the workers who produce it."[1]

For the British socialists at the time, the application of Ricardism showed workers that the entire social product, that is, the work they did belong to them because they were the only producers. That application directly led to Communism. On the contrary, "Marx has never argued about his communist claims with these arguments but based on the inevitable collapse and increasingly become the immediate reality of the capitalist mode of production"[2]. The critique of K. Marx and Engels towards the inequality of par value in capitalist production was not only direct criticism of bourgeoise itself but also is a critique of the delusion of those who belong to the socialist school but do not understand the essence of injustice in capitalist society.

According to Marx and Engels, in the private ownership of the means of production, the desire to implement the principle of distribution (according to labor) of the above socialist people cannot become reality. Because they believe that "fairness seems to require both parties to adopt the same conditions"[3]. However, this did not happen in capitalist production. In competition with capitalists, workers are always at a disadvantage.

To build a truly just society, the initial inequalities must be eliminated. To do that, it is necessary to make everyone equal in the relationship of ownership, that is to make everyone equal in terms of

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 21, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 272

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 21, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 272.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 367.

the relationship with the means of production. This is the starting point of equality as the basis for the implementation of social justice.

The concept of the distributive principle to ensure social justice has been fully presented by K.Marx in his book "Critique of the Gotha Programme".

The author of "Critique of the Gotha Programme" argues that "the income generated by labor belongs to all members of society according to the equal rights", at the same time, "equal distribution of income of labor" must be implemented. Regarding these points, K. Marx questioned: What is the "income of labor"? Is it the product of labor or is it the value of that product? Is that value is the total value of the product or is it just the value that labor adds to the value of the means of production used?"[1].

K. Marx asserted that the drafters of "Critique of the Gotha Programme"'s view of the implementation of the principle of distribution according to the labor contributed. Although the distribution principle is implemented based on the starting point of equal ownership, it applies not only to employees but also to all members of society, including even those who do not work. Therefore, workers who should get all their income from labor (after deducting their contribution to society, of course) only receive "reduced income" for those who do not work. Therefore, the above distribution principle cannot be regarded as a true fair distribution principle. Marx said that a truly fair distribution can only be labor distribution. Why is that?

According to K.Marx, first of all, the implementation of social justice depends not only on the distribution sector but also on the overall nature of the production method. "Any distribution of consumer materials is only the result of the distribution of production conditions. However, the distribution of production conditions is a characteristic of

1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 3.

the production method itself.[1]" From the above point of view, although Marx comes to criticizing views that referred to social justice, but separate the distribution relationship from the production relation of a certain production method. Marx wrote: "The mediocre socialism inherited by bourgeois economists the way of viewing and interpreting the distribution as something independent of the modes of production"[2].

In Marx's view, social justice is possible only in socialism, because at that time private property is abolished and public ownership was established. Therefore, there is an equal starting point in the distribution relationship to ensure social justice.

In other words, the foundation of social justice in socialism is the public regime of the means of production. This is due to the public regime of the means of production, the equal relations of all members of socialism in terms of the means of production so now the distribution of labor products can be conducted based on labor. And because only wealth is created after labor affects nature, the distribution of that wealth - only really fair when the basis for the distribution is labor. Therefore, the principle of distribution according to labor applied in socialism is a principle of fair distribution.

When analyzing the distribution principle to ensure social justice in socialism, Marx clearly showed that the progress of the distribution principle compared with capitalism and its limited aspects are in the advanced stage of communist society.

The aspect of that progress is that in socialism - the lower stage of communist society - the producer will receive from society the consumer goods of equal value to the amount of labor. that he gives to society. These incomes have been deducted from the amounts necessary to maintain production and expand reproduction, prevent

1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 36-37.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 37.

natural disasters, destroy and meet the overall needs of the community, etc. "For the same amount of labor that he provided to society in one form, he gets back to society in another form"[1]. This is the principle of socialist labor distribution. Because in socialism, no one can provide anything except their labor. At the same time, there is nothing else that can become personal property but personal consumption items. Therefore, the above distribution principle is very fair. That is the progressive aspect of the distribution principle of socialism versus capitalism. However, according to K. Marx, its drawback compared to the highest stage of communist society is that the dominance in this principle of distribution of labor is still the principle of equal exchange in the economy capitalist market[2]. Therefore, the authors of the " Critique of the Gotha Programme " demand that the distribution of the income generated by labor according to equal rights. As Marx pointed out, this equal right is still the right of the bourgeoisie and is still limited to the framework of the bourgeoisie. The rights of a producer are proportional to the labor that he provided. Equality is that people measure by equal measure, that is, by labor[3].

Furthermore, workers are not the same. A person's body and spirit are different in workability and workmanship, personal talents, and family environment. Everyone differs physically and mentally, working capacity, skills, individual talents, and family circumstances, etc. Therefore, "in fact, for an equal job and equal participation in social expenditure funds, one person still gets more than another, one person is still richer than the other, etc... To avoid all these shortcomings, inequality must be mentioned, not equality "[4]. Thus, although the

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 34.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 34.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 34-35.

4 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p.35.

above distributional principle is considered to be a very fair principle, K. Marx clearly states that in terms of socialism, that fair distribution is not only not excluded but still includes in it the acceptance of certain inequality among members of society... According to K. Marx that was both the preeminence and the shortcoming of the principle of distribution of labor- which is unavoidable in the early stage of communist society.

Viewpoints of the Vietnamese Communist Party on the realization of social justice in a socialist market economy

In the cause of building socialism in Vietnam, social justice as well as the realization of social justice has always been focused on by the Communist Party of Vietnam and implemented through socioeconomic policies and measures. However, how to achieve social justice in the process of Vietnam's transition to a socialist market economy-this is an important step in economic growth, but at the same time, it also brings a distinction between rich and poor. Also, will that differentiation tend to increase? These are theoretical and practical problems that need to be resolved urgently. The clarification of this issue will contribute to the policy planning for the goal of "rich people, strong nation, equitable, democratic and civilized society".

Since the Sixth National Congress-Vietnam Innovation and Development orientations Congress, the Communist Party of Vietnam has been advocating the implementation of social justice and has expressed in outstanding opinions: "Ensure that the rights and obligations of all citizens are fair and against special privileges and special advantage[1]". The implementation of social justice is primary: "eliminating prejudice in evaluating and treating workers from different economic sectors"[2]. In the spirit of this major innovation in social justice, the later congresses

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 6th National Congress*, The Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1987, p.88-89.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 6th National Congress*, The Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1987, p.61-62.

have been continuously supplemented and completed this view. Then, the documents of the Seventh National Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party continued to emphasize the goals of social justice and confirmed that: "Create opportunities for everyone to be devoted and enjoy the achievements of development"[1]. In that same spirit, the Document of the Eighth National Congress also emphasizes: "Create conditions for everyone has the opportunity to develop and make the best use of their abilities"[2].

At the Ninth Congress, compared with the distribution principles described in the documents of the sixth, seventh, eighth Congresses, the distributive principles for ensuring social justice have been more adequate, clearer, and more specific. In addition to emphasizing distribution according to labor as the main principle, the Ninth Congress continued to emphasize the implementation of distribution based on capital contribution and other productive resources. This is a decisive and important innovation in thinking about distributional principles in particular and the realization of social justice goals in general during the transition to socialism in Vietnam. A document of the 9th Congress affirms that: "The socialist-oriented market economy distributes mainly according to labor results and economic efficiency, and at the same time distributes according to capital contribution and other resources in the production, business and through social welfare"[3]. Similarly, in this spirit, the Tenth Congress also reaffirmed the common goal of the implementation of justice: "To achieve social progress and justice in every step and development policy".

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Strategy for stability and socio-economic development until 2000*, The Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1991, pp. 9-10.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 8th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996, p.113.

3 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 9th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2001, p.88.

The basic content of the social justice principles put forward by the Communist Party of Vietnam has indeed promoted the socio-economic development of Vietnam in recent years. However, the Tenth Congress also pointed out that the third content of the distribution principle is implemented in a socialist-oriented market economy, that is, distribution through social welfare. This is not only a condition for solving economic problems but also a great contribution to solving social problems.

The distribution through social welfare was also stated in the VI Congress: "Expanding the social consumption fund, making it hold a growing position in the development of education, medical economic, cultural and other social welfare[1]". Since then, this view was inherited by the seventh, eighth, and ninth congresses and became one of the contents of the distribution principles of the socialist-oriented market economy. It is worth noting that although other content of the distribution principle uses economic efficiency as a means of distribution, the distribution through social welfare emphasizes social efficiency. Its purpose is to limit the rich and poor differentiation and inequality. Because poverty belongs to people who have little or no ability to develop. In this spirit, the Tenth Congress continued to declare: "The country's new stage of development requires deeper and more comprehensive innovation. It is necessary to be determined to quickly and synchronously formulate market economy elements and socialist-oriented market economy institutions, to fully implement the principles of the market. At the same time, the more opportunities we have to enter the market economy, the more we need to take care of social welfare, create employment opportunities, eradicate hunger, reduce poverty, develop education, culture and care about people's health"[2].

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, p.89.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, p.182.

Therefore, the realization of social justice through the distribution of social welfare must first be supported by the state to directly support many disadvantaged groups in society. "The state has increased investment from the budget and continued to develop the material and technological foundations to improve the overall welfare of the entire society and ensure that basic social services are provided first in terms of health and education for the poor, poor areas and policy beneficiaries"[1]. To help policy beneficiaries integrate into common social development, the Document also emphasizes: "Create conditions and opportunities for equal access to development resources, enjoy basic social services, and steadily rise out of poverty in poor areas. Overcoming the thought of subsidy, relying on[2]". This is also the goal of helping them to reduce the burden of difficulties, quickly get out of poverty, and have the opportunity to integrate into social development through their efforts. Therefore, distribution through social welfare is not only a simple social relief policy but also a driving force for the rise of these people.

Therefore, in addition to the proposed implementation of social justice policies which is creating the driving force for economic development, the distribution through social welfare is a measure of the state to regulate income. The purpose of this is to prevent excessive disparity between the rich and the poor by implementing a series of socio-economic policies, such as education support, medical care, preferential loans, land use rights, housing policies...The purpose of this is to prevent excessive disparity between the rich and the poor by implementing a series of socio-economic policies, such as support for education, support, medical care, preferential loans, land use rights, housing policies... In essence, the distribution through social welfare is a measure to reduce inequality and ensure that it is socialist-oriented under the conditions of market economic development.

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, p. 203.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, p. 10.

However, this distribution does not mean average performance, but to distribute them specifically, applied to many different subjects and through different specific strategies. To achieve social welfare goals, it can be divided into the following target groups: (1) Policies for national meritorious persons, families of disabled soldiers and martyrs, and families of revolutionary meritorious persons; (2) Social relief policies for people who are in trouble due to natural disasters and enemy destruction; (3) Social allowance policy for the helpless elderly, orphans, (4) Social policy to prevent force major risks that may occur to many people...

On the other hand, under the conditions of a market economy, social service sectors must satisfy the basic welfare of society, especially socialized medical services, education.... which are socialized or partly to operate according to market principles, the distribution through social welfare cannot only target policy beneficiaries. This is the right viewpoint to implement social justice more appropriately under current development conditions. In the conditions of building a socialist-oriented market economy and international economic integration, one must always attach importance to the need to improve the basic social welfare of the people, especially for the poor, regions. poor, policy beneficiaries. At the same time, do not underestimate the response to the needs of an increasing number of people with higher incomes[1]".

Thus, the distribution principle through social welfare, based on the combination of social efficiency criteria with economic efficiency, has made this distribution principle work more effectively in limiting social inequality. In the spirit of inheriting the opinions of previous congresses, the Eleventh Congress continued to emphasize: "The distribution regime is mainly based on labor results, economic efficiency, capital contribution, and other resources and distributed through the social

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, p. 202-203.

security and social welfare systems".[1] In particular, to define more specifically the basis for the realization of social equity goals in each step, each development policy, based on combining the implementation of social justice associated with the implementation of social welfare, the Congress XII emphasized: "Closely attach economic policies to social policies, economic development and the improvement of people's living standards. Ensure that the people enjoy more and better achievements of the country's renovation, construction, and development. Everyone has opportunities and conditions for comprehensive development"[2]. Starting from the direction of achieving social justice, the spirit of the 12th Congress also emphasized the conditions for achieving this goal, but first of all: "Create jobs and increase income opportunities for people. Ensure fair wages, income, living conditions, and reproduce labor power. Mobilize the best labor resources to serve national construction and development"[3]. On that basis, the 12th Congress also emphasized the role of the state in achieving this goal, in particular: "The state uses institutions, resources, regulatory tools, distribution, and redistribution policies to develop culture; Realizing democracy, progress, and social justice; Ensure social security, gradually improve social welfare, take care of all aspects of people's lives, and narrow the gap between the rich and the poor"[4]. The correct policies of the Vietnamese Communist Party are proven in practice through the tremendous development achievements of all aspects. This is a solid foundation that will enable Vietnam to quickly realize its goal of "rich people, strong nation, equitable, democratic and civilized society".

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p.35.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, pp.30-31.

3 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, p.136.

4 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, p.269.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM'S THEORY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE SOCIALIST-ORIENTED MARKET ECONOMY CONDITION

Nguyen Dinh Bac[1]

Realization of social justice is always a righteous aspiration, a noble idea, and the goal that humankind strives to achieve. In the current condition, social justice has become a strong drive and an essential factor guaranteeing sustainable development of the economy and the whole society. In that sense, all countries in the world have been paying attention to realizing social justice. Nevertheless, each country deals with this issue under different approaches, in line with specific historical conditions of their state and people.

For Vietnam, realizing social justice is a great policy, a consistent and thorough purpose of the Communist Party of Vietnam, demonstrating the humanistic and good nature of the socialist regime that the Party and people of Vietnam are building. However, the formation and development of the Communist Party of Vietnam's theory of social justice, especially in the condition of implementing a socialist-oriented

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market economy in Vietnam is a difficult and complicated process of implementing, exploring, experimenting, sifting, researching theories and summarizing practice to determine the appropriate direction, guideline, forms, steps, and measures. That is the process of development from low level to higher ones, from inadequate and incomplete state to more adequate and complete ones in all different aspects of social justice, with the following manifestations:

1. The objective inevitability of realizing social justice in the socialist-oriented market economy condition in Vietnam

Before the "Doi Moi" (Reform) period, the Communist Party of Vietnam determined to abolish the market economy, because similar to the common viewpoints of other Communist Parties at that time, our Party considered that "market economy daily and hourly produces capitalism, and capitalism is an injustice society, and the abolishment of the market economy is the necessary condition for social justice"[1]. The process of abolishing the market economy became one of the important factors that made production stagnant, the country fell into the socio-economic crisis, the lives of the people met lots of difficulties. In that situation, from 1986, the Communist Party of Vietnam initiated and led the cause of comprehensive reform of our country. And one of the important milestones was that the Party advocated to restore and promote the development of the market economy, so the country got out of the socio-economic crisis, the economy grew fast, the society was stabilized, and people's lives were increasingly improved, and so on.

1 Nguyễn Ngọc Hà, Phạm Quốc Thới, "Thực hiện công bằng xã hội - Nội dung cơ bản của định hướng xã hội chủ nghĩa đối với kinh tế thị trường ở Việt Nam [Implementation of social justice - A fundamental content of socialist orientation of market economy in Vietnam]", *Khoa học xã hội Việt Nam*/*Vietnam Social Sciences*, No. 2/2012.

But, another issue arose, "together with economic accomplishments achieved in the process of developing market economy, the rich and poor gap is wider than in the period of abolishing market economy"[1]. Looking at this fact, some argue that if Vietnam implements a market economy, there should be no social justice, or in other words, to implement a market economy means to sacrifice social justice for economic growth.

Firmly standing on the stance and viewpoints of Marxism - Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought, the Communist Party of Vietnam has objectively and comprehensively researched and reviewed all aspects of the issue and come to reaffirm clearly and consistently that: Social justice and socialist-oriented market economy in Vietnam do not oppose, eliminate or negate each other, but always have dialectical relationships with each other, support, complement each other, and serve as the basis and premises of each other. Social justice is not the factor that constrains economic growth; on the contrary, it is also a drive that contributes to economic growth, socio-economic development in particular and social progress in general. Social justice creates equal opportunities for each individual and all members of the society can leverage their capabilities and strength in contributing to the development of the society as well as benefits that they can enjoy correspondingly. In other words, "if there is social justice, the legitimate benefit of each person is guaranteed, each person is entitled to benefit according to their contribution; That will stimulate people to make their best efforts to contribute to society in the most voluntary way, from which the economy will grow rapidly."[2]. As reaffirmed by the Communist Party of Vietnam: "Proper and just social

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1 Nguyễn Ngọc Hà, Phạm Quốc Thới, "Thực hiện công bằng xã hội - Nội dung cơ bản của định hướng xã hội chủ nghĩa đối với kinh tế thị trường ở Việt Nam [Implementation of social justice - A fundamental content of socialist orientation of market economy in Vietnam]", *Khoa học xã hội Việt Nam*/*Vietnam Social Sciences*, No. 2/2012.

2 Nguyễn Ngọc Hà, "Bảo đảm công bằng xã hội vì sự phát triển bền vững [Guaranteeing social justice for sustainable development]", *Triết học*/*Philosophy*, No. 2 (213), 2/2009.

policy is a strong drive, promotes a creative capacity of people in the cause of protecting and safeguarding our Homeland"[1].

On the other hand, the realization of social justice in a socialist-oriented market economy will overcome the intrinsic nature of the market economy: competition, the strong winning against the weak, injustice, social inequality, etc. Therefore, in the socialist-oriented market economy, Vietnam inevitably has to realize social justice.

On the other hand, developing a socialist-oriented market economy is the method, the path, and the practical measure to realize social justice. However, the Communist Party of Vietnam also clearly pointed out that the market economy itself does not automatically guarantee social justice. Therefore, there must be social regulatory control via roles of socialist State, "on the one hand, to eradicate illegal incomes; and on the other hand, to reduce "legal" differences created by the market due to advantages of occupations, monopoly, etc"[2]. And, more importantly, such regulatory control of the State shall harmoniously resolve the relationship between contributions and benefits of all members of the society - which cannot be done by the market economy itself. As reaffirmed by the Communist Party of Vietnam: "The State's role is to provide guidance, formulate and complete the economic institution, ... use tools, policies and resources at the State's disposal to guide and regulate the economy, push up production and business and protect the environment; and to achieve social progress and equity in each step and through every single development policy"[3].

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ XI [Documents of the 11th National Congress]*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, pp. 79.

2 Lương Việt Hải, "Công bằng xã hội trong điều kiện kinh tế thị trường ở nước ta hiện nay [Social justice in the market economy condition in our country nowadays]", *Triết học*/*Philosophy*, No. 4 (155), 4/2004.

3 Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ XII [Documents of the 12th National Congress],* Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, pp. 103.

That is one of the first and prominent milestones in the process of development of the Communist Party of Vietnam's theory of social justice in the socialist-oriented market economy condition.

2. Social justice is realized in every step of economic development

Before and at the beginning of the "Doi Moi" (Reform) period, there were many opinions that Vietnam was still poor, the economy was still underdeveloped, so the immediate task was economic development, when the economy became highly developed there would be the material foundation and conditions to realize social justice. This opinion seems reasonable at first glance but does not match the viewpoints and goals of the Communist Party of Vietnam as well as the nature of the socialist regime that Vietnam is building.

Firmly basing on the Marxist theoretical basis of the relationship between the base and superstructure of society, between social existence and social consciousness, and thoroughly grasping viewpoint of Ho Chi Minh: "When the supplies and goods are not in short supply, but they are not properly distributed, this causes unnecessary stress. In circulatory distribution, there are two important issues to keep in mind: "Not afraid of shortage, only afraid of injustice; Not afraid of poverty, only afraid of uneasy people's hearts"[1]. As such, the Communist Party of Vietnam reaffirms that: "Not to wait for the economy to be highly developed to solve social issues, but even in each step and throughout the development process, economic growth must always be associated with social progress and equity."[2]. And that, "to realize social progress and social justice in every steps and policy of development is a great

1 Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, Vol.15, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, pp. 224.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ VIII [Documents of the 8th National Congress]*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996, pp. 31.

and consistent policy of our Party and State, demonstrating the good nature of the socialist regime"[1].

Experiences of other countries and regions in the world show that if economic goals are separated or overemphasized and social goals are overlooked or disregarded, in the end, the economic goals cannot be fully achieved. But on the contrary, if social goals are overemphasized, and economic goals not paid with sufficient attention, there will be no material basis or foundation to realize social goals. This means that economic growth and social justice can be and must be the premise and the condition of each other. In that relationship, economic growth creates material conditions for realizing social justice. And the appropriate realization of social justice is the force that drives economic growth. "There shall be no social justice of the economy is weak and only capable of providing people with merely sufficient lives. Also, there shall be no fast-growing economy of high efficiency and sustainability in a society with a majority of the population being intellectually inferior and physically weak and a significant proportion of labor force being unemployed, poor and pushed to the margin of the society"[2].

Therefore, the Communist Party of Vietnam also reaffirms that only a harmonious combination of economic growth goals with social goals can guarantee the sustainable realization of social justice. However, the Communist Party of Vietnam also points out that in a socialist-oriented market economy, to any extent the economy grows and develops, social justice must be realized to the same. It is unacceptable to wait until the economy develops to a high level to realize social justice, and not less unacceptable to sacrifice social justice for economic growth for the sake

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ XI [Documents of the 11th National Congress]*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, pp. 43.

2 Phạm Xuân Nam, *Tăng trưởng kinh tế và công bằng xã hội trong nền kinh tế thị trường định hướng xã hội chủ nghĩa [Economic growth and social justice in the socialist-oriented market economy]*, Tạp chí *Cộng sản điện tử/ Online Communist Review*, 21/01/2007.

of the minority. It is a must to consistently "realize social progress and social justice in every steps and policy of development: economic growth in line with cultural, health-care, educational developments, etc. and properly resolve the social issue for the goal of people development"[1]. Especially, it is necessary to "link closely economic policies with social policies and economic development with the improvement of the people's life quality, ensure that the people enjoy ever better fruits of the renewal process, national construction, and development"[2].

This is one of the crucial emphases, showing a leap in the development of the Communist Party of Vietnam's theory of social justice in socialist-oriented market economy condition.

3. Social justice does not mean even distribution and "equalitarianism".

According to the viewpoint of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the nature of social justice is the guarantee of "being equal" between an individual and others in the relationship between contribution and benefit, rights and obligations, honor and responsibility. Therefore, it is impossible to consider the realization of social justice as an even distribution in poverty; social justice is not the equality or even distribution in the manner of equalitarianism. Our Party always emphasizes that the realization of social justice in Vietnam is not only an effort to achieve goals of socialism but also an important driving force boosting the socio-economic development of our country and urgent demand of the cause of national "Doi Moi" and renovation. Therefore, merging social justice with equalitarianism shall eliminate the driving force of economic growth and development. This had also been repeated by Ho Chi

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ X [Documents of the 10th National Congress]*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, pp. 77-78.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ XII [Documents of the 12th National Congress],* Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, pp. 135 - 136.

Minh: "Equalitarianism is against socialism"[1]. But on the other hand, the Communist Party of Vietnam considers that it is not that the rich-poor gap being narrowed means having social justice, and not that the rich-poor gap being expanded means inequality being increased.

The aforesaid viewpoint is not only a step forward in the thinking of the Communist Party of Vietnam of social justice in a socialist-oriented market economy but also an important consciousness change of the Party as compared to the theory of Marxism - Leninism of social justice. As history has confirmed that, previously in a certain point of time, "Lenin also had the view of merging social justice with social equality"[2] when he considered that: There exists a difference in wealth means there exists inequality. As such, in the first phase of the future communism, due to the implementation of contribution by labor, there shall be no exploitation, but there still be differences in wealth, and therefore manifestations of inequality in society still exist. As Lenin wrote: The first phase of communism, therefore, cannot yet provide justice and equality; differences, and unjust differences, in wealth, will persist, but the exploitation of man by man will have become impossible because it will be impossible to seize the means of production--the factories, machines, land, etc.--and make them private property. In smashing Lassalle's petty-bourgeois, vague phrases about "equality" and "justice" in general, Marx shows the course of development of communist society, which is compelled to abolish at first only the "injustice" of the means of production seized by individuals, and which is unable at once to eliminate the other injustice, which consists in

1 Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, Vol.8, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2009, pp. 386.

2 Nguyễn Ngọc Hà, Phạm Quốc Thới, "Thực hiện công bằng xã hội - Nội dung cơ bản của định hướng xã hội chủ nghĩa đối với kinh tế thị trường ở Việt Nam [Implementation of social justice - A fundamental content of socialist orientation of market economy in Vietnam]", *Khoa học xã hội Việt Nam*/*Vietnam Social Sciences*, No. 2/2012.

the distribution of consumer goods "according to the amount of labor performed" (and not according to needs)"[1].

In fact, "the merging of social justice with social equality was once the theoretical base of equalitarianism, and also the theoretical base of the wrong viewpoint considering that it was impossible to simultaneously achieve the two goals of social justice and economic growth"[2]. The success in overcoming these limitations is one of the important development steps of the Communist Party of Vietnam's theory of social justice in the socialist-oriented market economy condition.

4. Proper implementation of appropriate distribution principles is the essential condition to have social justice in the condition of developing a socialist-oriented market economy in Vietnam

Both theory and practice reaffirm that to properly realize social justice, it is a must to ensure fairness in distribution. Distribution is the process of allocating production results and resources to production and living demands. Distribution plays a crucial role in the whole process of social reproduction, and also has great socio-economic significance. Therefore, it is a must to have a proper distribution policy in every period. However, it is not that right from the beginning or at any point in time do we properly determine and implement the principle of proper distribution. Previously, "due to the mistake of dogmatically following foreign models, social justice was understood and realized in practice in the manner of equalitarianism"[3]. In the circumstance the country was in war-time condition, the equalitarianism-based distribution policy played

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1 V. I. Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol.33, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, pp.114-115.

2 Nguyễn Ngọc Hà, "Bảo đảm công bằng xã hội vì sự phát triển bền vững [Guaranteeing social justice for sustainable development]", *Triết học*/*Philosophy*, No. 2 (213), 2/2009.

3 Trần Hậu, "Về quan điểm tiến bộ và công bằng xã hội ở nước ta [About viewpoint of social progress and equality in our country]", Tạp chí *Cộng sản điện tử*/ *Online Communist Review*, 12/10/2016.

a certain historical role. But when the actual circumstance changed, that such equalitarianism-based distribution policy is maintained for too long had leveling all labor values, not only failing to create any social justice but also being the hindrance eliminating the driving force of production and becoming one of the reasons constraining economic growth and leading to adverse impacts on the development of the society. This is one of the reasons that force us to implement the cause of "Doi Moi", to establish a market mechanism to realize the new equality principle: To abolish subsidiary mechanism, and to establish a more reasonable form and the principle of distribution.

When our country moves into a socialist-oriented market economy, the Communist Party of Vietnam determines that it is necessary to implement various forms of distribution. As in the viewpoint of the Party, in the economy of Vietnam exist various sectors, each of which is based on a certain form of ownership of means of production and a corresponding form of distribution for specific individual consumption. Although the economic sectors in Vietnam, rather than existing in isolation, interleave and form a unified national economic structure, that different forms of ownership exist mean the distribution of individual incomes cannot be done in a uniform form but must be done in various ones. Only then it is possible to release all production capacity, and to fully exploit all economic potentials of our country to vigorously develop forces of production, thereby step by step consolidate and perfect relations of production under socialist orientation.

On the other hand, the socialist-oriented market economy in Vietnam has various participating production and business entities from various economic sectors. Different production and business entities have different modes of production - business structuring, resulting in the diversity of the economy. Based on such business modes exist diversified forms of distribution, such as the distribution according to assets, distribution according to contributions to business and production like investments, experiences in production organization and management, labor, intellectual capacity, shares, etc.

Notably, the market economy in Vietnam is regulated by State management under the socialist orientation. Under this mechanism, factors of production inputs and outputs must be distributed through the forms and principles of the market. This also contributes to forming a distribution mode having various distribution forms. Basic forms of distribution identified by the Communist Party of Vietnam are "implementing a distribution regime mainly according to labor results, economic efficiency, and at the same time according to degrees of the contribution of funds and other resources, and distribution via systems of social security and social welfare"[1]. This is a profound grasp of the principle of objectiveness, comprehensiveness, historical - concrete and developmental viewpoints in realizing social justice in particular, and in the process of resolving social issues in general of our Party. This point of view is completely correct theoretically, consistent with the reality and objective conditions of Vietnam, presenting a new qualitative development in the Party's awareness of realizing social justice socialist-oriented market economy condition in Vietnam.

Because in fact, the forms of distribution according to labor and according to economic efficiency have the effects of encouraging people to improve their sense of responsibility and working attitude, consolidate labor discipline, actively drill their skills, improve efficiency and increase labor productivity. This thereby contributes to improving the material and cultural lives of labor, both guaranteeing reproduction of labor power and creating all conditions for the labor to develop comprehensively. However, according to the viewpoint of the Communist Party of Vietnam, although this form of distribution is the most progressive and fairest, the most fundamental and essential, this form is not the only one. This is because this form of distribution still contains conflicts and limitations which have not been solved thoroughly, especially when socialism in Vietnam is still in the transition period.

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ XI [Documents of the 11th National Congress]*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, pp. 79- 74.

This had been pointed out by Marx: "Thus, with an equal performance of labor, and hence an equal in the social consumption fund, one will receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on"[1]. That is both the preeminence and the defect of the principle of distribution according to labor - a defect that, according to Marx, is "inevitable in the first phase of communist society"[2].

Moreover, as the market mechanism in Vietnam is in the process of forming and developing, there have been several manifestations of "not all who are capable, talented and virtuous can meet demands of the market. In some cases, some persons who are not talented and virtuous become rich quickly, while the talented and virtuous are swept away by the market. That social stratification occurs quickly and deeply has created quite a lot of new inequality in society"[3]. Also, many simple jobs provide higher income, being times higher than complicated jobs; some intellectual jobs provide fewer benefits than manual jobs; and many people in the remoted, far-flung, border and island areas have not yet enjoyed the social welfare as those in centers, big cities, etc.

On the other hand, other contributions not in economic activities and physical production areas, especially contributions in social areas, must also be recognized and taken into account to guarantee that the true contributors can enjoy commensurate benefits. Therefore, the Communist Party of Vietnam considers that it is necessary to combine distribution according to contributions of other resources to production and business results with distribution via social security and social welfare funds to guarantee a degree of possible equality for the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society, especially for the

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, pp. 35.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, pp. 34 - 36.

3 Đỗ Huy, "Công bằng xã hội ở Việt Nam - Nhận diện và giải pháp thực hiện [Social justice in Vietnam - Identification and realization measures]", *Triết học/ Philosophy*, No. 5 (204), 5/2008.

disabled, elderly, lone persons, families of war invalids, martyrs, ethnic groups in highland, remote and isolated areas, families with meritorious services to the revolution, etc. Only then can social justice be fully and properly realized in reality; at the same time, can the nature of socialism and the traditions of humanity, humane, love, and mutual support of the Vietnamese nation be demonstrated.

Also according to the viewpoint of the Communist Party of Vietnam, guaranteeing justice in distribution must be understood in a broader and more substantial sense; it is not just the justice in the distribution of material wealth, production outcomes or purely from an economic perspective, etc., but the core of the issue is the justice in the distribution of means of production, in other aspects and areas of social life (such as culture, sciences, education, health-care, etc.), providing opportunities and conditions for each individual to comprehensively develop personal capabilities. As confirmed by the Party: "Social justice must be presented in the stage of reasonable distributing means of production as well as in the stage of distributing production outcomes, and in the provision of conditions for everyone to have opportunities to well develop and utilize their capabilities"[1]. And, it is a must to pay attention to "formulate and execute policies suitable to various social strata; settle effectively resentment-arousing social issues and discrepancies which may lead to social conflicts … to give adequate attention to disadvantaged sections of people, ethnic minority people in the mountain, hinterland and remote areas, and keep in check the widening of the rich-poor gap"[2].

It can be seen clearly that the development of the Communist Party of Vietnam's theory of social justice in the socialist-oriented market

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ VIII [Documents of the 8th National Congress]*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996, pp. 113.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Văn kiện Đại hội đại biểu toàn quốc lần thứ XII [Documents of the 12th National Congress],* Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, pp. 135.

economy is a continuous process of development from low levels to a higher one in increasingly more complete, appropriate, scientific, accurate, creative and effective manners. Continuously from the beginning of "doi moi" to now, through various National Congresses and Plenums of the Party Central Committee, in various documents and resolutions of the Party in different historical periods and points of time, although forms of representation and expression may be different, throughout and consistent in the directions and viewpoints of the Communist Party of Vietnam is an emphasis on properly recognizing and harmoniously resolving the issue of social justice in socialist-oriented market economy condition. Thereby, this marks a remarkable development in theory and practice leading the Doi Moi cause of our Party, significantly contributing to the overall achievement of the national reform project.

Development of the Communist Party of Vietnam's theory of social justice in the socialist-oriented market economy is the result of the process of our Party understanding and flexibly applying Marxism - Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's thought on specific conditions of Vietnam; and at the same time, always closely following the movement and development of the country's reality, actively consulting the experiences of countries around the world; and well-performing the combination between theoretical research and reality review of the "Doi Moi" cause.

Nowadays, the increasingly high demands of the cause of comprehensive and synchronized national "Doi Moi", as well as the process of globalization and international integration of Vietnam, etc. require the Party's theory of social justice in socialist-oriented market economy condition to be not only correct and creative but also more breakthrough and effective.

PART 2

REALITY AND PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN CONTEMPORARY VIETNAM

SOCIAL EQITY IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT OF SCIENTIFIC-TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION IN VIETNAM

Luong Dinh Hai[1]

Equity and democracy are the aspirations of every society and nation that has social polarization, or oppression, or exploitation. They are the measures for social progress, the common values of humanity, and the target of modern societies. At the same time, they are the strong driving force of the development of countries, nations, and the international community. Equity and democracy in societal history have a close relationship. However, it is impossible to describe or shape the relationship in terms of mathematical formulae or functions that are proportional or inversely proportional. It is complex, diverse, multidimensional, and contains various contents depending on objective conditions.

One of the manifestations of the level of social equity is the rich-poor differentiation and social polarization. Therefore, one way to implement social equity is to regulate the real income of social entities so that equity becomes the most powerful and inclusive human and social development motivation. In Vietnam, social equity in the past

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decades has been implemented with many new contents in both theory and practice [5]. Regulating income by the state's policies is one of the main and common ways to implement social equity in Vietnam. The state adopts various types of policies to regulate income such as economic policies, taxes, social policies, policies on health insurance or education, etc. However, in reality, social equity is still not as desired, and its implementation still faces many difficulties. Poverty alleviation and income adjustment by different policies in the past few decades are one of the great efforts, with significant achievements already recognized by many organizations and countries in the world. But various recent statistics and surveys show that income disparities are widening, and the rich-poor differentiation in society is no longer ordinary as appearing are signs of social polarization. In this article, we only mention the rich-poor differentiation from an economic income perspective. The differentiation has many other aspects, but, among them, that of economic income is a very fundamental one.

"In an hour, the richest person in Vietnam gains the income from assets nearly 5,000 times more than the income that the poorest 10% of Vietnamese spends daily on essential needs. The one-year income of 210 super-rich people in Vietnam is enough to bring 3.2 million people out of poverty to end extreme poverty across the country" [6], [7], [8]. "Vietnam is among the ten countries in the world with the rich-poor gap and the number of super-rich people increasing the fastest. While the property is increasingly accumulated among very few people in the society, the rate of income transfer of the poorest group to higher income groups is slowing down. The rich-poor gap is widening" [10].

Reasonable and legitimate rich-poor differentiation in the market economy and societal history, in general, is the driving force of human and social development; however, the polarization, in general, is a barrier to human and social development. Rich-poor differentiation and social polarization are primarily due to income disparities. From the perspective of the relationship between personal income and institutional framework, which, in the narrow sense, is laws, rules, regulations, and

policies of the state, the management apparatus, and their operation mechanism, in Vietnam today the rich-poor differentiation is due to four sources:

First, the differentiation is from legitimate, reasonable, and lawful income in the institutional term, that is the income from talent, labor, other sources of income that are legal and suitable with the strongest capacities, competence, and specific socio-economic conditions of each individual and community. The differentiation generated by such income sources is also legal and reasonable. The differentiation of this origin is the driving force for human and social development that should be strengthened and encouraged.

Second, the differentiation is from reasonable, but illegal income. These are proper incomes in line with the rules of in a positive and progressive direction. The elimination of the illegal source of such income is the task of the government because it has created an institutional framework that is inconsistent with human and social development. Regulations, laws, and policies should be adjusted so that such income sources become legal and reasonable. In the context that the scientific-technological revolution is rising rapidly and exerting stronger impacts on production, people, and society, the regular improvement of the institutional framework in this direction is an urgent requirement and a frequent and important task of the authorities at all levels. The nature and the extent of the government's effectiveness are reflected there, therefore, it can be considered one of the criteria to evaluate the effectiveness and the extent of being "tectonic", i.e., facilitating and constructive, of the government, rather than relying merely on the GDP growth to assess it.

Third, the differentiation is from unreasonable, but legal sources of income, for example, from BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) toll gates where roads are not newly built, but just the repairs of old roads were made. People having this source of income are often afraid of being discovered and blamed, so they often find ways to rationalize or hide in different ways. The existence of this source of income is often, since

the institutional framework is slow, to be reformed to suit reality, or it reflects incorrectly the economic and social relations that need to be encouraged to develop. If the income of this type is allowed to be long-lived or popular in society, the consequences will be very unpredictable, because it does not encourage reasonable labor and income. Then legitimate interests and social norms will not be strictly followed and self-disciplined; the institutional framework become environments and tools to facilitate and encourage unreasonable and illegitimate income; people lose faith in laws, policies, the state's governance, and management, social values, especially the value of fairness; the society will suffer a crisis in the non-material life, being, first of all, the crisis in the political consciousness, and instability sooner or later will occur. Therefore, the rich-poor differentiation due to unreasonable but legal sources of income is very harmful to human and social development. The regular task of the state is to promptly discover the sources to correct the institutional framework to suit the reality so as not to cause a negative social differentiation.

Fourthly, the social differentiation stemming from unreasonable and illegal sources of income is the most harmful. Income from corruption is one of those kinds of unreasonable and illegal income.

As many people in society have unreasonable and illegal income, and the situation persists, the social values are inevitably turned upside down, and, sooner or later, instabilities will appear, accumulate, converge and then trigger social conflicts. The rich-poor differentiation due to unreasonable and illegal income sources is one of the causes and sources of the rich-poor polarization in society. The differentiation in such a way is the typical injustice and serious violation of social justice. Of course, such differentiation will inhibit the development of productive forces of humankind and society. Removing as quickly as possible those sources of illegal and unreasonable income is an extremely important task of the state to ensure social equity and that is a condition for sustainable development of people and society. The existence of these sources of income represents inefficiencies, or impotence of institutions, primarily the state.

In fact, in Vietnam today, all the four above-mentioned sources of income exist, and, even, sometimes, in many places, the second, third, and fourth types are predominant over the first one. And the emergence of the fourth has even caused social annoyance and seriously reduced people's confidence in the state. The rich-poor differentiation caused by the second and third sources of income is also a significant obstacle to the development of Vietnamese people and society. If reasonable income is considered illegal by the institutions, like in the case of a café named "Xin chào" (i.e., "Hello") in Ho Chi Minh City [12], [13], [14], or the case of exchanging the US $100 to Vietnamese Dong in Can Tho province, which were covered by the mass media recently [15], [16], [17], [18], exploration, creativity, and innovation in business methods will not be encouraged. Such ways of handling will even squeeze talents, initiatives, and ideas towards new ways and new directions. The phenomenon of *xé rào* (breaking the hurdle) is the most focused and clear reflection of the situation that the institutions consider legitimate and reasonable activities and incomes of people and communities illegal, which causes the people and society "to break the institutional hurdle". It was reasonable to perform "*khoán*", or make use of contracts, in agricultural production in Vinh Phuc province and some other localities in the late 1970s to help generate more income for the local farmers, but it was considered illegal by the institutional framework. On the other hand, the unreasonable sources of income are, however, recognized by law as legal, which is also causing dissent in public opinion. The "backwardness" of the institutional framework is a reality existing in many fields, industries, and professions at different levels, causing considerable obstacles to the implementation of social equity.

The rich-poor differentiation based on legitimate and reasonable income, though it may not be legal at the beginning (for example, the incomes from "khoán", the "third plan" in the industry at the end of the 1970s, which, due to being illegal, were termed as the phenomenon of "breaking the hurdle", etc.), of course, will be the driving force for the

human and social development and ensure that social equity is to be realized sustainably. It is also the foundation for a stable, developed, and united society with consensus. However, in practice, the above four types of income always go together, with interactions among them, though their degrees of significance are different from one another in different periods and social conditions. If one wishes for and only sees one type of rich-poor differentiation, which is reasonable and legitimate, that will not be a multifaceted view, and the social governance and management will be subjective and wrongful.

In reality, the rich-poor differentiation and social equity performance depend on many different factors. In the next ten years, in our opinion, the more the market economy develops and the more strongly the scientific-technological revolution and Industrial Revolutions 3.0 and 4.0 develop, bringing more and more achievements to Vietnam, the more the opportunities and conditions for the rich-poor gap to expand. Meanwhile, it will be difficult for social institutions to make sufficiently strong changes to curb the increase in the rich-poor differentiation; consequently, narrowing the rich-poor gap that has existed over the last two decades will also be harder.

Today is the era of the scientific-technological revolution, in other words, one of the great characteristics of the current historical period is the enormous development of that revolution. Studying the impacts of the revolution, we conceive that such revolution from the 2nd World War to the late 1970s and early 1980s was the theoretical foundation for Industrial Revolution 3.0 with great achievements and unprecedented significant impacts on human and social development on a global scale. The scientific-technological revolution that has been taking place since the 1980s to now has created the theoretical foundation for Industrial Revolution 4.0, which has just begun and is being mentioned a lot in Germany and Vietnam. At the same time, the revolution is also continuing to boost and spread the Industrial Revolution 3.0 to all over the world.

In history, Vietnam was not able to carry out any scientific, technical, and technological revolutions among those the world has made. Even, with regard to the three industrial revolutions, Vietnam could not participate in them due to its historical conditions and many other factors. The survey conducted by the National Research Project KX 01.11/16-20 in nine provinces of Vietnam's all three regions, namely the North, Central region, and the South[1], shows that the levels of production and industrial forces in regions, locations, industries, and fields quite vary[2]. There are still places and regions where production

1 The author uses research results of Project KX 01.11/16-20. The research team of that project has conducted sociological surveys, in-depth interviews, workshops with managers, executives, researchers, university lecturers, secondary school teachers, workers, entrepreneurs in the provinces and cities of Lao Cai, Quang Ninh, Hanoi, Da Nang, Ninh Thuan, Dak Lak, Ho Chi Minh, Dong Nai and Vinh Long. Opinions assessing the impacts of the scientific-technological revolution on the Vietnamese people and society vary on the basis of differences in evaluating the country's level of industrial development. The majority of respondents said that Vietnam is currently only in the industrial period of 2.5, i.e., not yet reaching Industrial Revolution 3.0. But the impacts of the industrial and scientific-technological revolutions on Vietnam's people and society are now very strong and generating more and more pressure from many aspects. The impacts and changes in different aspects due to them are, even though uneven, gaining more and more strength, being disruptive, inevitably changing many aspects of life and people in a drastical manner. The impacts on social equity implementation and social relations are also stronger and stronger, creating many challenges in the years ahead. A 2017 report of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences on the impacts of Industrial Revolution 4.0 also contributes to affirming that, though laying more emphasis on the challenges created by the revolution. It is more and more obvious that impacts of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions on social equity are stronger and stronger in Vietnam.

2 We believe that the main technology platform of Industrial Revolution 1.0 was the steam engine and internal combustion engine; Industrial Revolution 2.0 - the electromagnetic machines (power generators and electric motors); Industrial Revolution 3.0 - electronic devices; and Industrial Revolution 4.0 - to be artificial intelligence. Read more: [2, pp.3-14], [3, pp.3-16].

is in the pre-industrial stage and many other places that are at the Industrial Revolution 2.0 stage. Only enterprises in industrial zones, big cities, some industries, and sectors have already reached the level of Industrial Revolution 3.0, but merely at its early stage. However, the achievements of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions are approaching Vietnam at very fast paces.

The achievements of both the scientific-technical and scientific-technological revolutions are greatly affecting Vietnam. But, as seen from the industrial angle, the Industrial Revolution 2.0 - the foundation of electromagnetic technologies and the Industrial Revolution 3.0 - the foundation of electronic technologies, are the foundation of Vietnam's industry today. We would like to emphasize this to note that there are several misconceptions about the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Industrial Revolution 3.0 when it comes to their impacts on Vietnam. There is currently not yet Industry 4.0 in the country because its technological base is the artificial intelligence that has not yet appeared in Vietnam's industry as a popular technological platform. Considering the impacts of the scientific-technological revolution on social equity, one needs to pay attention to this important feature of the modern Vietnamese society, to avoid subjective illusions, basing merely on one's will, trying to bypass necessary stages, which can lead to serious mistakes with unpredictable consequences.

The development of the scientific-technological revolution and industrial revolutions (both 2.0 and 3.0) in Vietnam now contributes positively to ensuring social equity on a much more solid, broadened, and profound foundation than the social equity that is based on agriculture or production yet to be industrialized. Technology and industry are both products of science; and, when taken into production and society, technology will change the people and society in the direction of progress and development. Science, especially social sciences, has strong impacts on the awareness of people and society of social equity, creating ideals, methods, and solutions to implement it on a reasonable foundation and making it fit with each development

stage of production. The concept of equity has been changed towards a more progressive, comprehensive, complete, inclusive, and profound direction, as analyzed in a seminar [5].

But the important thing is that when the achievements of the industrial revolution approach Vietnam, turning the Vietnamese economy into an increasingly industrialized one, pushing productivity of the economy higher, there will be increasingly open and diversified opportunities to implement equity, and, as a result, more people will be able to achieve. That is because, on the one hand, science, technology, and industry create various jobs and opportunities for workers to generate their incomes, which is a requirement to achieve equity. The pre-industrialization society before could not have the conditions to carry out broad and complete equity, so it was forced to implement equity through egalitarianism. On the other hand, the industry creates opportunities and conditions to free people from direct labor functions, such as motivation, transport, technology, and supervision, so differences in physical strength are less likely to affect the volume of products made, more sources of reasonable and legitimate income are created, and so are the opportunities to have them.

Along with the development of science, technology, and industry since the end of the 20th century till now, the number of jobs has increased rapidly, and the opportunity to access income has not decreased but increased more and more instead. That is most evident in the fact that the number of workers has increased continuously and strongly, the number of careers has not decreased but still continuously increased, although some traditional industries have been removed. The development process of the industry has removed some sectors and at the same time created many new industries which are one of the important characteristics of the scientific-technical and scientific-technological revolutions and industrialization. That has created an opportunity for different human capacities to be utilized and thus the people can gain legitimate and reasonable incomes.

The means of science-technology and the industrial revolution create devices and tools that can correctly identify and monitor the quality of products and labor productivity of each individual and each community. This means that each person's labor can be objectively evaluated, more accurately, and more reasonably. That is the condition and premise to implement social equity in a reasonably grounded way. Also, science, technology, and industry have helped increase labor productivity and production capacity of the economy, creating more and more products. More wealth is generated, and the basic needs of people and society are guaranteed to be the most important prerequisites for human and social development. Satisfying the basic needs of individuals and society is itself equality, humanity, and progress of the human race. On that equal foundation, modern society may provide other social equitable contents at higher but more vital levels such as equity in education, healthcare, and environment, etc.

If previously, in the pre-industrialized societies, the saying "not to be afraid of shortage, but to be afraid of unfairness" was correct, then in the era of scientific-technological and industrial revolutions today, it is not anymore. Correct is now the phrase "sufficiency does not always mean fairness, while shortage never does". This means that under the impacts of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions, horizontal equity (equal treatment for those who contribute equally) is like a condition being firmly assured, as the type of equity that has the character of the human race, being universally humane. Vertical equity, i.e. treating differently those who are different from the common groups or live in different conditions, means that people with higher abilities, working better, and making more contributions are entitled to more benefits which belong to the upper layer of social equity, bears special significance in the era of scientific-technological and industrial revolutions. It is the vertical implementation of equity that drives human and social development.

The scientific-technological and industrial revolutions contribute to extending the reach of the hands and the vision of the eyes of each person

and each social community, helping them to continuously boost their capacities in all aspects as well as their labor productivity. In addition to the aspect of social differentiation due to ownership differentiation that creates social classes, differentiation due to increasing capacity and labor productivity is an important cause of social polarization, even though this polarization is reasonable and legitimate. In the early stage of industrialization, most countries expressed an attitude of accepting and promoting rich-poor polarization towards vertical equity to promote the rapid development of their people and societies. The differentiation here is due to fairness and therefore very reasonable and legitimate. It motivates people to be more active and utilize rationally all of their capacities and enhance their labor productivity and efficiency, developing the economy and generating more wealth. Social progress is as a result maintained regularly.

While vertical social equity is accelerated by the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions, creating a reasonable rich-poor diversification that is growing day by day, can this lead to social polarization? That is a big question, which we have not found a valid answer in research documents. Certainly, in principle, the differentiation taking place over a long period will inevitably lead to polarization. Logically, that is unavoidable. But in reality, it is not the case, as the opportunity to increase the income generated by the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions is not permanent or long-term for any specific individual or community. The opportunity to increase such income source is not confined to any specific type of subject, but all subjects in society. Human development always takes place unevenly in all aspects. People's capacities and qualities also vary. Taking advantage of opportunities brought about by the scientific-technological revolution and those by the industrial one is not the same. Therefore, it is essential to promote and expand the opportunity for maximum use of the achievements of the two revolutions. We should not be afraid of the rich-poor differentiation due to vertical equity under the impacts of the revolutions. The paradox of vertical social equity in

the revolutions will create such differentiation and social polarization that is a reality that is tough to solve. But it is unadvisable to base on that to constrain the development of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions.

In Vietnam today, that paradox has not yet caused any consequences on the social development; on the contrary, it is the rich-poor differentiation due to other irrational sources of income that causes great harm to human and social development.

Therefore, in our opinion, the state should further encourage and accept the rich-poor differentiation due to vertical equity under the impacts of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions to promote people and society to grow stronger and faster.

On the other aspect, the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions often promote the horizontal equity level. They create more products to satisfy the needs of living and improve society's basic living standards. In other words, the achievements of the two revolutions always raise the people's average, and also, minimum, living standards. It also means that the scientific-technological and the industrial revolutions further horizontal social equity to be broader, more inclusive, and at higher and higher levels. Horizontal equity, therefore, also rises and becomes more sustainable. More products are included in the basic needs in a more diverse way that demonstrates social progress at a higher level. However, when horizontal social equity is enhanced, vertical social equity will also be pushed to higher levels, the paradox of the situation "the more the equality, the higher the extent of division into layers/levels" continues to exist.

Along with the development of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions, the fairness in both vertical and horizontal ways is increasingly expanded into many elements such as environmental fairness and fairness in achievements of all development aspects: education, healthcare, sports, etc. To ensure the implementation of social equity in all elements, both horizontally and vertically, is very

difficult when one needs to, at the same time, ensure the development of a market economy at a rapid pace. Our survey shows that the majority of people deem the impacts of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions have not yet exerted great impacts on the implementation of social equity, and the paradox of the situation "the more the equality, the higher the extent of division into layers/levels" is not as strong, as under the impacts of the market economy and institutions. The shortcomings in the implementation of social equity today are mainly caused by the market economy and institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to accelerate the application of achievements of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions in socio-economic and human development, using them to limit shortcomings caused by the market economy and institutions which can distort social relations and restrain human and social development.

While the rich-poor gap is widening, causing the risk of social polarization, the matter is how to effectively utilize achievements of the scientific-technological and industrial revolutions to restrain such widening and to narrow the rich-poor differentiation which is in existence today. The achievements of the two revolutions themselves neither create fairness nor cause injustice, and neither increase nor decrease the rich-poor gap. Their application in line with the defined purposes of individuals, social groups, and communities based on market rules makes the rich-poor differentiation occur in different trends. The achievements are especially effective and very fundamental tools, to raise income for social groups, either widening or narrowing the rich-poor gap in and social polarization. To properly apply them for humanitarian purposes and social progress has become an urgent task and requirement of modern society.

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IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL EQUITY IN THE RELATIONSHIP WITH ECONOMIC GROWTH, CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND SOCIAL PROGRESSION IN VIETNAM IN RENOVATING PERIOD

Dang Huu Toan[1]

In the country's comprehensive renovation with socialist direction, the Communist Party of Vietnam had a significant renovation in the awareness and realistic lead in solving *the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, culture development, as well as social progression*. With clearer awareness and realistically more effective solution for this relationship, the Communist Party asserted that this is one of the "huge relationships" that needs "special attention to grasp and solve nicely" throughout the renovation to achieve the goal of prosperous people, strong countries, democracy, justice, and civilization. This is a huge guideline of the Communist Party of Vietnam and in reality, this guideline has become the guiding idea of the Party in implementing the country development's programs and plans.

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1. The Communist Party of Vietnam's awareness development process of the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression

Right in VI Congress, when announcing the new pathway for the country's comprehensive renovation with socialist direction, the Communist Party of Vietnam aware that to stabilize the country's economic – social situation and free the production ability, Vietnam needs to not only quickly and sustainably grow the economy to build modern material and technological foundation, but also solve social issues, improve the people's lives material-wise and culture-spirit-wise, nurture people's strength, build positive social relationships, healthy lifestyles, and implement social equity with the sense that workers are the biggest production force and the subject of the society. Social policies need to cover every aspect of human life, from work and living environment, education and culture, to family relationships, class, and ethnicity, etc. It is essential to have a consistency between economic policies and social policies, solving the attitude of underestimating social policies and human factors; build foundational and long-term social policies, as well as implementing social equity and progression.

With this awareness, the Communist Party of Vietnam identified basic social issues that need to be solved in the period of transition towards socialism, as well as asserting the social equity implementation guideline; built a cultural lifestyle; ensured social security; restored the order and rules in every aspect of social life, cared about and met the demand of education, culture, protection, and health improvement of the people; built social aid policies; and correctly implemented social class and ethnic policies[1].

Therefore, it can be said that cultural improvement, progression implementation, and social equity topics were proposed by the Communist Party based on the basics right at the beginning of the renovation process.

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1 See: The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Collections of Party documents*, Vol. 47, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, page 520, 420 – 421, 421 – 430.

Continuing to develop this awareness, in *Platform for national construction in the transitional period to socialism* (as known as Platform 1991) approved in VII Congress, the Communist Party of Vietnam asserted: Judicious social policies for human's happiness is a huge motivation to enhance every creativity potential of the people for building socialism. That, to enhance that motivation, it is essential to build and develop an advanced culture that is rich in ethnic characteristics, as well as bringing humane, democratic, and advanced contents as a feature of socialism; as well as enhancing the human element on the foundation of ensuring equity and equality regarding rights and responsibilities, combining economic growth with social progression; material life and spiritual life, and meeting the upfront demands and long-term benefits, of individuals, groups, and the society[1].

In Platform 1991, the Communist Party also emphasized that to develop the culture and implement progression and social equity, it is essential to implement gender equality policy and equality, solidarity, and support policy among ethnic groups; consistently implement the policy of respecting and ensuring the people's freedom regarding religions; enhance the role of culture and art in nurturing and improving the soul of Vietnam; and ensure the rights to be informed and to be free to create of the people.

After 20 years of implementing Platform 1991, the Communist Party of Vietnam had new awareness that is becoming clearer about the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression.

First of all, with the perspective of focusing on the strategy to nurture human, develop culture, and implement progression and social equity in the period of developing market economy and executing the country's industrialization and modernization, in VIII Congress, the Communist Party proposed an important guiding idea in the process of promoting the country's industrialization and modernization: "Take

1 See: The Communist Party of Vietnam, Ibid, Vol. 51, page 139.

the enhancement of human resources as the basic element for fast and sustainable development. Encouraging everyone to be frugal to build the country, continuously increase the accumulation for investing in development. Economic growth attaches to the improvements of people's lives, as well as cultural and educational development, progression, social equity implementation, and environment protection"[1]. With this guiding idea, the Communist Party determined that in implementing economic – social development strategy, it is essential to *harmoniously combine economic growth with cultural – social development*, focus on solving pressing issues to *create a significant change in implementing equity and social progression*.

Continuing to complement and develop that perspective, in IX, X, and XI Congression, the Communist Party determined that: Implementing social policies has to aim towards developing and cleaning up the society, implementing social equity, starting with equity in distribution that creates motivation for economic growth, developing production, increasing social working efficiency, implementing equality in social relationships. About developing the culture, the Communist Party maintains: Building an advanced and rich-with-ethnic-characteristics culture is a goal, as well as a motivator for economic – social development. Every cultural activity has to aim towards building a Vietnamese person that comprehensively developed in politics, ideology, intelligence, ethics, physical state, creative ability, social awareness, compassion, tolerance, sentimental attachment's respect, culturally appropriate lifestyle, and harmonious relationships in the family, community, and society. Culture has to be the element to motivate people to self-improve their personalities, inherit the nation's revolution tradition, and enhance patriotic spirit, self-reliance, and self-strength to build and protect socialist Vietnam.

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 8th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996, page 85.

With more in-depth awareness about the relationship between implementing socialism that starts with equity in distribution, and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression, the Communist Party determined that this is one of the basic contents of the socialist orientation. Therefore, it is essential to implement progression and social equity in each step and each development policy; economic growth has to attach to development in culture, healthcare, education, etc. Solving social issues has to aim toward comprehensively developing people. Implementing distribution system based on working time, economic effectiveness, as well as the capital and other resources contribution, and through social welfare. To clarify this topic, the Communist Party emphasized: It is essential to combine economic goals with social goals on a national scale, in every field and location; implement social equity has to closely attach to implementing social progression in each step and each development policy; implement social policy based on economic growth that attaches to rights, responsibilities, contributions, and enjoyment creates a strong and sustainable motivation for economic – social development, focus on solving pressing social issues; encourage people to get rich legally, effectively implement policies for eliminating hunger and reducing poverty; create favorable conditions and equal opportunity to access development resources, enjoy basic social services and social welfare, and sustainably eliminate poverty in impoverished areas and poor resident groups, etc.

About cultural development, the Communist Party emphasized continually developing and improving the quality of the advanced and rich-with-ethnic-characteristics Vietnamese culture that is more closely and synchronously attached to economic – social development. And in the process of implementing the economic – social development strategy, building and developing the culture need to meet the requirements of social development, comprehensive human development, human resources, especially high-quality human resources throughout the process of promoting industrialization and modernization that attaches

to knowledge economy development and globalization. Especially, it is essential to ensure the attachment between the missions of developing the economy as the core and building the Communist Party as a keynote and cultural development as a spiritual foundation of the society; value improving the leading and managerial culture, as well as the culture in business, in the characteristics of adolescences; and preventing anti-cultural and non-cultural phenomenon.

With this awareness and the leading reality, the Communist Party has realistically solved the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression. These results were seen by the Communist Party as one of the most precious experiential lessons for the process of the country's comprehensive renovation. That is the lesson of "valuing the close combination between economic growth with the implementation of progression and social equity; ensuring social security; taking care of the material and spiritual life of the people", "attaching economic growth to cultural development". In Platform 2011 approved in XI Congress, the Communist Party asserted that this is one of the "big relationships" that needs to be "especially attentively grasped and well solved"[1]. And in XII Congress, "attaching growing the economy to developing the culture, building and developing people, and implementing progression and social equity" was determined by the Communist Party as a big guideline and in fact "has become the guiding idea for many programs and development plans" of the Party[2].

To brief the awareness development process of the Communist Party of Vietnam in the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression in the last 30 years of renovation, we can draw some conclusions:

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, page 72 – 73.

2 See: The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 7h National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2016, page 124.

First, throughout the process of comprehensively renovate the country, the Communist Party of Vietnam always cares for and values solving this relationship.

Second, thanks to the awareness that is becoming clearer about the conflicting quality and being consistent when solving this relationship, the Communist Party has proposed through each step the perspectives and guidelines, as well as in-time and suitable solutions to appropriately solve it.

Third, from caring about the width, the Communist Party has slowly focused on the depth and the quality of this relationship. And from the care on a macro level, the Communist Party emphasized the move on a micro level, combining economic goals with social goals on the national level, in each field and location, implementing progression and social equity in each step and each development policy.

Fourth, from emphasizing on building the culture in the community, the Communist Party highlighted more on enhancing the role of culture in the mission of economic development and in building the Communist Party, especially valuing improving the leading and managerial culture, as well as the culture in business, in the characteristics of adolescences, and preventing anti-cultural and non-cultural phenomenon.

Fifth, with the guideline that encourages the people to get rich legally, the Communist Party emphasized the effective implementation of eliminating hunger and reducing poverty policy, creating favorable conditions and equal opportunities to access development resources and enjoyment of basic social services to sustainably eliminate poverty.

These can be seen as theory achievements with significant meaning in realistic guidance of the Communist Party in solving the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression in the recent renovation process in Vietnam.

2. The reality of solving the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression in the renovation process in Vietnam

The main achievements in implementing the Communist Party of Vietnam's perspective about this relationship in more than the last 30 years of renovation are shown in these aspects:

First, the Communist Party's perspective about the tight attachment between fast economic growth and cultural development, progression and social equity implementation as a regulatory system is appropriate and meets the requirements of the country's sustainable development; and therefore, Vietnam can keep the national traits in development, avoiding the risk of "alienation" and becoming "the shadow" of other ethnic groups or other countries. "The whole society's awareness about economic growth along with cultural development, progression and social equity implementation was raised"[1], and solving this relationship is getting better and more effective.

Second, through thoroughly and more effectively implementing the Communist Party's perspective in reality about cultural development as the spiritual foundation of the society, being both the goal and the motivation for economic – social development; about combining economic goals and social goals on a national level, in each field and location; about implementing progression and social equity in each step and each development policy and about ensuring a tight attachment of developing the economy as the center and building the Communist Party as a keynote with developing the culture – the spiritual foundation of the society, Vietnam created a consensus in the society towards the renovation pathway of the Party; and therefore, the belief in the predominance of socialism was raised. Also, through that, the democratic, pro-active, positive, and creative spirit of the people in implementing the attachment between economic growth and cultural development, progression, and social equity implementation was more effectively enhanced.

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, Ibid, page 132.

In over the last 30 years, through thoroughly implementing the Communist Party's perspective, the economy of Vietnam has reached a high growth rate in many years and as a result creating an important material premise for investing in culture, implementing progression and social equity, increasing opportunities and create a favorable condition for social classes to equally access economic, cultural, and social development resources. Thoroughly following the Communist Party's perspective, the State of Vietnam established many guidelines and solutions to institutionalize and specify this perspective in each period and each development policy, attaching to the specific traits of each division, field, and location. The national budget for investing in activities in culture, society, education, healthcare, hunger elimination, and poverty reduction, etc. was significantly raised.

Third, the legal system and policies to ensure the goals of economic and social development, as well as progression and social equity implementation, were gradually complemented and improved, creating a favorable legal environment for Vietnam to adjust the relationships. The national goals program about developing the culture, creating jobs, encouraging legal enrichment, along with sustainably eliminating hunger, reducing poverty, and caring for the community's health, wages policy, health insurance, social security, and social welfare had a positive use and realistically contributed in raising material life and spiritual life for the people. Socialize policies in culture, education, science, healthcare, physical education, and sports, etc. helped Vietnam mobilize huge resources domestically and internationally to actively participate in developing the culture and implementing progression and social equity. Charitable activities and movements for origin-bound, gratitude, and humanitarian aid, etc. attracted wide-spread support from the people, contributing to strengthening the nation's unity.

Fourth, in the social aspect, Vietnam gained some significant achievements in creating jobs, eliminating hunger, and reducing poverty. Vietnam completed the majority of the Millennial goals committed in front of the international community. Social welfare and

social security were given more attention. Caring for and protecting people's health was focused on and achieved many positive outcomes. The human development rate increased continuously. The society is stable, consensual, and more open. The people actively support the Communist Party and the State's guidelines and policies.

Fifth, the culture continued to be developed in the right way and variously, contributing to keeping political stability, order, social security, and economic – social development. Buiding an advanced Vietnam's culture that is rich-with-ethnic-characteristics as a spiritual foundation of the society is given more attention. Thanks to cultural development, new and beautiful values in lifestyle and morality of Vietnamese people comprehensively developed, gravitating towards truth – goodness – beauty, imbruing with the national, humane, democratic, and scientific spirit, that is gradually formed. The preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage are given more attention. Domestic and international cultural exchange is focused on and expanded; therefore, people's intellect and spiritual life are raised.

Sixth, national unity is strengthened. "Unifying the people to build cultural life" was implemented widely. Freedom in belief and religion was respected. Gender equality made progression.

Seventh, considering education and training as "top prioritized national policy" was cared about by the whole society and had development; therefore, better met the study and work demands of the society, contributing to raising the people's intellect and creating human resources for the country. The national education system including different levels, stages, school models, and education methods continued to be developed. Middle school education generalization on a national level was completed. Skill training scale gradually increased especially in college and special high school. The technical infrastructure for education and training was gradually improved. The State investment for education and training gradually increased and the national budget for education annually increased. Socializing education achieved many important outcomes. Many different resources in society were

mobilized to invest in education and training. The content, program, and teaching and studying methods had some renovation and started to improve quality-wise. The guideline of building an educational society is actively implemented.

However, the shortcomings and inadequacies of solving the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression are still shown in the aspects mentioned below:

First, the organization of implementing the Communist Party's perspective about the attachment between economic growth and social development, progression, and social equity implementation was still lack of synchronization and outrightness. The awareness of some leading and managing offices in some field and location was inconsistent; therefore, the role of the culture and cultural development towards economic – social development is unclear. The awareness of cultural integration, national cultural characteristics maintenance, and the cultural market is still controversial. Due to the weight of economic growth, many divisions and locations hardly give attention to cultural development, as well as underestimating progression and social equity implementation.

The gap between renovating economic policies and renovating cultural and social policies clearly showed; many social issues, as well as anti-cultural and non-cultural phenomenon emerged. The leading directions focus more on material quotas instead of social development and environment protection quotas. Many decisions about implementing social, cultural, educational, and scientific policies were established and executed; however, the outcomes were not satisfied. Many pressing social issues were not solved or not on time.

When planning and building the programs and projects to develop the economy and society, many places only focused on economic benefits and did not have adequate attention for the development of culture, education, and healthcare, as well as for solving social issues and living environment for workers.

Building cultural lifestyle has not gained positive changes, especially in festival activities, public communication, as well as building traffic, office, leading, and managerial culture. The recession and degradation of the ideas, ethics, and lifestyles were not effectively prevented. The loss of democracy, authoritativeness, bureaucracy, and corruption commonly emerged. The rate of social evils and other crimes had an uprising tendency and were very concerning, especially among the young generation. The weakness in the state administration of the culture was not improved. The fight to prevent toxic cultural products, especially online, is still insufficient.

Second, investment for cultural development was still lack of rational planning, wasting resources, and being ineffective; some cultural systems and policies were realistically unsuitable but were not modified on time; the cultural institutional system was asynchronous, incomplete, and poor. There also was not any cultural work that has on par stature with the nation, the Communist Party, the country, and the Vietnamese people's heroic history.

Third, in the literature and art division, there were only a few creations that are valuable in the idea and art. Reasoning and criticizing literature and art still had many shortcomings. Creating, performing, and promoting activities still had many faults. Mass media system was still insufficient; some press agencies did not correctly implement according to the principles and purposes, as well as having some commercialized signs, etc. The product market was still primitive and spontaneous.

Fourth, social classification is getting more complicated. The poverty reduction rate tends to slow down, while re-impoverishment still can rise, and the gap between rich and poor remains large. Taking care of the community's health has not reached satisfying results. The gap between living expenses, both material-wise and spiritually, in the suburb and rural areas, in delta and mountain areas, is still large.

Fifth, in the education and training division, there is a significant gap in study conditions, infrastructure, schools, and classes between

suburban and rural areas. Education and training quality, teaching and studying quality are also different and low in general, therefore, not meeting the requirements about human resources in general and high-quality human resources specifically for the promotion of industrialization and modernization process attaching to intellectual economic development and globalization.

Sixth, illegal enrichment through smuggling and corrupting still emerges with complexity, without prevention and repellent, creating people's displease and wasting the State's capital. These phenomena, if not strictly prevented from the root, many important activities of the economy will be manipulated, affecting the sustenance of socialist orientation.

Seventh, social negativities and social evils tend to increase, especially organized crimes; drug dealing, gambling, prostituting, superstition, and social order disrupting; traffic accidents still happen at an alarming rate. Administration of culture, society, and education – ethics, as well as hunger elimination, poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS prevention, food safety, and hygiene protection, and environmental protection programs, etc. are still weak and insufficient.

The above-mentioned weaknesses and insufficiency have various causes, with the majority being objective. Those objective causes are:

First, the awareness of the attachment between economic growth and cultural development, progression, and social equity implementation in different administrative levels and implementing organization is not synchronized or consistent. The process of mentality renovation about cultural development, progression, and social equity implementation is still slower than the renovation process of economic mentality. Because of the economic growth and material interest's weight, many regions undervalued cultural development, progression and social equity implementation, and environment protection, creating economic, cultural, and social instability, affecting sustainable development.

Second, the institutionalization and specification of the Communist Party's perspective about the attachment between economic growth and cultural development, progression, and social equity implementation are still insufficient. The policies and solutions to thoroughly implement this perspective of the Communist Party in realistic activities did not have an adequately strong impact to create the attachment of these fields.

Third, the guidance and implementing organization still had weaknesses. The inspections and treatments of infringements in blindly following economic growth and material interests, creating negative results for the culture, cultural development, social policies' implementation, and environment protection, as well as dodging the responsibilities and obligations towards workers, etc. have not been strictly handled.

From the reality of solving the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression, it can be asserted that, although having specific shortcomings, the achievements that Vietnam gained in more than the last 30 years of implementing this relationship are foundational and positive. That when this relationship is correctly implemented with higher effectiveness, this result shows that, the implementation of sustainable development and the country's modernization will surely succeed.

However, the reality of solving this relationship not only requires a deeper awareness about its position and importance in the overall renovated reasoning and new awareness about socialism and the pathway of the transition towards socialism, but also requires Vietnam to quickly changing the growing model from mainly developing in width to rationally developing in width and depth, considering quality, efficiency, effectiveness, and competitiveness as top prioritized goals, focusing on harmoniously combining in-depth development and intellectual economic development with cultural development, progression and social equity implementation, continuously improving

the quality of the people's lives. Simultaneously solving the insufficiency in institutionalizing the Communist Party's perspective about this relationship in real-life activities; solving the weaknesses in guiding and implementing organization and increasing inspections and treatments of infringements that create negative results in the process of implementing this relationship in real life. It can be considered as proposed issues or main solutions to increase the effectiveness of implementing this relationship in the upcoming years.

3. Some main solutions to solve the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression in Vietnam during the period of "comprehensively and synchronously promoting the renovation process"

First, it is essential to have a full, in-depth, and continuously developing awareness about the Communist Party of Vietnam's perspective about the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression.

To more effectively implement the perspective of the Communist Party of Vietnam about the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression in reality, *first of all*, it is essential to raise the awareness of officers and Party members, especially offices that make plans for economic – social policies, companies, and corporations, about the important position and huge role of the relationship in each step and each development policy. Along with raising the awareness, it is essential to more thoroughly follow the perspective about firmly fighting against the trend of seeking for interests, getting material interests at all costs, and detaching from the goal of economic growth along with the goal of cultural development, social stability, and the people's spiritual life enhancement that the Communist Party asserted and emphasized multiple times.

Second, the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression is a

dialectic relationship with responsive interactions, being the premise and support to develop together; therefore, when solving this relationship in real life, it is essential to tightly combine 3 missions: developing the economy as the center, building the Communist Party as the keynote, with continuously developing the culture and implementing progression and social equity. Along with the priority of economic renovation, it is important to adequately focus on developing the culture, building and developing the comprehensive Vietnamese people, implementing progression and social equity, creating a healthy and positive spiritual environment for economic development. However, in each period, each division, each region, and each area, it is possible to highlight economic, cultural, or social factors that are appropriate for each situation, remedy dogma, mechanism, or subjectivism, and idealism in the reality of implementing this relationship.

Third, the institutionalization of the Communist Party's perspective into laws and specific policies, clearly determining the responsibilities of each subject in the implementation of this relationship needs to be determined as a decisive issue to transform the Communist Party's' pathways, perspectives, guidelines, and policies into reality. Along with that, it is essential to continue renovating the Communist Party's guiding method and the State's administration, enhancing the owning and supervising role of the people in the process of implementing this relationship. Leaderships and administration levels must regularly inspect, supervise, and learn from the experience to timely solve the pressing issues proposed in the reality of solving this relationship.

Fourth, to solve this relationship with increasing effectiveness in the reality of economic – social development, a harmonious combination of economic growth and cultural development, progression, and social equity implementation is essential, as well as continuously raising the quality of the people's lives. It requires increasing State investment while increasing the mobilization of social resources for the development of culture, education – training, and science – technology. Promoting the development of key economic regions; therefore, creating motivation

for the country's economy; simultaneously supporting the development of regions that are facing plenty of difficulties. It is essential to "appropriately care about the weaker class and part in the society and minorities in mountainous and distant areas, remedying the upward trend of rich-poor differentiation, ensuring the stability of sustainable social development"[1].

Fifth, consistently implementing progression and social equity in each step and each development policy. It requires focusing on nicely solving labor policy, job creation, and income; remedying irrationalities in earnings, wages, and social welfare according to the country's economic – social situation. "Harmoniously solving social relationship, preventing and effectively solving pressing social issues and conflicts that can lead to social collisions"[2].

Sixth, eminently enhancing the role of culture, education – training, and science-technology in economic growth and sustainable country development. It requires building an advanced Vietnamese culture that is rich-with-ethnic-characteristics, both inheriting and enhancing the beautiful cultural traditions of Vietnamese ethnic groups, and absorbing the quintessence of human culture so that the culture truly is the spiritual foundation of the society. Developing and improving the quality of human resources, especially high – quality human resources and taking it as one of the factors to decide the country's fast and sustainable development. Strongly developing science and technology to motivate the increase in efficiency, quality, and effectiveness, as well as quickly and sustainably develop the country's economy. Strongly renovating and synchronizing organizations, administrative structure, and science and technology development policy; attaching the goals, science missions, and technology to the goal and mission of economic – social development. Starting with aiming scientific and technological activities towards changing the growth model and restructuring the

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, Ibid, page 135.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, Ibid, page 135.

economy, as well as promoting industrialization and modernization attaching to intellectual economic growth and globalization.

Conclusion

The relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression is a dialectic relationship. The creating factors in this relationship always have responsive interactions with each other, being the premise and supporting each other to develop for the goal of the country's fast and sustainable development, implementing prosperous people, strong countries, democracy, justice, and civilization in Vietnam in renovation period.

With the dialectic trait of this relationship and the realistic result of its implementation, it can be asserted that in the country's renovating process with socialist direction, the Communist Party of Vietnam was completely right with the perspective of the tight attachment between growing the economy as the center, building the Party as the keynote, with continuous development in culture, progression and social equity implementation as the spiritual foundation.

It can also be asserted that: In the country's renovating process with socialist direction, solving the relationship between social equity implementation and economic growth, cultural development, and social progression is a rule and that is the rule about harmoniously combining economic growth (economic development) with cultural development, progression and social equity implementation.

THINKING WITH HO CHI MINH ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES AND CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKET ECONOMY IN VIETNAM

Do Thi Kim Hoa[1]

Introduction

Since the dawn of human civilization, philosophers and scholars have mentioned social justice. Social justice is one of the factors that are important to ensure the community and nation to progress the development. The great philosopher Aristotle looked at social justice in state regimes from which to find a principle of social justice for an ideal state. According to him, both democracy and oligarchy regimes had shortcomings on justice and that could not be fully expressed about their meaning: "[both oligarchy and democracy asserted] justice is equal in terms of participating in government, but [according to the democracy], it is equality between peers, not equality for everyone. In the oligarchy regime, inequality [in terms of government participation], is considered fair, but it is justice between people who are not equal. Both sides did not pay attention to an important factor, that is, when

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applying the principle of equality, they are both the subject and the judge. And people, when they involved with [the rights of] themselves, are unable to judge justly". According to him, "in the concept of justice encompassing a relationship between a human as well as material, and an equitable distribution"[1], "those who contribute the most to the nation must be rewarded more people who are equal or superior in their aristocratic background or free, or equal or superior in property but with less political virtue"[2]. This is the concept of an equitable distribution according to dedication.

Building on the foundations of ancient philosopher's social justice ideas, philosophers later developed Social Justice in more detail. They provided the basic principles to solve the practical problems with the desire to build a good society, ensuring equality for everyone and establishing principles for the implementation of social justice that would counter the existing inequities in practice. These ideas flourished primarily among the proponents' Marxism. The social injustices accumulated in a capitalist society helped C. Marx understand that the exploitation of labor power was based on the possession of the means of production. The person who holds the means of production is also the person who decides the interests of the employees and dominates them, holds their destiny. C. Marx brought light to human society when he came up with the principle of equitable distribution according to labor. This was to undermine the injustices that took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The rich are the ones who created blatant injustice in society, because of profit, they trample on dignity, virtue, and compassion. They practiced on the principle of profit, not for people. K. Marx and F. Engels tried to change that to have a good society, in that, we act for people and for the community, for a society with the slogan "do according to your capacity, enjoy according to needs".

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1 Aristotle, *Politics*, Translated by Nong Duy Truong, Thế Giới Publishers, Hanoi, 2013, p. 170.

2 Aristotle, Ibid., p. 174.

As an outstanding student of Marxism, Ho Chi Minh inherited its principles concerning social justice, combined them with Eastern culture, indigenous customs, and the Vietnamese practical situation in his time in order to create a particularly nuanced approach to social justice implementation in Vietnam.

Ho Chi Minh's Thought on Social Justice

According to Ho Chi Minh, the role of social justice was very important. The implementation of social justice must first be fair in terms of its distribution. Borrowing from the ancient philosopher's ideas about justice, Ho Chi Minh expressed his opinion to the Government Council in late 1966 on the implementation of distributive justice, he reminded that: "No fear of shortage, only fear of injustice; No fear of poverty, only afraid of people's unrest"[1]. A simple comparison, but it was very concise. Normally, the shortage always makes people worried. Although the deprivation situation was very spread, for people the deprivation was not as scary as the injustice at that time. If justice could not be implemented, people would feel upset and uneasy. Poverty was not the most feared thing, but the most frightening thing just was an unequable situation of people. The ancients said that: "Carrying a boat" is also the people and "turning the boat" also is the people". Society would not develop if the people lost their belief in the implementation of justice. Ho Chi Minh's repetition was not to accept poverty and deprivation, but only to affirm that social justice is a matter of great concern and never let people have disappointment about that, it was a category associated with freedom and democracy.

Ho Chi Minh understood Vietnamese people profoundly, he knew that people could cope with the poverty and deprivation of a country while still being ravaged by war, but if justice were not enforced, people would not be satisfied. "The people are very sympathetic to the

1 Ho Chi Minh, *Complete Works*, Vol. 15, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p. 224.

situation shortage of commodity, they only will complain about the unfair distribution"[1]. Justice would destabilize people's contribution and destroy people's fervor.

Implementing Justice in distribution with the principle of work (i.e. how much one has deserved) had a significant influence on people's activities. It would eliminate various forms of privilege for individuals or groups. It would not care for people's social status; people are treated equally by the law. Thanks to justice, the relationship between the rights and obligations, between dedication and enjoyment, between rights and responsibilities, were satisfactorily resolved. People would then really do and enjoy the right things the law did not prohibit. It meant true democracy was being implemented. It could be said that democracy and justice always go hand in hand, complementing, and develop together. Perhaps that is the reason why Ho Chi Minh has paid great attention to fair distribution.

Therefore, the implementation of social justice in distribution is Ho Chi Minh's primary concern. This is the most prominent issue in ensuring social justice. How to distribute available resources so that people can see it is fair justice. According to Ho Chi Minh, the distribution of work would ensure minimum justice.

Inheriting Marxism-Leninism in implementing justice in distribution, Ho Chi Minh followed implementing the principle of distribution by work: "The principle of living is: "The people who don't work cannot receive the food" and "work a lot, enjoy a lot, work less, enjoy less"[2]. In terms of economy: "If the people who work a lot will be distributed a lot, who work less, will get less distribution, with difficult work, requires high qualifications to be distributed a lot, with easy and simple work, gets less". In Ho Chi Minh's principle about distribution, he emphasized that: "There should be no situation of the good, the poor, the hard, the easy, the same merits. That is egalitarianism that must be

1 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 15, p. 681.

2 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 290.

avoided". Egalitarianism affects the interests of every person. It makes the benefit of those who work hard and work much not be guaranteed and respected. The phenomenon of having some individuals who are still able to work but refused to work, yet they still try to enjoy the material wealth of society as participants, will create negative reactions, depressive psychology, discouraging the industrious people from their devotion to work. Egalitarianism is the driving engine behind complaining, laziness, greed, dredging... people's dissatisfaction, loss of solidarity, affecting the revolutionary cause, even to the point of affecting the survival of the country.

President Ho Chi Minh's policy of social justice shows profound humanity. In 1958, a voter in Hanoi asked Ho Chi Minh: "Does anyone who does not work still receive what she/ he needs in a socialist society? But it also was said that if people don't work, they can't get anything, so how about the old and weak people?". Ho Chi Minh replied: "Socialism has a suitable justice: if you work more and you enjoy a lot, if you do a little and you enjoy a little, you won't enjoy it if you don't work. The elderly or disabled will be helped and taken care of by the State"[1]. In the justice of distribution, Ho Chi Minh never forgot about the social welfare policy, this is a new point compared to the Marxist theory of justice on distribution. Although in his theory, Ho Chi Minh did not mention, more precisely, specifically about the distribution through social welfare, but in the policy of implementing social justice, he reminded each member of the Communist party to "take great care of people's lives, attempt to develop production and thrifty practices, and distribute equally, step by step improving the life, food, accommodation, study opportunities and providing healthcare and entertainment to people; pay special attention to war-ravaged areas, orphans, frail elderly people and families of martyrs, war invalids, soldiers, young volunteers"[2]. This demonstrates Ho Chi Minh's great spirit of charity.

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1 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 11, p. 404.

2 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 15, p.596.

The effect of that policy had a significant influence on the social community. It encouraged people to work towards the development of society. It made people believe in the Communist Party, on the Vietnamese Government, and believe in the future with good things in order to strive, study, work and contribute to society when they are still able to work.

This policy also cultivated mutual love and respect among people, enhanced the solidarity of people to each other, created stronger connections between generations, intensified sharing between people who did not have the opportunity to contribute to society and those who have devotes their lives wholeheartedly to the nation. People's faith in the state improved.

A very interesting feature in all of this is Ho Chi Minh's placing great importance on the equality of benefits and just distribution of opportunities in economic activities. In the theory of Marxism-Leninism, the employer- is the capitalist, the exploiter, and the employee is the person who works for the capitalist, who is exploited. Yet, Ho Chi Minh advocated that employers and employees were got all benefit equally ("Chủ thợ đều lợi"). Was Ho Chi Minh on the wrong path of socialism when he had such a policy? Absolutely he was not. Ho Chi Minh had planned that the Government had to *ensure fair relationships between the employer and employees*. He had determined: "capitalists cannot be perpetrators of exploitation. But the Government prohibits them from exploiting workers too much. The government must protect the right of workers. At the same time, for the long-term sake, the workers also let the owner get a reasonable amount of benefits, not asking for excess. Then both owner and worker are automatically self-motivated, increasing production getting benefits for both sides"[1]. This is essentially a concretization of social justice. If the Government did not allow the capitalists to enjoy some reasonable benefits, or if the workers' rights were not protected, production could hardly grow well. Ho Chi Minh

1 Ho Chi Minh. Ibid., Vol. 8, p.267.

understood that the justice of benefits would motivate people to actively engage in labor and to do their best. This is the relationship between the capitalist and the worker class. So, what about the benefits in the relationship between the state economy and the private economy?

Ho Chi Minh still maintained the policy about keeping justice on benefits between state and private economy ("Công tư đều lợi"). Was Ho Chi Minh too fond of the nation's capitalists? We could see his idea here was contrary to the views of Marxism - that moving forward to socialism requires the nationalization of all capitalist production, the means of production no longer belonging to anyone, which belongs to the whole society. Obviously, with the policy of "state and private are got benefits equally" of Ho Chi Minh, of course, it is not possible to confiscate the capitalists' production materials, nor turn all capitalist's assets into common property of society. This seems Ho Chi Minh did not follow Marxism, doesn't it?

The special thing we can see is that, as Ho Chi Minh said above that we are "moving gradually" to socialism, then the policy of keeping justice on benefits between "state and private" economy is the right policy, and there is no biased in it. It is simply to implementation social justice during we move step by step towards socialism. Because if we immediately did follow the Marxist-Leninist's "predictions" about the model of socialism, the interests of the capitalist would be more or less affected, which also affects more or less the economic development of the country. The question is with an underdeveloped economy, the country wouldn't progress to socialism.

Ho Chi Minh - a communist, always follow the Marxist stance, he fully understood the situation of Vietnam, with an ultimate desire was to somehow make the country be independent, the people have freedom, and all people have enough food and clothes and be educated. He understood that when the conflict of interests between the state and private economy was resolved fairly, his wishes come true. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh's analysis in this regard is worth noting: "Justice needs to be established between the interests of the public (state) and private

economy. The public economy belongs to the state. It is the foundation and guideline of the new democratic economy. So we must strive to develop it and people will support it. Therefore, persons who sabotage it, steal public goods, commit tax fraud, must be punished strictly by law; The private economy is the ethnic capital economy and the economy of farmers, artisans, and the people of free economic activities. It is also a necessary force for the construction of the country's economy. So the Government needs to help them grow"[1].

In addition, he emphasized the vital role of the private capital economy: "In private capitalist economy. They [i.e entrepreneurs] exploit the workers, but they are an important factor that contributes to the development of the economy"[2]. Ho Chi Minh advocates fair treatment to all economic sectors. All economic sectors are free to do business and enjoy benefits fairly. One of the measures to ensure social justice for all economic sectors in the implementation of democracy in the economy.

Equal treatment among economic sectors is also legalized in the 1959 Vietnamese Constitution. In the 1959 amendment of the Constitution, as the head of the Constitution Amending Committee, Ho Chi Minh affirmed: "In our country at this time, we need to have the following main forms of ownership of the means of production, such as: - State ownership means that ownership of the entire people. - Ownership of the cooperative means collective ownership of the working people. - Ownership of individual employees. - A few production materials belong to the capitalist". This is the right opinion and a true worry for the people of a great leader. In particular, the acknowledgment of the private capitalist economy by the Constitution shows that people are not deprived of their freedom of business, their freedom in economic activities are protected by the law. The ownership of production materials of all economic sectors is actually guaranteed to

1 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 267.

2 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 266.

be fair and respected by the Constitution, which made all citizens dare to do and dare to undertake work in production and business activities.

Interest is the most important factor in stimulating people's activeness. People here can be an individual person, a social organization, or an entire community. Personal interest stimulates individual activeness, while collective interest stimulates collective activeness. Each individual is one member of a collective, all his activities in the collective are a contribution to the existence and development of a collective. On the contrary, the individual's activities are also determined by the existence and development of the collective. Therefore, in order for the individual's activities to be suitable for the development of the collective, the private interests must also match the interests of the collective and vice versa. Thus, Ho Chi Minh also advocates, harmoniously combination between individual interests and collective interests, between common interests and private interests. He always respects his personal interests, considers it an indispensable factor in encouraging each person to constantly strive and dedicate himself to society. At the same time, he also highly valued the collective interests, the interests of the whole society which plays a decisive role in private interests. In this relationship, Ho Chi Minh stated: "Each person is a part of the collective, holds a certain position and contributes a part of the resources in society. So individual interests are in the collective interest, are a part of the collective interest. If the collective interests are guaranteed, the individual interests have conditions to be satisfied"[1]. The guarantee of justice between private interests and common interests are always complemented each other for development.

However, it must be seen that the decision is for the common good. When all strive for the common goal of the collective and the nation, a part of their own interests must be sacrificed. But in long term, when the interests of the collective and the nation are guaranteed, the individual interests will also be cared for and strengthened: "Everyone supports

1 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 11, p.610.

to the development of the common good of the nation, then personal interests just can develop and strengthen. So personal interests must "obey" the interests of the nation, never put personal interests above the national interests. It is an improvement"[1]. Personal interests are always tied to collective interests. In cases where individual interests contradict the collective interests, against the collective interests, sooner or later the person's interests must also submit to the collective interests. This is a democratic rule, the minority must submit to the majority. Moreover, if the individual interest intentionally against the collective interest, that individual will fall into individualism, becoming a force that obstructs the development of the collective and of society. That individual finally is also excluded from that collective, that community, that society.

In the article with the title "Revolutionary Ethics" written in 1958, Ho Chi Minh deeply analyzed that, each individual in the collective, in the community, could not live, work, study and fight to nature, to the enemy in single. Individuals are bound to rely on the collective of society, to blend into the collective, into the society; therefore, individualism must be rejected. Saying this does not mean that Ho Chi Minh underestimates individual interests, because, while fighting against individualism, Ho Chi Minh wrote: "Fighting against individualism is not "trample" on individual interest. Each person has his own personality, own forte, own life. If those individual interests are not contrary to the interests of the collective, they are not bad"[2].

Realizing the great role of ensuring justice between personal interests and public interests, Ho paid great attention to the piecework regime, an effective way to ensure fairness in labor and enjoyment, which strongly stimulated the activeness and enthusiasm of each people. This regime made the common good guaranteed and private interests be also paid proper attention, workers would not be disadvantaged. It can be said the piecework regime was a harmonious and very ingenious

1 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 8, p.143.

2 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 11, p.610.

combination between the common good and private interests at that time, while Ho Chi Minh was being affected by Marxism. Later, sometimes this regime was not properly concerned with its value, but in the Ho Chi Minh era, it was highly appreciated. He said: "The piecework regime is a condition of socialism. It encourages the workers to always make progress, for the companies to make progress. It brings both for the common good and personal interests ... it was appropriate and fair in our current regime"[1]. Piecework regime is a fair distribution based on labor results and economic efficiency. The implementation of this mechanism is a strictly fair guarantee, attracting many contributions from the people.

In order to ensure that social justice is effectively implemented, it is necessary to pay attention to the people's opinion participation, the people have the right to take part in the Government's work; The Government must be under the supervision of the people, must public financial revenues and expenditures. People must have relevant information on what, where, and how the Government conducts its duties. Then before the government implements its policies, the policies must be discussed and evaluated by the people and experts. Truly, "In order to manage cooperatives well, the authorities must be a democracy, avoid bureaucracy and order, and must discuss carefully with people. Working according to the imperative, bureaucratic, and undemocratic way will definitely fail"[2]; must "instill the spirit of collective ownership into everyone, together with discuss how to do business, implement democratic management and open finance, combat corruption and waste"[3]. Above all, in order to enforce justice effectively, firstly, democracy must function well in our country.

It can be said that Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on ensuring social justice to create a progressive and developed society are an eternally

1 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 10. p.537 – 538.

2 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol. 12, p.317.

3 Ho Chi Minh, Ibid., Vol.14, p. 107.

valuable and meaningful idea. Whenever Vietnam was aware and carried our Ho's insight on this matter, we saw significant improvement taking place. The history of applying Ho's thought in our socio-political reality has proved its correctness.

Ensuring social justice in Vietnam under the lens of Ho Chi Minh's thought

For more than thirty years of implementing Doi Moi, with the development of the economy under the socialist-oriented market mechanism, it has brought a new situation when it comes to ensuring social justice for the people. Economic sectors are free to exist and conduct their activities. It is the encouragement and appreciation of the private sector that can be traced back to Ho Chi Minh's original thought and which has contributed to the economic development, bringing Vietnam's economy to a much better condition. We can legitimately say that due to this Vietnam is out of poverty in the present. People are free to choose their businesses, pursue their careers, and enjoy their rights.

It is clear that Ho Chi Minh's ideas on social justice continue to be vastly meaningful today. They contribute to the orientation and the forming of the plan and guidelines of the Vietnamese Communist Party and Government in the right way. They help to keep the proper ideological orientation of the Vietnamese people. They strengthen the will of the people to protect the democracy and equality of all citizens. Ho's thoughts raise the awareness of a wide range of people. They will also be the key to solve some of the difficult issues that are limiting our efforts in the implementation of social justice in Vietnam today. As we have seen, when Vietnam applied Ho Chi Minh's thought on the implementation of social justice well, the Vietnamese society prospered.

Although understanding Ho Chi Minh's principles of implementing social justice, the effectiveness of the implementation of social justice still depends very much on the Party's policies and the law of the state. With the policy of economic development with many sectors with different types of ownership, economic sectors are free to do business,

freely develop in a guaranteed by law environment. The law ensures equality between rights and obligations, responsibility, and authority, it would help social justice be implemented well.

It can be said that implementing social justice has been done much better than before. For example, in Decree 69 of the Government dated August 13, 2009, on compensation and assistance in site clearance, the compensation for land clearance by the state with an amending policy must compensate at market prices[1]. This is a guarantee of justice between private interests with public interests. However, in fact, there are still interest groups with policy corruption, leading to unfair land compensation, people flocking to the administrative offices to complain; then the project is behind schedule and cannot be implemented due to the inability of the site clearance, while the state budget is lost.

We still can see the reality of implementing social justice in Vietnam still has many struggles to go through. For example, the situation of salary increase in the administrative and non-business agencies regularly every three years reduces the enthusiasm for labor. Or, there have been preferential policies for families of war invalids and martyrs, but we should ask how the State has compensated for their loss and whether it was worthy of what they and their loved ones have lost. In fact, they have the right to receive more than that.

Moreover, the Government's personal income tax policy, that is one of the measures to make social equality more secure and the gap between rich and poor to diminish. However, the fact shows it was not fair when the guy who lost the job could not get good enough money from the unemployed subsidy agency even he paid income tax completely before. In addition, we do not want to mention the complicated administrative procedure that makes the people afraid of asking to receive unemployment benefits. Recently, unemployment insurance has been improved, but we need to ask how many people have got money from unemployment insurance.

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1 http://www.thanhnien.com.vn/Media/Pages/Video.aspx?IDS=2731

Besides that, there are problems of fraud in examinations in the Northern provinces of Vietnam (Son La, Hoa Binh, Lang Son, Ha Giang)[1]; there is also the issue of improper official appointment[2]; the unreasonable cases when officials could build luxury villas or palaces while receiving only "normal" official salary[3]. It is showing that there is still a sizeable corruption even at the top levels of government and that social justice is not implemented well enough; etc. The causes of these limitations are many. However, we can legitimately argue that one of the reasons for this situation is that Ho Chi Minh's thought has not been implemented correctly and totally.

In general, Ho Chi Minh's thought on social justice continues to carry significance for Vietnam today.

1 N.V.HẢI, *Gian lận thi cử: Sơn La, Hòa Bình đã 'gọi tên', sao Hà Giang còn… nín thinh?* August 02, 2019 [online]. Available at: https://tuoitre.vn/gian-lan-thi-cu-son-la-hoa-binh-da-goi-ten-sao-ha-giang-con-nin-thinh-20190802114359168.htm

2 Thanh Tuan, *Thanh Hóa: Nhiều trường hợp bổ nhiệm sai quy định* October 19, 2018 [online]. Available at: https://baomoi.com/thanh-hoa-nhieu-truong-hop-bo-nhiem-sai-quy-dinh/c/28232383.epi

3 Chan Luan – Biệt phủ Yên Bái và tài sản bất minh August 28, 2019 [online]. Available at: https://plo.vn/thoi-su/biet-phu-yen-bai-va-tai-san-bat-minh-736220.html

PART 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF MARKET ECONOMY

BETWEEN THE NATIONALIZATION OF INDUSTRY AND CODETERMINATION: A CASE STUDY ON THE SOCIALIZATION OF MEANS OF PRODUCTION AND ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

Kim Sang Bong[1]

1. Billy Eliot

There was a movie called Billy Elliot. Since it is so a famous movie, thatI don't have to introduce the plot. However, while the 1984-5-year strike by the British National Union of Mineworkers(NUM), which was behind the film, is such an important event that "it has become a watershed in post-war British history"[2] it is not as famous or as well-known as the film. Billy's story, born as a miner's son and growing up as a ballerino, is a beautiful fiction, but the story of the British mineworkers, who had to surrender the white flag in spite of a long strike, is a tragic reality that is still happening and can happen everywhere. If we want to prevent or solve the same problem, we need to look back on the history and learn a lesson.

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1 Prof. Dr., Chonnam National University, South Korea.

2 Milne, S.*, The Enemy Within—The Secret War against the Miners*, Verso, 2004, p. IX.

The direct impetus for the strike was that on March 6, 1984, the National Coal Board (NCB) Chairman, Ian McGregor, announced that he would cut annual coal output by 4 million tons.[1] In the UK, coal production and total energy use and employment declined from the 1950s to the 1980s, as shown in the charts below. (Table 1, 2 and 3). In the UK, however, the problem was more serious than in other countries because the price of coal produced in the UK was generally too high for international market prices.

This change in circumstances has come from the oil shock of 1973. Suddenly as the price of oil rose, so many countries became enthusiastic about mining coal. As a result, the huge amount of very cheap coal has begun to be exported from countries such as Australia and South Africa, which has led to a decline in coal prices in international markets. Specifically, as of 1984, the price per tonne of coal is at least 46.60 pounds and up to 55.92 pounds for British coal, while the price of South African coal reaches the UK via the ARA (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerp) The final delivery price was just 35.34 pounds including all logistics costs up to. (Table 4)

In the UK those days, electricity was mainly produced using coal. For example, in 1980, 73% of UK electricity was produced by coal, most of which was mined from the UK. However, in the international market there was already supplied much cheaper and better quality coal at that time, so that the British electricity company (Central Electricity Generating Board) was producing electricity at a higher cost than had been expected. Therefore, in the 1970s, there were tensions between the NCB and the largest buyer, CEGB.

But how could this unusual transaction last in the UK, the leading country of capitalist market economy? This is because NCB and CEGB are both state-owned enterprises. So it was an internal transaction between companies dominated by the same owner. However, all the inefficiencies and wastes that arise from internal transactions among

1 Callinicos, A. and Simons, M., *The Great Strike*, Bookmarks, 1985, Ch. 1.

state-owned enterprises are bound to come back to the burden of the people. For all the expenses that are wasted through unfair transactions have to be covered by the taxes of the people. Nevertheless, by the end of the 1970s no British government could fundamentally address this issue. For no government has found a solution to improve the inefficiency of the coal industry without sacrificing miners. However, one-sided restructuring was also not feasible, because if miners stopped working, electricity production would have to be stopped at numerous thermal power plants, which would inevitably lead to a limited supply of electricity. In fact, in the UK, where the supply of electricity was restricted and the Conservative government collapsed in 1972 and 1974, as a result of the strike of NUM, the unilateral restructuring of mining industry, against the will of the coal miners' union, seemed impossible at least until Thatcher came.

However, after Mrs. Thatcher came to office of the British prime minister 1979, she attempted to solve the problem seemingly un-resolvable in her own way. She reduced government subsidies to the coal mining industry in the UK, expanded the import of cheap coal from abroad, and diversified coal-dependent energy production to oil and nuclear power. And in order not to repeat the experience of 1974, she stockpiled at first six months' worth of coal needed for power production in preparation for a strike by a coal mine union, and thereafter went directly into restructuring the mining industry.

When Ian McGregor, who had been appointed to the president of NCB by Thatcher 1983, announced on the 6.March in the next year that he would reduce the coal production and close the non-economic mines and push for the privatization of the British coal mine industry in the long run, the NUM went on strike almost conditionally.

But the situation was disadvantageous to NUM in every way. In March, when the strike began, the consumption of coal was beginning to decline, and Thatcher could import any amount of coal if it had not had enough reserves in advance. The union had the ability to stop mining in the coal mines but had no power to physically stop importing

coal from foreign countries. In addition, this time, public opinion was not favorable to strike. According to the Gallup poll in July 1984, only 15 percent of people agreed to strike, but in December of the same year this figure dropped to 7 percent. On the other hand, 88% said they did not agree with the strike.[1] Under such circumstances, militant miners continued strike for one year. According to the journalist Milne, "it has no real parallel in size, duration and impact - anywhere in the world."[2] Nevertheless, as described by Billy Elliot, they had no choice but to terminate their strike on March 3, 1985.

We cannot track all the things that have happened since the defeat. However, some facts are clear: the coal miners' union was split in December 1985 and a new union was established,[3] and numerous coal mines in the UK were phased out and many miners were fired with it; and finally, the coal mining industry has been privatized. I do not know what happened after the miners who were once over 700,000 were dismissed. We can only guess their situation from the report that "the miners were abandoned like the surplus proletarians and lived in the past world"[4] when the Kellingely coal mine was shut down in 2015.

2. The Nationalization of coal industry in U.K. after the 2. World War

We can think of many reasons for the tragedy of coal mine workers in the UK, but we can say that the seeds of tragedy were conceived in the nationalization of coal mining industry. In a nationalized enterprise, the government stands at the employer's place. While the coal industry

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1 King, A., British Political Opinion 1937-2000: The Gallop Polls, Compiled by Robert J. Wybrow, Politico's Publishing, 2001, p. 337. from Wikipedia, "UK miners' strike (1984–85)".

2 Milne, ib.

3 Amos, David (December 2011). "THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE MINERS', THE UNION OF DEMOCRATIC MINEWORKERS AND THE 1984-85 MINERS STRIKE: SCABS OR SCAPEGOATS?". University of Nottingham. p. 12.

4 J. Arnold, 'Like being on death row': Britain and the end of coal, c. 1970 to the present, Contemporary British History, 2018 Vol. 32, No. 1, p. 4.

is booming, the government can protect workers as a good employer and maintain cooperative relations between employer and employees, but if the coal industry is on the path of a fatal decline, there will be an antagonistic struggle between the workers and the state. The strike in 1984/5 is a representative example of such a conflict. However, when the coal industry was first nationalized in UK, it seemed that no one would have anticipated a catastrophe that would happen several decades later. At the time, on the contrary, the nationalization was thought to be an ideal way to capture both the stability of employment and the efficiency of the industry.

Such an optimistic outlook can be found in *Let us face the future*, published in April 1945. The declaration first reveals that the economic crisis is due to the concentration of excessive economic power in the hands of a few, and that situation is "totalitarian oligarchies within our democratic State."[1] The declaration then suggests "public control"[2] as a solution to overcome the chaos caused by the laissez-faire economic system and to establish order. As a concrete measure, the Declaration suggested a comprehensive social welfare policy that includes: 1) an increase in productivity and "general economic expansion"; 2) a wage increase and tax policies to enhance purchasing power; and 3) a comprehensive social welfare policy including plans for housing, education, and the introduction of the economic planning 4) public ownership of financial powers. The declaration then specifically stated the industries to be nationalized, the first being the coal, gas and power industries, arguing that "there are basic industries ripe and over-ripe for public ownership and management in the direct service of the nation".[3]

It is clear that the nationalization policy was based on socialist ideals. The Declaration makes clear that "the Labour Party is a Socialist Party", and "its ultimate purpose at home is the establishment

1 *Let us face the future*, p. 2.

2 *Let us face the future*, p. 2.

3 Ibid, p. 6.

of the Socialist Commonwealth".[1] In addition, the Declaration also emphasizes the value of freedom. However, the concept of freedom here has two different meanings. If we are generally speaking the freedom of conscience, faith and of speech, such freedom should be defended. But if freedom means "freedom to exploit others," such freedom cannot be allowed. The monopoly of economic power, however, implies the subordination of most people to capital. In this sense, it can be said that the nationalization of industry was a way to guarantee the true freedom of all people by dismantling the private monopoly of economic power. However, in nationalization, the value emphasized by these moral values was "economic expansion and efficiency". "If the standard of life is to be high-as it should be, the standard of production must be high. This means that the industry must be thoroughly efficient, if the needs of the nation are to be met."[2] This economic efficiency was equally expected in the nationalization of the coal industry.

"For a quarter of a century the coal industry, producing Britain's most precious national raw material, has been floundering chaotically under the ownership of many hundreds of independent companies. Amalgamation under public ownership will bring great economies in operation and make it possible to modernize production methods and to raise safety standards in every colliery in the country."[3]

Here we can read expectations about economies of scale through nationalization: It would modernize the coal industry itself and allow workers to work in a safer working environment. In this sense, the nationalization of the basic industry proposed by the Labour Party can be evaluated as an attempt to realize economic publicness and democracy by harmonizing the efficiency of the capitalist economy with the socialist ideals. Thus, the judgement that a nationalized industry is superior to a privatized industry even from a purely economic point of

1 Ibid, p. 6.
2 Ibid, p. 5.
3 Ibid. p. 6.

view, would have been one of the reasons why the nationalization of the basic industry could be maintained until Thatcher comes, whichever party came to power in UK since 1945.

In 1945, the Labour Party won in the general election for a new cabinet of peace time, instead of the coalition cabinet during the war time. The Labour, which formed the sole cabinet without coalition for the first time, quickly promoted the nationalization of the basic industry as proclaimed in the Declaration. The first object of nationalization was the Bank of England.[1] Thereafter, the law concerning the nationalization of the coal industry came into forcewith receiving the Royal Assenton June 12, 1946. As a result, the NCB(National Coal Board) was formed on June 15, and the ownership of 958 coal mines operated by about 800 companies was transferred to the NCB on January 1, 1947 as a vesting day.[2] At that time, the number of full-time employees in the NCB reached almost 800,000, which was 4% of the UK labor force at the time.[3]

The Labour Party was defeated in the general election in 1951. Surprisingly, however, Churchill's Conservative government did not withdraw the nationalization policy of the former government. Tracking the reasons here is not something we can do. But we can remember the fact that Churchill already acknowledged the need for industrialization so much as to say in the so-called fireside talk broadcasted on March 21, 1943, "there is a broadening field for state ownership and enterprise,

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1 Murphy, Mary E., "Nationalization of British Industry", The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, 1952, p. 148. "On March 1, 1946, all existing capital stock of the Bank was transferred to a Treasury nominee, Holders of Bank stock, which paid a dividend of 12 per cent for twenty-two years and a yield of 3 per cent, were given new 3 percent Government stock which would provide them with the same income as they enjoyed before nationalization."

2 Hill, Alan, *The South Yorkshire Coalfield A history and Development, Tempus Publishing*, 2001, p. 36. From Wikipedia, "National Coal Board"

3 Hill, 2001, p. 37. From Wikipedia, National Coal Board

especially in relation to monopolies of all kinds,"[1] and that also the Industrial Charter (1947), which was the basis of the Tories' economic policies in the postwar years, advocated a kind of mixed economic system without unilaterally opposing the public ownership and management of the industry. Anyway, the public ownership and management through the nationalization of the basic industry, which remained unchanged despite the regime change, became a system established by socio-political consensus in postwar British society.

From the case of the UK, we can infer the circumstances that after World War II, the spirit of socialist progress was so widely accepted in Europe, as people could agree on the nationalization of the basic industry, regardless of the right or left. At the same time, it can be seen that the nationalization of industry has been supported not only on the moral groundof socialism but also on the pragmatic ground of capitalism. But now, these days seem to have passed. The NCB was privatized in 1987 and the CEGB was privatized in 1992. So thetrend of privatization that Thatcher's Conservative Party began to pursue was not changed bythe Prime Minister Blair, who raised a flag of the so-called New Labor. Thus, if the public control of industry was the predominant tide for almost a generation after the Second World War, the neo-liberalism appears to have become a kind of social consensus in England for a generation afterwards.

Whether or not this opposite flow is desirable can be evaluated in various ways. However, whatever the assessment, it seems clear that the flow was a reaction to the problematic situation that the people of Great Britain had to face repeatedly due to the nationalization.

3. The German way to the co-determination

After World War II, the German people took a different path. They did not seek nationalization. In terms of pursuing economic publicness,

1 Schmitthoff, Clive M., "The Nationalization of Basic Industries in Great Britain", Law and Contemporary Problems, Vol. 16, No. 4, 1951, p. 557.

the Germans started from a different idea than that of English people. It was "Democratization of Economy",[1] which can be grounded on the "equal rights for labor and capital" and realized through the "co-determination of employees and employers" in corporation. Specifically, German labor unions (DGB) rebuilt after the war demanded full parity on the board of directors of the corporations.[2] DGB tried to abolish unilateral domination of the capital over the labor by exercising equal rights with the capital in the decision-making process of enterprises.

For simplicity, both nationalization and codetermination are all for public control of the corporation, but the former tries to realize its purpose by socializing ownership of the enterprise, while the latter does not touch corporate ownership but merely changes corporate governance in order to arrive the same destination. In other words, the codetermination is neutral to the capitalist market economy. It does not try to change the given capitalist economic order. What it is trying to change is the power relationship between capital and labor. But if we can say that the cardinal evil of capitalism lies in the domination of capital over labor, it can be said that changing the power relationship and giving equal rights to the workers in relation to capital means overthrowing capitalism in its essential feature.

The ideology of nationalization, however, can be found from the Marx-Engels *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, but it is not easy to find classical documents that provide such theoretical grounds. (It would be correct to say that there is no such document.) Even H. Böckler who was the first president of DGB and also the most important contributor to the legislation of the codetermination law for steel and coal industry, did not leave any systematic writings on the ideology of the codetermination. In this sense, Germany's codetermination system is a rare example of praxis without systematic theories presented in advance. Perhaps this is because the codetermination is an ideal that is consistently deduced

1 G. Müller, *Mitbestimmung in der Nachkriegszeit*, Düsseldorf, 1987, p. 69.

2 Ibid, p. 71, 75.

neither from socialist nor capitalist theory in the general sense. But it can be seen both as a socialist ideal in the sense that it rejects the unilateral domination of capital over labor and demands equal rights of labor with capital in corporate governance, and as a capitalistic idea in the sense that it does not change or abolish the ownership of capital. Therefore, the codetermination is a concept that can be applied to both the capitalist and the socialist economic order. Because of this universal applicability, we sometimes unexpectedly encounter the concept of codetermination in the German writings and books issued before 1945. When the DGB called for the codetermination after World War II, it might be just because of the universality of the codetermination that it could obtain a broad support from both sides of right and left.[1]

However, apart from the universality of this ideological neutrality, we can say, the idea of codetermination is deeply rooted in German history and culture. Unlike the tradition of Roman law, which regards all social communities as being in principle constituted by the contracts of atomic individuals, the Germanic law recognized the existence of pre-contractual communities and also the possibility of collective authority and collective responsibility of its members in a community. From this tradition was received and has grown the idea of codetermination and therefore it was a relatively familiar concept, even though there was no systematic theory. Perhaps this familiarity is why the Germans could understand its meaning without any specific explanation and respond to the calling, when H.Böckler called them for codetermination.

Nevertheless, it was not easy for the codetermination to be legislated. How would employers accept, that workers, who are merely employees, are willing to participate in management with equal rights to capital owners? Nevertheless, May 21, 1951, the so-called Montan Co-determination Law could have come into effect for a number of reasons, but most importantly, the entrepreneurs in the mining industry accepted the DGB proposal positively. The coal and steel industries

1 Even CDU supported the codetermination, as confirmed in the Ahlener Programm.

covered by the law can be transformed into military industries for war at any time. For this reason, after the war, the Allied Powers put German coal mining and steel industry under special trusteeship and would keep these also in the future under international control.[1] In this situation, the entrepreneurs of Germany's coal and steel industry at the time were trying to get rid of the interference from the outside by giving the employees an equal right to the corporate governance.

In that sense, the most important rule in the Montan Codetermination Law (1951) may be the article 4 on the composition of the supervisory board, according to which the board of directors of the coal and steel industry must be composed 11 equally authorized and independent directors, of which the one five are appointed by shareholders, the other five by employees and the another one by agreement of the both sides,[2] in order to avoid the tie of the vote in the supervisory board.

This supervisory board appoints directors of management. The law, however, stipulates that the labor directors in the board of management don't have to be appointed against the will of majority of the directors.[3] This means that the chairman of the supervisory

1 G. Müller, op. cit., p. 113.

2 §4. (1) The Supervisory Board consists of eleven members. It is composed of: a) four shareholder representatives and one additional member, b) four employee representatives and one additional member, and c) one additional member. (2) The other members shall be referred to in paragraph 1: a) a representative of a trade union or association of employers or a head organization of such associations or business services; b) during the last year before the election c) work in companies as an employee or employer; d) have significant economic interests in the company. (3) All Supervisory Board members have the same rights and obligations. They are not bound by orders and instructions.

3 §13 (1) Being an equally authorized member of the organ appointed for legal representation [=management], a labor director is appointed. The Labor Director cannot be appointed against the votes of the majority of the Supervisory Board members elected in accordance with § 6. The same applies to the cancellation of the appointment. (2) The Labor Director shall, like the other members of the organ appointed for legal representation, perform his duties in close consultation with the organ as a whole. The details are determined by the rules of procedure.

board cannot appoint somebody as labor director, if the whole group of directors of the supervisory board appointed by the employees is against that appointment. In this way, the law gives equal rights to shareholders and workers in the organization of the supervisory board, which is the supreme organization of a corporation, and then let them appoint the labor director in the management (Vorstand) who can care and consult employees in personnel and social affairs.

4. Betriebsverfassungsgesetz 1952

German codetermination takes place at two levels: the enterprise level and the workplace level. The former refers to the codetermination in corporate governance, which is practically realized through the participation of employees in the supervisory board. In analogy, the former can be called a codetermination from above, and the latter from below. Montan MG. is the law that stipulates the codetermination at the enterprise level for the first time in postwar Germany.

On the other hand, the codetermination at the workplace level stipulates that employees can participate together in determining all of the specific problems in the workplace where the production activity takes place, for example, the start and end times of work. In postwar Germany, the Work's Constitution Act (Betriebsverfassungsgesetz) which permits employees the codetermination at the level of workplace was first legislated in 1952.

This law consists of two different parts, one defining the composition and authority of works council (Betriebsrat), and the other constituting a supervisory board of all other types of corporations, except coal and steel industry. In order to present this latter part, "one third of the supervisory board of a joint-stock company or a partnership limited by shares must be occupied by the employees' representatives." (§76, 1) Thanks to this provision the employees of all kind of corporation came to be able to participate to the corporate governance although not in full parity.

However, the main contents of the Works Constitution Act(BtVG) are the concrete provisions for the codetermination of employees through works council. The works council is the representative organization of employees in the workplace. According to BtVG the works council can be set in workplaces with five or more employees. In order to understand the nature of the council, the first thing to keep in mind is that the council is the representative body of the workers, but not the same thing as the labor union which pursues the interests of the workers in a narrow sense.[1] In other words the council is not an organization for dispute but for cooperation. (§49 1 and 2) This nature of Betriebsrat can also be found in the provision that employers are responsible for all costs of running the council (§ 39).

The cooperation between employer and employees through the council cannot be realized through the one-sided concession of the latter but through effective participation of the decision making in the workplace. Works Constitution Act is the law for the institutionalization of that participation, which is so unique that is hard to find elsewhere than in Germany. The law requires that the works council and employer should meet once a month to discuss all matters that may arise at the workplace level (§49, 3) and to jointly decide, but each things according to the legal provisions. The general task of the council is to propose measures that are helpful for the workplace and its employees, monitor whether agreements between labor and management are being observed well, accept complaints from workers, require employers to make corrective action if those are judged as legitimate, and help those who are handicapped to adapt themselves to workplace (§54).

Then, the works council confers with employer about social, personnel, and economic problems and makes decision together with employer. For example, the time to start and end the work, the planning of vocational education, the management of welfare facilities, the rules

1 "§2. The tasks of the unions and the employers' association are not affected by this law"

to be followed in the workplace, and the establishment or amendment of the principle of calculating wages are all subject to joint determination (§ 56). Measures to prevent industrial accidents and to establish workplace safety are social issues that are also subject to co-determination (§57). Decisions are made mainly through consultation and consensus. If no agreement is reached, an arbitration committee (Einigungsstelle) will be settled also according to full parity (§ 56, 2).

Personnel issues to be jointly determined include, e. g. recruiting new employees, redeploying, promoting, and dismissing. (§60) When the employer's plan of recruitment is deemed unwarranted by the legal standards, the works council can refuse to hire. In the personnel issues, the co-determination is made through consent of works council. (Zustimmung).

Finally, in regard to the co-determination on economic issues, in the case of a corporation with more than 100 employees, an economic committee should be established separately from the council to share information on the current status of the company (§ 72, 1). The works council and employer confer on the current situation of the corporation and the business plan for the future. In economic issues, is applied the principle of co-determination equally, so that the employer and works council search for agreement after consulting. In case of disagreement, they can build a mediation committee. (§ 72, 2) Anyway, it is not so easy, not to say impossible, for German entrepreneurs to determine everything alone without consideration of the will of employees.

The Works Council Act was revised in 1972 and in 2002 once more. Through these revisions the co-determination right of employees through works council was further defined in detail and strengthened in general. But the aimed purpose of the co-determination laws of Germany is not simply the protection or patronage of employees against the exploitation of employer, but the realization of autonomy of employees and their participation and cooperation for the prosperity of corporation.

In the postwar German history, the coal industry as a pioneer of co-determination system demonstrated the realistic suitability and effectivity of that system. A brief interview with sociologist H. Heidt, which was featured on the German WDR Internet edition for the 60th anniversary of the Works Constitution Act in 2012, tells us what miracles Germany's co-determination system has created.

"In the Ruhr area, nearly 500,000 mining jobs have been lost in forty years. This was possible without dismissals and without social misery - only because union has taken co-responsibility."[1]

It was the same with Germany that the coal industry entered the specification industry. But according to H. Heidt, here in Germany, the coal pits had to be closed like in UK, but unlike UK, there is no miner fired for it. Heidt says it is because the union [better: employees] has taken on co-responsibility for the management of the enterprise. But what does it mean specifically to share responsibility, if it is not a rhetoric justifying sacrifice of employees? According to the report of Wodopia,[2] coal companies help miners to adapt themselves to the inevitable closure of collieries in the following ways: 1) relocation 2) early retirement 3) labor-to-work transfer. So if one of many collieries come to be closed, you can avoid dismissal of miners of that colliery by sending them to another colliery, and older miners may retire earlier after their will and finally for younger people, it was possible to get rid of dismissal through various vocational trainings and transfer. Everything was the task of co-determination.

5. A personal epilogue

It was in the spring of 2013 that I read the interview of H. Heidt. But I could not believe it, so I emailed the interviewee if it really was. He answered that it was a fact. But I was still dubious about it because I

1 Interview of Holger Heidt, in M. Teigeler, "60 Jahre Betriebsverfassungsgesetz: Wie die Mitbestimmung erkämpft wurde." WDR internet site.

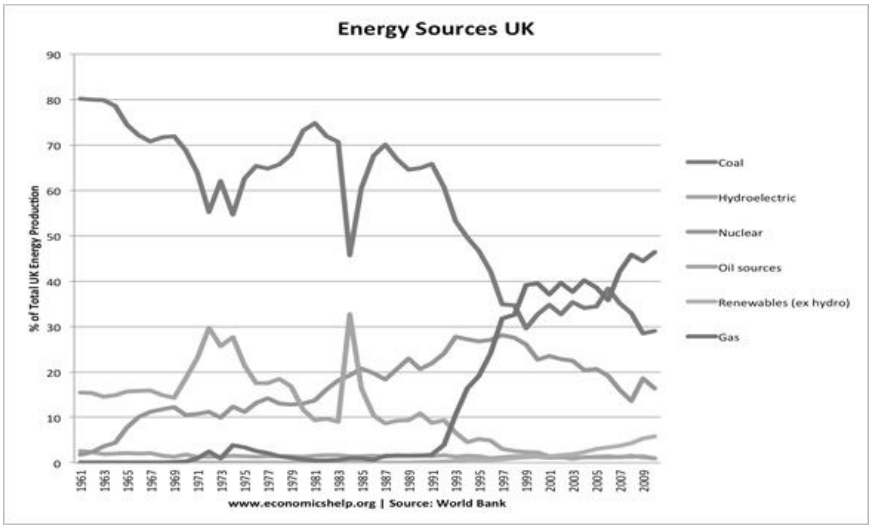
2 Wodopia, F-J, "Coal Industry Restructuring in Germany", GVSt, 2018.

could not get any evidence or document for it. But two years later I got a chance to see for myself whether H. Heidt's words were true. With the support of Gwangju Metropolitan City, I was able to visit Germany to cover the co-determination system in Germany. After visiting IG-Metall and Volkswagen AG, I finally visited the Ruhr region to meet Korean ex-miners who worked as foreign workers in the German collieries in the 1960-70s. And I asked them if really nobody was fired. They confirmed that no one was fired because of closure of colliery. And they added that it was all thanks to Betriebsrat. The specific measures to keep them from dismissal is also the same with the report of Wodopia. Some could work as miners until retirement through the relocation, others have acquired new jobs through new vocational education. Among those ex-miners whom I met, there was a man with two Meister certifications.

Perhaps there is no need to add another word to the conclusion. If the foreign miners from were not dismissed, the German miners would not have to ask any more. Of course, no social institution can be simply transplanted in other country. But if the ideals of the democratic republic originated from the ancient Greece and revived through the French Revolution could be rooted in Korea, there would be no reason why Germany's co-determination system would not be realized in Vietnam.

<Table 1> Production and Imports of Coal in UK: Dept. of Energy and Climate Change)

<Table 2> Energy Source of UK: World Bank



<Table 3> Employment of Coal Industry in UK

Table 6. *Cost of mining and delivering one tonne of steam coal to British market, November 1984* $ per tonne, coal of equivalent calorific value (25·5 GJ/t) (£1 = $1·20)

	Mine operating cost	Rail & port charges	Shipping cost	Total cost at ARA	Trans-shipment to Thames	Total cost at Thames	Energy value of coal (GJ/t)	Energy weighting factor	Total energy-weighted cost at Thames
Britain (a)	48·26	—	—	—	—	—		—	—
Britain (b)	47·04	2·40	6·48	—	—	55·92	25·5	1	55·92 (£46·60)
USA small open cast	21·00	15·00	10·50	46·50	9·80	56·30	31·4	0·81	45·60
USA deep, non-union	26·00	18·00	10·50	54·50	9·80	64·30	29·4	0·87	55·94
USA open cast, (drag-line) union	27·00	18·00	10·50	55·50	9·80	65·30	29·1	0·88	57·46
USA deep union	31·00	18·00	10·50	59·50	9·80	69·30	29·4	0·87	60·29
Australia NSW deep	20·20	15·40	16·00	51·60	9·80	61·40	26·5	0·96	58·94
Australia NSW open cast	18·30	12·50	16·00	46·80	9·80	56·60	26·7	0·96	54·34
South Africa open cast	7·90	7·90	12·00	27·80	9·80	37·60	27·0	0·94	35·34

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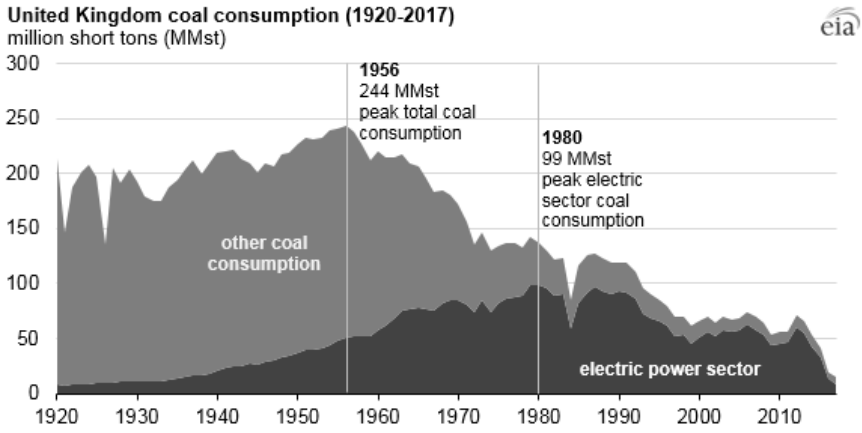
<Table 4> Comparison of the coal price

<Table 5>

Table 3 NCB/British Coal Corporation deep mine and opencast output, million tonnes

Market sector	1955	1973	1980	1990	1995	1996	1999
Power stations	44	77	90	84	60	55	41
Industry*	50	13	8	6	4	4	3
Domestic/commercial†	48	17	11	6	3	3	2
Railways	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coke ovens	27	22	12	11	9	9	8
Manufactured fuel plants‡	28	1	0	0	0	0	1
Other	2	3	3	1	1	1	1
Total	211	133	124	108	77	71	55

*Includes colliery consumption.
†Includes miners' coal and others.
‡Includes gasworks.
Figures rounded to nearest million tonnes and include consumption of stocks in some sectors.
Source: *Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics* (various issues).



<Table 6>

THE CHALLENGE OF IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN A DEVELOPING MARKET ECONOMY: THE CASE OF SLOVAKIA

Michal Valco[1]

Introduction

Slovakia is a small, land-locked country in Central Europe whose land area is roughly 48 thousand sq km and population 5.43 million (2018). Its political system is unitary multiparty republic with parliamentary democracy, it is part of the EU, including the Schengen Treaty and the Euro Zone (Euro currency since 2009). Slovakia's GDP Per Capita reached 19,547.168 USD in Dec 2018 – a long way up from the record low of 3,720.960 in Dec 1995. (CEIC, 2019) Labor force by occupation shows a strong preference for services: agriculture: 3.25%; industry: 30.97%;[2] services: 55.94% (HKTDC, 2019). With its export-oriented economy and the highest per-capita car production in the world, Slovakia has become an attractive place for investors representing

1 Prof. Dr., University of Presov in Presov, Slovakia.

2 Main industries: automobiles; metal and metal products; electricity, gas, coke, oil, nuclear fuel; chemicals, synthetic fibers, wood and paper products; machinery; earthenware and ceramics; textiles; electrical and optical apparatus; rubber products; food and beverages; pharmaceutical industry.

primarily manufacturing industries (automotive, electronic, chemical) but also for business process outsourcing centers (BPOs) and shared services centers (SSCs). Macroeconomically speaking, things look up for this small country in the heart of Europe, as Slovakia gets ready to become a hub on the New Silk Road.

However, there are numerous challenges along to way to continued prosperity and stability. Environmental issues and issues of social justice constitute major concerns for the country that must yet come to terms with its own complicated history. In my paper, I will give a short introduction to Slovakia's history, focusing on its political and socio-economic transformations in the 20th century. The roots of some contemporary problems can be traced to Slovakia's socialist past or even to a more distant past. I will then offer a description of some of the challenges our country had to go through during the painful decade of transitioning between state-planned to a market economy (1990-2000) and in the end I will introduce examples of challenges we face in implementing social justice in our contemporary situation.

1. A Brief Look at the Country and its History

Founded on Jan 1, 1993, Slovakia is a young country with a turbulent past. After centuries of subjugation by the Hungarian part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Slovaks enjoyed relative freedom and stability in the interwar period between 1918-39 (the era of the first Czechoslovak Republic). During the six-year WWII period (1939-45) Slovakia became Hitler's puppet state and existed merely formally as an independent country. Czechoslovakia was renewed after WWII as a country of the Czechs and Slovaks that would fall under the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. This fate was determined at the Yalta Conference in February 1945 (Churchill, Stalin, Roosevelt). Four decades of building of socialism followed after the elections of 1948 (the Communist Party won the elections in Czech but ranked second in Slovakia after the Democratic Party) under the ever-watchful eye of the Soviet leaders.

Generally speaking, the first two decades between 1948 – 1968 could be labeled as "decades of hope" where most of the population of Czechoslovakia either directly shared the enthusiasm of building a more just society under the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia or were sympathetic with these efforts. When the Berlin Wall came down in November 1989, the situation in Slovakia, which was still part of Czechoslovakia at that time, was ripe for major socio-political and economic changes. The much-needed and hoped for reforms, however, left a bitter aftertaste in the minds and lives of many. The way forward proved to be more difficult and painful than originally expected.

2. A Painful Decade of Transition: 1990 - 2000

Slovak industry and businesses could not compete in an open, free-market competition. Their levels of productivity were low, and the used technologies outdated. Major foreign investments were needed to remedy for these shortcomings. However, the inflow of investments was slower than needed due to perceived political instability in the country.

In 1990, it was obvious to both, domestic policy makers as well as foreign observers, that the existing socio-economic structures and policies were unsustainable. Unable to compete within a free, European (and worldwide) market, the Slovak economy (which was still part of Czechoslovakia) had to make a transition to a market economy. Big disagreements erupted among economists and politicians regarding the extent and pace of the reforms. The 'gradualists' wished to move at a slow pace whereas the proponents of 'shock therapy' wanted to move ahead as quickly as possible. The decision, influenced mainly by economic neo-liberalism, was to proceed with a guided shock therapy. "The reform steps should have been implemented immediately because of the likelihood of a transition trap, i.e., a situation where the rules of the communist-type economy are already weakened but not fully functioning, and economy is marasmic." (Beblavy et al., 2000, 36) Plans were made in 1990 but the actual transition scenario began to be

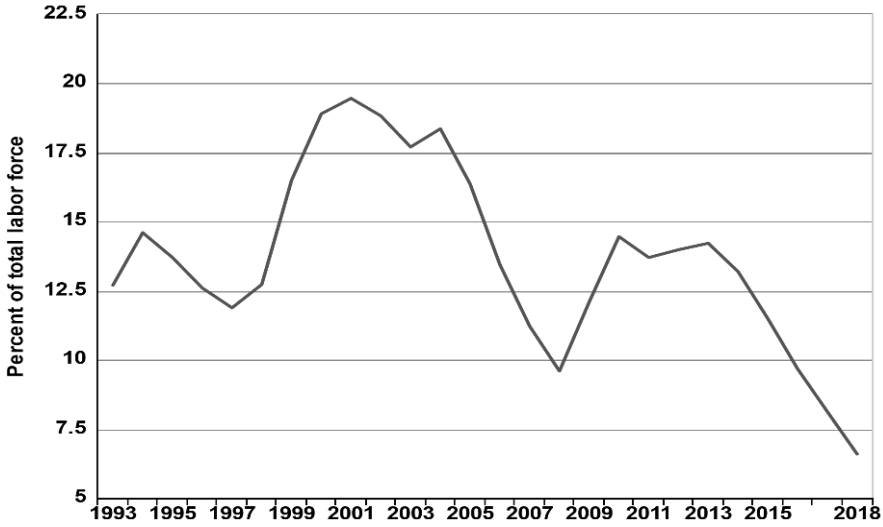
implemented in January 1991. Though the deregulation was massive and swift, about 15% of GDP in prices remained regulated. "The aim of this regulation, along with a restrictive fiscal and monetary policy, was to prevent the shock of inflation from evolving into an inflationary spiral, to suppress speculative and excessive swings of prices, to prevent cartel agreements, and to weaken the differences between the prices of inputs and final prices." (Beblavy et al., 2000, 36) Such regulation proved to be important especially during the initial time of transition.

Though lacking flexibility and innovativeness, the former planned economy boasted with a high degree of stability and predictability. From the viewpoint of macroeconomics, therefore, "it was important that the first reform step gave preferences to stabilization, to the establishment of equilibrium, to hinder inflation, and to eliminate State budget deficits. In the short term, economic demand had to be suppressed because of the need to convert from a supply constrained economic system to a demand constrained economic system. Some reduction in GDP generation was also expected for a transient period of time." (Beblavy et al., 2000, 36) On the one hand, these measures helped prevent inflation from getting out of control; on the other hand, the unemployment rate skyrocketed, real wages decreased significantly, and the overall economic performance weakened. Hasty economic decisions of the new government contributed to a rapid deterioration of the situation in the early 1990s. One such decision came from president Havel, who had decided to decrease the production of weapons in the country early on in his term. This affected Slovakia more dramatically than Czechia, as about 10% of the Slovak labor force worked in the defense industry.

Of course, such turn of events did not enjoy a popular support. While most of the younger generations and those with higher education understood the deep roots of the early 1990s crisis, as well as the unavoidability of the adopted austere measures, the looming index of deterioration in the population's standard of living raised big political concerns. The most affected were people in their 50s and older who

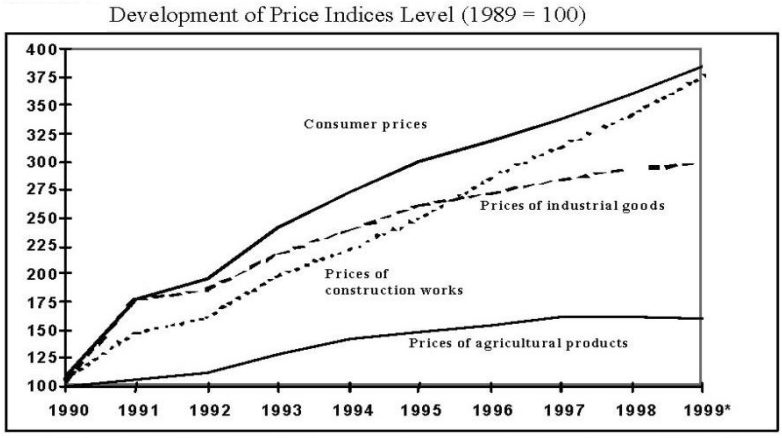
could not easily adjust to a new economic environment; they were the most susceptible to becoming unemployed and left out from benefiting from new opportunities that came from the market liberalization, reform of education and free travel. Existing pensioners and those retiring between 1990 and 2000 had hardly enough income to live a decent life. What follows bellow are three graphs showing the development of (a) unemployment, (b) consumer prices, and (c) GDP volume index in constant prices of the period of the first decade after the socio-economic transition.

Chart 1: (a) Rising Unemployment Rate (1993 – 2018)



Source: (KNOEMA, 2018: World Data Atlas – Slovakia Unemployment rate 1993 – 2018)

Chart 2: (b) Increasing Consumer Prices (1990 – 1999)



For 1999, data for the first six months. Source: Author´s own calculations based on Slovak Statistical Office data

Source: (Beblavy et al., 2000, 25)

TABLE 1. GDP Volume Index in Constant Prices (1989 = 100)

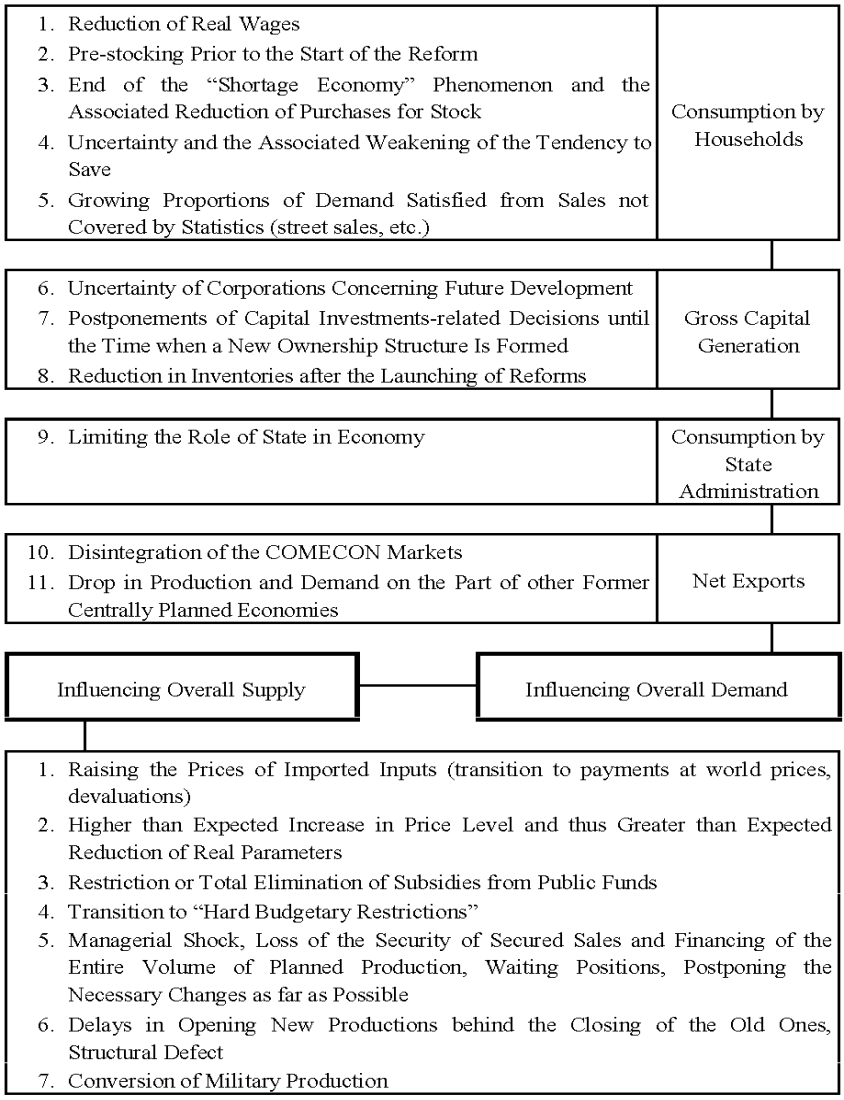
Year	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
GDP index	100	97.5	83.3	77.9	75.0	78.7	84.1	89.7	95.5	99.7	102.4

Note: 1999 data according to the forecasts by the Slovak Statistical Office. Source: Author´s own calculations according to the data provided by the Slovak Statistical Office.

Source: (Beblavy et al., 2000, 20)

The Slovak GDP decreased between 1988 and 1991. It started to climb in second half of 1991 but the GDP volume index measured in constant prices declined steeply until it hit the bottom in 1993 (75% of the 1989 performance). It took a decade for the performance measured in constant prices to get back to the 1989 level – which was a big disappointment not only for economists but also the politicians and their voters (see Table 1). Nevertheless, the transition between state-owned/state-planned economy to a liberalized market economy had progressed rapidly between 1990 – 1999. According to the National Statistical Office of Slovak Republic, about 85% of GDP was produced by private sector in 1999, a great majority of which proceeded from services, while industry and agriculture experienced a sizeable decrease. (Beblavy et al., 2000, 20-21)

Causes behind the GDP Volume index in Constant prices reduction were summarized by economists from the Slovak Academy of Science in Anton Beblavy (et al., 2000):



Source: (Beblavy et al., 2000, 39)

The socio-economic consequences of these changes were dramatic: (a) the abrupt transition to payments at world prices and the

accompanying devaluation of national currency resulted in a steep rise of the prices of imported goods and inputs; (b) subsidies from public funds tied directly to the national budget were either severely restricted or completely discontinued; (c) the overall economic governance transited to "hard budgetary restrictions"; (d) factories and businesses throughout the country experienced "managerial shocks" and, more significantly, loss of the security of guaranteed sales and financing of planned production; (e) some structural and fiscal changes in businesses were postponed as long as possible, thus creating higher budget deficits; (f) new technologies implemented in new production lines were delayed due to lack of investments; (g) the abrupt conversion of military production caused unprecedented shockwaves fiscally as well as on the labor market. (Beblavy et al., 2000, 39)

3. Examples of Challenges in Implementing Social Justice in the Society

Privatization (including the bank and insurance sectors) and foreign investments have been the two most significant factors in the socio-economic transformation of Slovakia in the past three decades. Slovak enterprises would have had no chance to compete internationally without foreign capital, technologies, and the introduction of a new managerial culture. One of the biggest advantages of the Slovak market have been cheap and relatively skilled labor, solid education system, and working structure of control mechanisms (regulations and quality control). Low interest rates of bank loans (especially after 1998) helped speed up the economic development, (Morvay et al., 2005, 315) launching Slovakia on the way of economic prosperity.

Chart 3: Development of GDP Index in Slovakia, Czechia, Hungary, Poland, and OECD, 2001-2018

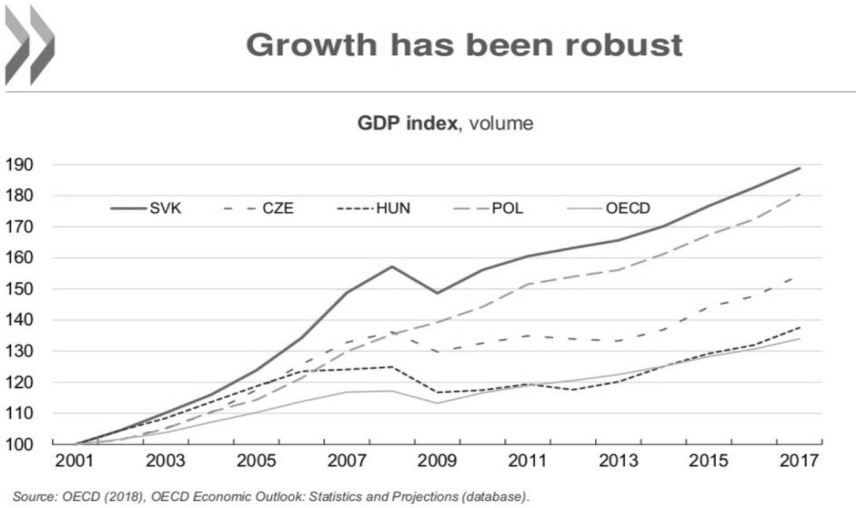


Chart 4: Development of Unemployment in Slovakia, 1993-2018

Source: KNOEMA World Data Atlas, Slovakia – Unemployment Rate, 1999-2018

This optimistic appraisal, however, concerns macroeconomic indicators rather than real life situations and living standards of individuals, namely the economically less fortunate, marginalized, and/or excluded. As has often been the case, macroeconomic success does not automatically trickle down to the roots of the given society's social fabric, i.e., to the working people. Concerns regarding implementing social justice in our situation are fully legitimate, as Slovakia attempts to fairly and properly ensure equal opportunities, distribute social benefits relative to the economic success of the country, and "administer laws conforming to the natural law that all persons, irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, possessions, race, religion, etc., are to be treated equally and without prejudice." (WebFinance Inc., 2019)

According to the latest European Commission's Country Report on Slovakia (2019), among the main problems belong regional differences, the quality of public institutions, education, science and research, as well as innovations. The education system and the labor market must become more flexible to facilitate the quickly changing environment of global business and innovations. Ability to adapt to new conditions, particularly robotization, IT and automation will become key. In addition to these sectors, more investments will need to come into infrastructure and energy technologies. (European Commission, 2019, 3)

There are several long-term challenges, too. Healthcare and pension systems are the source of long-term sustainability challenges, as demographic figures continue to deteriorate, and the government has recently adopted a constitutional law fixing the retirement age for men at 64 and even a lower age for women, relative to the number of reared children.

The European Commission appreciates progress that Slovakia has made in some areas, implementing measures conducive to social justice. These include: "(a) increasing the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare sector and addressing staffing shortages; (b) reinforcing activation and upskilling measures, in particular by delivering on the Action Plan for the Long-Term Unemployed; (c) fostering employment opportunities for women by extending childcare capacities; and (d) increasing the

use of quality-related and lifecycle cost criteria in public procurement operations." However, other areas remain lacking and the Commission criticized the government for deficiencies in: "(a) improving the quality and inclusiveness of education; (b) tackling corruption; (c) improving the effectiveness of the justice system; and (d) reducing the fragmentation of the public research system and stimulating business innovation." (European Commission, 2019, 4)

I want to offer the following probe pertaining to examples of concrete challenges that Slovakia is facing today in its efforts to implement social justice, increase social cohesion, and strengthen long-term socio-economic equilibrium:

a) Loss of Human Capital

The growth of GDP per capita is not automatically (and certainly not quickly enough) transformed into increased real wages. Imbalances within the EU and/or OECD in this regard will take much longer to overcome than expected. As a result of this, Slovakia is losing its best minds and most skilled workers who can earn more and enjoy better living standards in Western EU countries.

b) Labor Market Shortages and Immigration

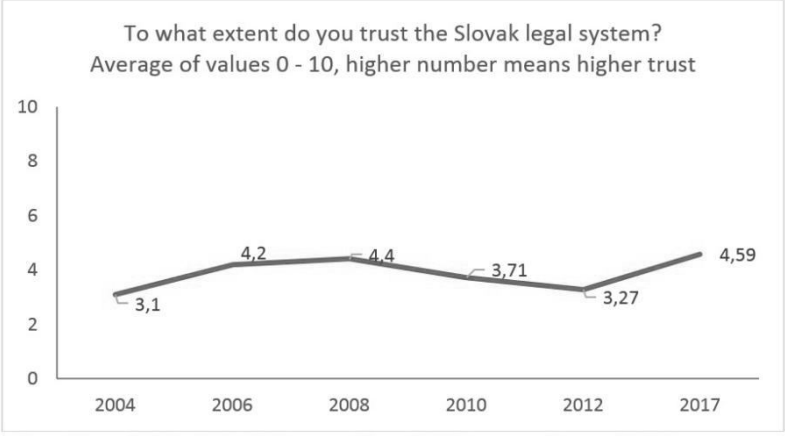
Slovakia's labor market is becoming overheated, lacking skilled workers especially for the automotive and electrotechnics industries. This threatens future inflow of investment capital as employers tend to prefer markets with sufficient (skilled) labor force. It also makes employers seek potential employees beyond the borders of Slovakia, which raises the hot issue of immigrants coming and staying in the country. Slovakia's laws belong among the toughest, most restrictive immigrant laws in Europe. Coupled with anti-immigrant rhetoric of the government, the strict laws resulted in very few people seeking, and even fewer receiving an immigrant and/or refugee status in Slovakia. According to 2018 statistics, only 2.2% of population are foreign nationals with a legal immigration status in Slovakia. (International Organization for Migration, 2019)

On the other hand, Slovakia's employment structure is extremely vulnerable robotization and automation of the production, with 34% of jobs being at high risk of automation and 65% risking significant changes. (OECD, 2019, 9) In addition, the results in PISA testing of education outcomes shows a steep decline in scores for science, reading and mathematics in Slovakia. (OECD, 2019, 11) The convergence of these two negative developments may result in fewer high-skilled job opportunities, less investment and more unemployment due to increased automation.

c) Judiciary System

Reform of judiciary system and the corresponding enhancement of legal enforcement of rights both in business as well as civic spheres is needed. Civil and business legal disputes often last too long and are influenced by corruption or political pressures. Although trust in Slovak courts and the legal system has grown between 2012 – 2017, it remains among the lowest in the EU. (Slovak Supreme Court, 2017)

Chart 5: Trust in the Slovak Judiciary System



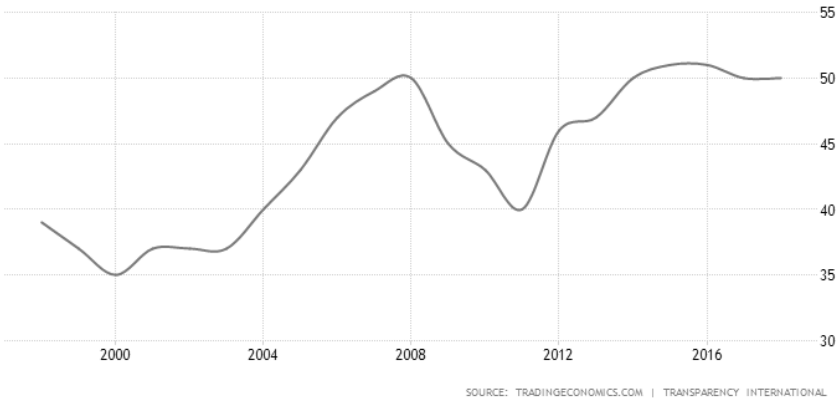
Note: Years 2004 – 2012 ESS survey. Year 2017 Supreme Court of SR/Focus survey

d) Corruption

Scoring 50 points out of 100 in this year's (2019) Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) and ranking 57 (among 180 countries),

Slovakia has reported its worst score in perceiving corruption since 2013. (Transparency International, 2019)

Chart 6: Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) Chart for Slovakia, 1995 - 2018



According to European Commission's critical observation, "corruption continues to pose a challenge, and organizational and procedural weaknesses at the police and prosecutor's level, as well as weak whistleblower protection, hinder the fight against corruption." (European Commission, 2019, 5)

e) Poverty and Social Exclusion

More than 60% of inhabitants had a lower economic status, while 12% were at or below the poverty line in 2005 (Morvay et al., 2005, 315). Although life conditions got better for the majority of the lower middle class in the past decade, 16.3% of the population remained at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2017. (Eurostat, 2019) Social stratification of the Slovak society is influenced primarily by the level of inclusion (or exclusion!) of people in productive age in the labor market and educational opportunities. Existence of wide social networks along with active policies against marginalization are also important.

f) Solidarity

State enforced solidarity has been decreasing between 1990 – 2005 (Morvay et al., 2005, 316). Due to frequent abuses of social benefits and

helping mechanisms, this decrease of state enforced solidarity has not been offset by an increase in voluntary solidarity based on the perception of the importance of social cohesion on local (community) level. The system of enforced solidarity must therefore be reformed to become more 'targeted' on real needs of the clients, less prone to abuses, and more motivating for the recipients of social benefits to attain the status of contributors to social welfare rather than receivers. In addition, there is pressure to look for alternatives of private insurance and pension investments, which would alleviate the burden of the state to be the sole provider of social securities. Obviously, this option is viable for the middle class and upper middle class of inhabitants – comprising together around half of the current population. The other half of the population is left out of this process of creating a supplementary 'cushion' of social securities. The frequent abuses of social benefits create pressure to devise and implement a stricter regulation of social benefits distributions, especially to socially excluded and marginalized groups. This issue reflects big regional differences, with Southern and Southeastern Slovakia being the most problematic regions. A new system of active politics of labor market is needed to help the long-term unemployed groups who have experienced exclusion (regardless of whether self-induced or caused by external forces) trans-generationally. The Roma people (pejoratively: 'Gypsies') have been the most marginalized and excluded group in Slovakia for decades.

g) Regional Differences

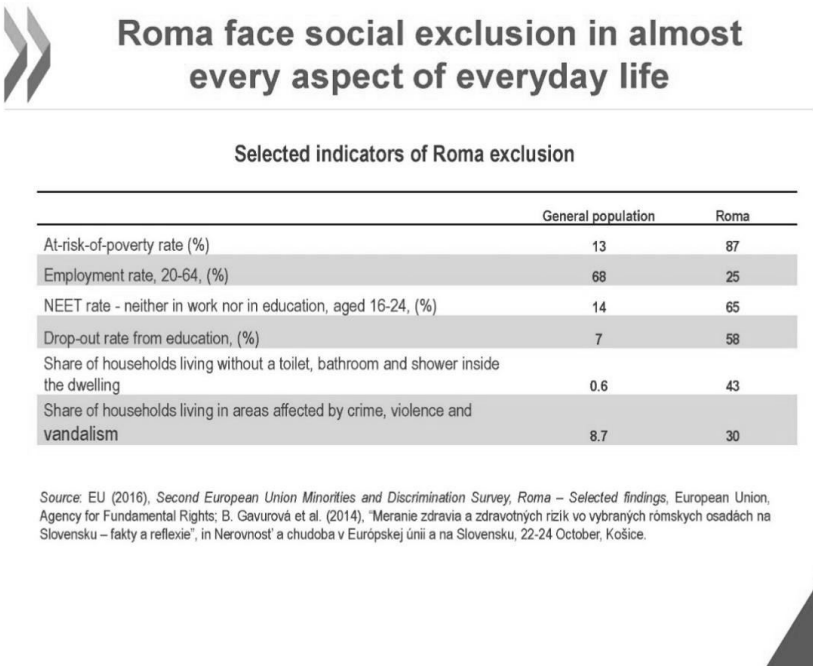
"The current expansion in the manufacturing sector is concentrated in the west of the country and its benefits will not necessarily spill over to weaker regions. Improvements in the quality of public institutions and targeted investment may help reduce long-standing regional and socioeconomic inequalities." (European Commission, 2019, 3) While the GDP for Bratislava and the surrounding county has reached 116% of EU average already in 2003, the region of Eastern Slovakia stagnated around 39% of the EU average in the same year. The disparity has not diminished but has actually grown over the years. Insufficient

infrastructure causes lack of investments in the underdeveloped Slovak regions, giving rise to unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, family problems, and overall decline of the socio-economic environment of the areas. Young people tend to leave these areas, preferring larger towns in the west of the country. This leaves many rural areas of the east severely underpopulated and/or ethnically ghettoized (by Roma population).

h) Marginalization (and Ghettoization) of Roma Population

Slovakia has traditionally had one of the most numerous Roma population (both in real numbers and percentagewise). Current estimates suggest that about 9% of the total population belongs to this group, rivalled only by 10% of Roma population in Bulgaria. This segment of the Slovak population faces social and economic exclusion in many aspects of everyday life. Selected indicators of exclusion can be seen in Table 2 below (OECD, 2019, 19):

Table 2: Selected indicators of Roma exclusion



Roma face social exclusion in almost every aspect of everyday life

Selected indicators of Roma exclusion

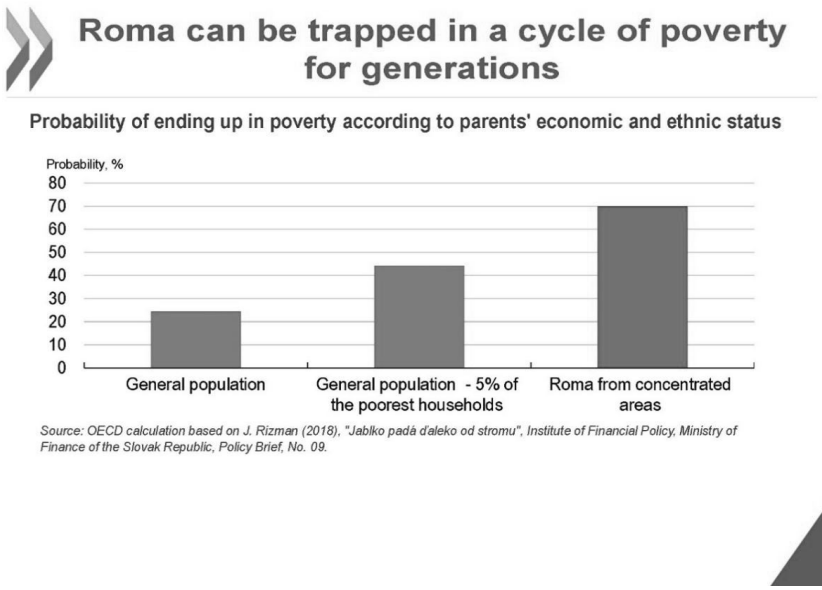
	General population	Roma
At-risk-of-poverty rate (%)	13	87
Employment rate, 20-64, (%)	68	25
NEET rate - neither in work nor in education, aged 16-24, (%)	14	65
Drop-out rate from education, (%)	7	58
Share of households living without a toilet, bathroom and shower inside the dwelling	0.6	43
Share of households living in areas affected by crime, violence and vandalism	8.7	30

Source: EU (2016), *Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey, Roma – Selected findings*, European Union, Agency for Fundamental Rights; B. Gavurová et al. (2014), "Meranie zdravia a zdravotných rizík vo vybraných rómskych osadách na Slovensku – fakty a reflexie", in Nerovnosť a chudoba v Európskej únii a na Slovensku, 22-24 October, Košice.

19

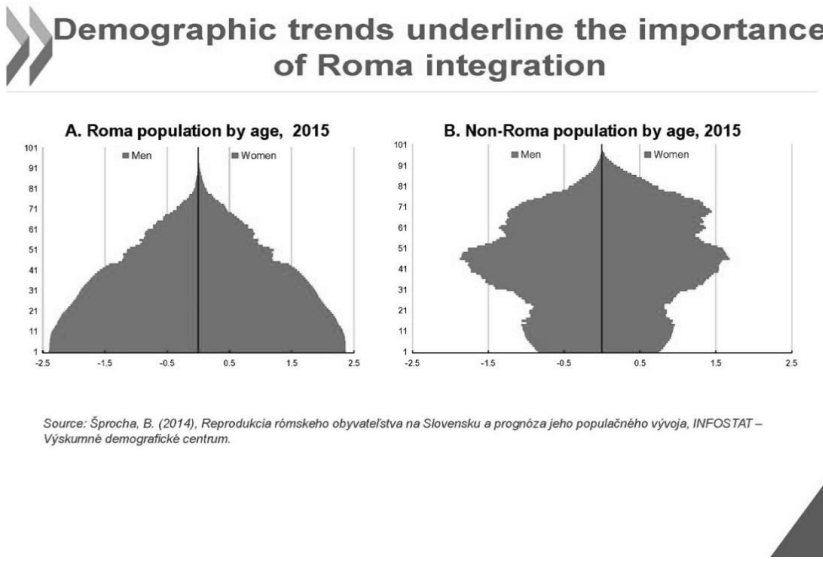
Marginalization, discrimination and social exclusion result in pauperization of the Roma ethnic group, making the Roma people much more prone to be trapped in a cycle of poverty than the rest of the population. This can be clearly seen in Chart 7 below (OECD, 2019, 21):

Chart 7: Probability of ending up in poverty according to parents' economic and ethnic status



Besides recognizing the obvious injustice towards this ethnic group and considering ways to diminish the detrimental effects of such social exclusion, the Slovak government must deal with this issue for another important reason: the socio-economic stability of the whole economy. The explanation why this ought to be a real concern is demography. While the majority population is diminishing, the Roma population has been increasing steadily with no signs of deceleration (see Chart 8). According to existing OECD estimates, social inclusion of Roma (increasing their employment rate and their productivity) will bring positive economic effects at the level of 12% GDP and 5% increase in fiscal revenue by 2060. (OECD, 2019, 23)

Chart 8: Demography of Roma and non-Roma population



Source: Šprocha, B. (2014), Reprodukcia rómskeho obyvateľstva na Slovensku a prognóza jeho populačného vývoja, INFOSTAT – Výskumné demografické centrum.

It is obvious that failing to include the Roma population into social, cultural, and educational processes and existing and new economic opportunities will result in a gradual breakdown of public finances, rise of populism and right-wing extremism, as well as an overall deterioration of public security and standards of living for all inhabitants.

Conclusion

What should be the proper relationship between economic reform and social policy? Concerns are growing over the political sustainability of economic reform in some developing economies. These concerns are further magnified by the fear that social problems in developing countries could affect the developed countries and threaten global stability. When lower income people are prevented from realizing their human capital potential, it is bad news for the whole economy. (OECD, 2015)

Innovative policy recommendations and priorities for governments and international institutions are needed, such as those of Amartya Sen (1999; 2004; 2009) or Ethan Kapstein and Branko Milanovic (2003). Kapstein and Milanovic, for example, point out the significance of

formal sector workers in transforming economies for social policies development and implementation. Fearing economic liberalization's potential to reduce their incomes and benefits, the formal sector workers (i.e. workers with regular working hours and permanent or long-term contracts) oppose the needed reforms and effectively lobby for social policies that protect their interests, such as progressive pension reforms and unemployment benefits. Ironically, though the lobbying is done on behalf of the 'poor and underprivileged,' such social policies do not benefit the poorest workers or those who work in the informal economy (small private businesses, independent artists etc.). As Kapstein and Milanovic rightly argue, "The poor have several disadvantages in lobbying for social protection, including a lack of political influence and a lack of jobs in the formal economy. Further, efforts at targeting the poor may backfire, since those who are in higher income brackets and who are more politically powerful will reject fiscal programs that do not benefit them directly;" hence, "To the extent that public spending helps the poor, it is a byproduct of programs that primarily support the best organized voting blocs." (Kapstein – Milanovic, 2003, 78) For them to work, however, poverty reduction policies must be targeted on their primary recipients – the poor and underprivileged and marginalized – not on the politically better organized and more influential formal sector workers. Social policy must not become a function of influence and wealth!

Keeping social policy targeted at the interests of the poorest (not the politically loudest!) will continue to be a challenge before Slovakian government officials, legislators, and even judiciary. The sensitive question of unemployment benefits as well as the unfinished (and often questioned and attacked) pension reform in Slovakia are bound to draw increased attention as lobbyist groups attempt to sway the policy toward their interest. For these social policies to work efficiently and properly, however, the synergic effect of several important institutions will need to be secured: (a) efficient and transparent taxation, (b) efficient and independent work of corresponding regulatory bodies, (c) prompt and

objective operation of the judiciary system ensuring the rule of law. Without such functioning institutional context, any well-meant social policy reform might (and more than often 'would') end up facilitating the growth of disparities, imbalances, as well both perceived and real injustices.

To achieve this, I propose adopting Amartya Sen's 'capability approach' to socio-economic development. (Sen, 2004; 2009) As humans are far more than automated entities behaving according to predetermined economic algorithms, we need an approach more comprehensive than the usual rationalist-utilitarian approaches common in traditional economics. Issues of justice (including, above all, social justice) and human rights must be integral parts of our considerations. Sen's proposal to widen social choice models to include factors not acknowledged in standard economic theories, along with his reconceptualization of poverty (seeing it in its multidimensionality), prompted the now highly regarded Human Development Index (HDI). In order to ensure the success of the implementation of the needed social justice policies, then, our approach must be comprehensive, integrating all key concepts of Sen's approach: (a) functionings;[1] (b) capabilities;[2] (c) agency;[3] (d) freedom.[4] (cf. Jacobson, 2016, 5) In the end, it all seems

1 "The concept of 'functioning', which has distinctly Aristotelian roots, reflects the various things a person may value doing or being. The valued functionings may vary from elementary ones, such as being adequately nourished and being free from avoidable disease, to very complex activities or personal states, such as being able to take part in the life of the community and having self-respect." (Sen, 1999, 75)

2 "A person's 'capability' refers to the alternative combinations of functionings that are all feasible for her to achieve." (Sen, 1999, 75)

3 A person with agency is "someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as well." (Sen, 1999, 17)

4 "In this approach, the expansion of freedom is viewed as both (1) the primary end and (2) the principal means of development. They can be called respectively the constitutive role and the instrumental role of freedom in development." (Sen, 1999, 36).

to revolve around human dignity and freedom. For true development "requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states." (Sen, 1999, 3)

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SOLVING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL EQUITY AND REDUCE POVERTY IN VIETNAM

Nguyen Thi Lan Huong[1]

I. About the relationship between economic and social development

Communist Party, State, and Government of Vietnam aware that:

**** Economic development is the foundation to solve social issues***

The reality of 30 years of modernization proved a fact that: the improvement path of Vietnam socialism had to go through the market economy. *Without a market economy, there cannot be socialism*. Economic development in Vietnam up until now is built upon a free-market economy with a socialist orientation. In XII Congress (2016), the Communist Party asserted: "The market economy directs Vietnam socialism to be a fully-operating economy that synchronizes with its rules while ensuring that socialist orientation is suitable for each developing period of the country. That is the modern and globalized market economy; with the management of the law-governed socialist State, led by the Communist Party of Vietnam, with the goal of "prosperous people, strong countries, democracy, justice, and civilization"

1 Assoc. Prof. Dr., Institute of Philosophy, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.

Vietnam market economy with socialist orientation has advanced production relationship, suitable for the development level of the production force; various forms of ownership and economic components, with government economy playing the lead role and private economy being an important driving force of the economy; the subjects belonging to economic components are equal, co-operative, and they compete while abiding by the laws; the market plays a main role in mobilizing and effectively distributing resources for development, being the main driving force to free the production capability; government resources are distributed based on strategy, project, and plan suitable for the market mechanism. The state plays a role which orientates, builds, and improves the economic institution, creating an equal, transparent, and healthy competing environment; using the tools, policies, and government resources to orientate and regulate the economy, boosting production business and protecting the environment; performing modernized and equal society in every step and developing policy. Enhancing the role of the people's commander during economic – social development"[1].

However, the Communist Party of Vietnam aware that *the free-market economy itself cannot bring socialism to humans.* If the free-market economy progresses on its own, there will be inevitable damages that society would hardly accept the increasing the gap between the rich and the poor, or the winner in a competition will have everything while the loser has nothing. Because of having predominant materials for production, the rich can dominate the poor by unequal trading. Therefore, it is essential to:

Thoroughly solving social issues right in each economic developing step.

Below is how this issue is shown in Vietnam:

About the foundational idea: Communist Party of Vietnam *is still loyal to Marxism-Leninism theory*, which means to be consistent with

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, page 102 – 103.

the goal of building a socialist society – a *more modern and equal social regime* than capitalism, in which distribution and re-distribution have an exceptionally important role in achieving socialism.

In *Critique of the Gotha Program* written in 1875, when discussing future society, K. Marx has brought up theses on distributing and re-distributing the total social products to implement *social equity* through assigning social wealth to ensure that everyone's living conditions are equal and safe. According to K. Marx, before distributing to workers, "Deducting from the total products:

Firstly, apart from replacing the used production materials

Secondly, an additional supporting part to expand production

Thirdly, a reserve fund or coverage fund in case of accidents, natural disasters, etc.

Before distributing to individuals, also deducts:

Firstly, general administration fees that do not fit in the production category

Secondly, amounts that are used mutually to satisfy the needs, such as schools, hospitals, etc.

Thirdly, a necessary fund to provide for people who are unable to work, etc. which belongs to the work that, nowadays, called social aid by the state"[1].

The thesis on distribution and re-distribution by Marx mentioned above shows that he has mentioned about basic functions of a network which creates safety for people that nowadays people call *social security* with 3 basic functions, which are: *preventing risks, decreasing risks, and remedying risks* for every people of that society. The reality of social development until now has shown that this is one of the measures to not only ensure the safety of every individual in the society but also achieving social equity.

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, page 31 – 32.

President Ho Chi Minh creatively used and developed the perspective of the founders of socialist science in the specific situation of Vietnam, with the goal is *to implement modernization and social equity*. He has explained socialism in a realistic, simple, and easy to understand way: "Socialism is rational equity: The more one works, the more he has, vice versa, and if one does not work, he has nothing. The elder and disabled will be helped taking care of by the State"[1], "socialism firstly aims to get people out of poverty and create jobs for everyone so they can live fully and happily"[2], etc.

The Communist Party of Vietnam always values creatively using and developing Marxism – Leninism and Ho Chi Minh ideology in each period of the Vietnam revolution, suitable for the reality of the country's development. About implementing social equity and social progression, the Communist Party's awareness course can be summarized as below:

In the VI Congress of the Communist Party (1986), the phrase *social equity* started to be mentioned in congress documents

In the VII Congress (1991), *social progress* is mentioned

The VIII Congress (1996): *identify that economic growth has to closely connect with progression and social equity in every step, every policy, and throughout the developing process.*

In IX Congress (2001): The Communist Party has established one of the most important measures to achieve social equity when officially used the phrase "social security" with the content that aims to create a multi-layer safety network for everyone in the society in case their income is cut or lost, expenses increase unexpectedly due to social and natural "risks" and see "Social security and social policy are one of the measures to solve social issues"

Along with that, IX Congress identified: "Market economy orientates socialism to execute distribution mainly based on working

1 Hồ Chí Minh, *Complete Works*, Ibid, vol. 9, page 175.

2 Hồ Chí Minh, *Complete Works*, Ibid, vol. 10, page 17.

results and economic effectiveness, as well as distributing based on capital and other resources contribution in production, business, and through social welfare"[1].

The X Congress (2006) wrote: "Implementing progression and social equity right in every step and every development policy: economic growth goes hand-in-hand with growth in culture, healthcare, and education, etc., excellently solve social issues for the sake of human development goal"[2].

In the XI Congress (2011): "Implementing progression and social equity right in every step and every development policy is a huge and consistent policy of our Communist Party and State, showing the good nature of socialism"[3]; "Right and equitable social policy for the human is the strong driving force for enhancing every creative capability of the people in the work of building and protecting the country. Ensuring equity and equality of citizen's rights and responsibilities; closely and reasonably combining economic growth with cultural and social growth, implement progression and social equity in each step and each policy"[4]. Emphasizing on *immediately* implementing social equity is a principal opinion of our Communist Party in XI Congress.

XI Congress CPV Documents also clearly pointed out the goal and distribution method: "Distribution relationship ensures equity and create a driving force for development; resources are distributed based on strategy, project, and plan for developing economy and society; implement distributing system mainly based on working result and economic effectiveness, as well as the capital and other resources contribution

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 9th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2001, page 88.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, page 77-78.

3 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, page 43.

4 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, page 79-80.

level and distribute through social security and social welfare system"[1]. IX Congress CPV Documents added *distributing through social security system besides distributing through social welfare.*

With the function that the Constitution set, the Congress and the Government of our country have respectively institutionalized policies and opinions of the Communist Party into specific law systems, strategies, policies, plans, programs, projects, etc. to bring into life. Therefore, economic growth, progression, and social equity implementation of Vietnam in recent years have gained multiple achievements[2].

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, page 74.

2 - *The number of people getting a job regularly increases each year*: In 10 years (1991 -2001), the whole country created jobs for about 12 million people; in the following years, the number of people getting a job increases: 2001-2005 period is 6.5 million people, 2006-2010 period: about 7.2 million people, and 2011-2015 period: 7.8 million people

- *Hunger elimination and poverty reduction achieved outstanding results*: According to standards calculated by the World Bank and General Statistics Office of Vietnam, the general poverty rate in our country decreased from 58% in 1991 to about 4.5% in 2015. In recent years, when the national economy faced challenges due to the financial depression and global economic recession, the Government timely proposed a Sustainable poverty reduction support program in more than 60 especially impoverished districts with more than 50% poor households. Until the end of 2015, the poor household rate in these districts decreased to 28%.

- *The implementation of social insurance policy had significant impacts*: Since The Reform (1986) until now, this subject has slowly expanded to many businesses in many non – government economic components. Therefore, the number of people joining the mandatory insurance rose from 4.8 million people in 2001 to 12 million people in 2015.

- *Health insurance coverage significantly increased*: After 3 times the Government established Health Insurance Resolutions in 1992, 1998, and 2005, the national health insurance coverage is expanding. Besides expanding the target subject of mandatory health insurance, optional health insurance has also expanded to subjects that are farmers, students, and university students. Overall, the number of people joining all kinds of health insurance rose from 11.34 million people in 2001 to 69 million people in 2015, accounting for about 75% of the country's total

In XII Congress (01/2016), the Political Report that the Central Committee of Vietnam, term XI presented has proposed multiple general policies and guidelines:

"Sustainably develop culture and society; tightly and harmoniously combine economic development with cultural development, implement progression, social equity, and improve people's lives. Implementing Agenda 2030 of the United Nations and efficiently intertwining sustainable development goals into economic and social development plan of the country, each department, and each region".

The political report in the XII Congress of the Communist Party has proposed some considerable directions: Completing the system of policy, tightly combining economic policy goals with social policy goals; raising income and improving the quality of people's lives; developing a diversified social security system that continues to expand and be more effective. Therefore, there are 3 key points:

Firstly, harmoniously combining motivating economic development, implementing progression and social equity, and ensuring social security in each step and each policy. The policy to motivate economic development and the implementation of progression and social equity

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population. [According to statistics from the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids, and Social Welfare]

- *The implementation of Policies to support society to improve step-by-step*: People under social support include two main categories: people negatively affected by natural disasters and people in need because of old age, disabilities, and fatal illnesses. The support for these two subjects is executed through the official channel of the State and unofficial channel based on social contribution. Therefore, the budget, funded by the national budget, rose from 113 billion for 180,000 people in 2001 to 4,500 billion for more than 1.6 million people in 2010. The country now has 580 facilities that accommodate lonely elders, heavily disabled people, and abandoned children, etc. without a home.

- *The implementation of social concession towards people with merits that need special attention*: According to the checking result of the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids, and Social Welfare (in 2014 and 2015), the number of people with merits that can rightfully and adequately use social concessions is 1.98 million people.

have to create more material and human resources; therefore expanding and completing the social security system. On the other hand, social security has to more effectively contribute in preventing, decreasing, and remedying risks for people facing hardships; therefore increasing communal solidarity, motivating social development in a humane direction, and ensuring progression and equity, as well as fast and sustainable economic development.

Secondly, increasing programs in economic and social development along with creating jobs and ensuring security for workers. To do that, it is necessary to improve the law system for working and jobs, create a safe environment, and ensure welfare for workers through fully executing social security system to workers of any economic components.

Thirdly, increasing effectiveness and tightly combining strategies and national aim programs in progress such as *the National goals program about sustainably eliminating hunger and reducing poverty; Housing for people with low-income*, especially, the poor workers in concentrated industrial zones, people in areas affected by hurricanes, mountain landslides, and people from riverbanks and seasides, etc.; *the National goals program about building the new countryside.*

II. Strategies to achieve social equity and reduce poverty in Vietnam

Resolution number 15 of the Central Committee of Vietnam stated: "Some problems about social policy during the period 2012-2020" also requires *"Social policies have to be equal with economic policies, implemented synchronously with developing the economy, and suitable for the development level and resource capabilities in each period…"* To specify the mentioned goal, Vietnam has built strategies and national goal programs that are collective and particular:

1-Strategy for economic – social development 2011-2020

The strategy proposed the direction and solution for developing Vietnam's economy and society from 2016 to 2020[1] through Plan

1 Nguyễn Xuân Thắng, "Developing the economy – the society of Vietnam from

for developing the economy and society period 2016-2020, with the focus on *pushing inclusive growth, creating equality in development opportunities for everyone*. It can be seen that the Communist Party of Vietnam wants to emphasize that the humane attribute is a specific trait of the socialist-oriented market economy, that is an economy that uses the benefit of the majority of people as the foundation for every economic activity, uses human as the center of development, everyone can participate in economic and social activities, and everyone can benefit. Besides establishing a base for a quick and sustainable economic development and creating jobs that are highly efficient and well-paid, Vietnam needs to implement particular policies such as creating favorable conditions for developing industries with jobs for low-skilled workers and vulnerable people; expand and improve the social security system to increase the accessibility for people to important social services[1]; care about and support the poor, the weak, and the vulnerable, especially during globalization[2]. Increase the quality of service and infrastructure in rural and mountainous areas to close the development opportunity gap among different areas, between city and countryside, between people from rural areas and people from suburb areas.

2-Strategy for Vietnam's sustainable development 2011-2020

Strategy for Vietnam's sustainable development 2011-2020 (No.432/QĐ-TTg, April 12, 2012) is one of the most important strategies to achieve social equity and reduce poverty in Vietnam. *The general goal* of the strategy is the sustainable and effective growth of

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2016 to 2020: Directions and plans", Article in the *Political Theory Journal* number 12 – 2016, http://lyluanchinhtri.vn/home/index.php/anh-chinh/item/2085-phat-trien-kinh-te-xa-hoi-cua-viet-nam-trong-giai-doan-2016-2020-dinh-huong-va-giai-phap.html

1 Nguyễn Xuân Thắng: "Economic growth attaches to progression and social equity", *Vietnam on the development path*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2015.

2 Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, *Summarizing report on 30 years of renovating socialist-oriented market economy in Vietnam*, Hanoi, 2014.

the economy, along with the rate of progress, social equity, resources, and environment protection, political-social stability, as well as firmly protecting the country's independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity. *The specific goals* of the strategy are:

- Ensuring a stable macroeconomy, especially large balances; protecting food security, energy security, and financial security. *Changing the growth model to harmonious growth between width and depth; implementing green growth step-by-step, developing a low carbon economy. Saving and effectively using every resource.*

- Building a democratic, lawful, consensual, fair, and modern society; an advanced culture with rich ethnic characteristics; prosperous, progressive, and happy families; all-round developed people in intelligence, ethics, constitution, mentality, creativity, citizen awareness, and law abidance. Education, training, science, and technology become important development motivations. Protecting political-social stability, the country's independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity.

- Decreasing negative impacts of economic activities on the environment. Reasonably exploiting and effectively using natural resources, especially non-renewable resources. Preventing, controlling, and remedying pollution and environmental degradation; improving the environment's quality, protecting and developing forests, and protecting biologic diversification. Limiting negative impacts of natural disasters, pro-actively and effectively adapting to climate change, especially raise in sea level.

It can be said that *Strategy for Vietnam's sustainable development* is one of the specific executions of the *Strategy for economic – social development* that the Communist Party's document proposed.

3-National goal program about sustainably decreasing poverty *from 2011 to 2020*

Although having achieved many successes in decreasing poverty in recent years, Vietnam still currently has to face the risk of becoming

poor again and the increasing social gap caused by poverty. Therefore, sustainably decreasing poverty has been defined as a focus of *Strategy for economic – social development 2011-2020*. This is also one of the most important programs in the national goals programs system with wide coverage and is implemented through multiple periods. *The general goal* of this program is to improve and raise the living conditions of the poor step-by-step, starting with mountainous areas and minorities, creating significant and comprehensive change in poor areas, closing the gap between suburbs and rural areas, between regions, ethnics, and groups of residents.

The specific goals of the program are:

a) Aiming to raise per capita income of poor households by 3.5 times; reduce the percentage of total poor households nationwide by 2%/year, except for impoverished districts and communes that need to reduce the rate by 4%/year according to poverty scale in each period.

b) Living conditions for the poor will be significantly improved, in healthcare, education, culture, domestic water supply, and housing; basic social services will be more easily accessible for the poor.

c) The economic – social infrastructure in impoverished districts, communes, hamlets, villages, and especially impoverished villages will be focused on comprehensively investing according to new countryside criteria, starting with essential infrastructures such as traffic, electricity, and domestic water supply.

This program especially focuses on areas: a) Impoverished districts; b) Impoverished communes (including especially impoverished communes of minor ethnics, mountainous regions, coastal regions, islands, and security zones.); c) Especially impoverished hamlets and villages of minor ethnics and mountainous regions.

About the content: The program includes policies below:

i/ Policies to help reduce general poverty: a) Supporting production, job training, job-creating, and income raising for the poor;

b) Supporting education and training; c) Supporting healthcare and nutrition; d) Supporting providing housing for poor households in rural and mountainous areas, as well as poor elderly and disabled households; e) Supporting the poor to access legal consulting services; f) Supporting the poor to take in culture and information.

ii/ Policies to help reduce particular poverty: a) Poor households and minor ethnic groups; poor households, poor people living in impoverished districts, communes, especially impoverished hamlets and villages that can benefit from documented prioritizing policies. Particular act for areas (frontiers, islands, etc.) and objects: minor ethnic groups, children from poor households, people from areas affected by natural disasters, etc.; b) Continue and expand on implementing prioritizing policies on impoverished districts and communes; c) About the source of capital: National goals programs, programs, and projects that use government bonds, ODA funds, and other programs have to focus their activities and resources, prioritizing investing in impoverished districts and communes to speed up poverty reduction in these areas.

4- National goals program about building the new countryside from 2010 to 2020 on June 4th, 2010, re-approved as the National goals program about building the new countryside from 2016 to 2020, August 16th, 2016 (1600/QĐ-TTg, August 16th, 2016)

National goals program about building the new countryside is a comprehensive program about developing economy – society, politic, and national security, executed nation-wide, based on the spirit of the 7th Conference Act, Central Committee of Vietnam, term X about agriculture, farmers, and countryside. *General goals* of the program are: Improving people's lives mentally and material-wise; having suitable economic – social infrastructure; having suitable economic structure and production organization forms, attaching agricultural development to industrial and service development; attaching rural development to suburb development; having a democratic, equal, sustainable, and

rich-in-ethnic-characteristics rural society; protecting the biological environment; maintaining national protection, security, and order.

The program has *11 basic contents*, including **1**. Projecting building the new countryside; **2**. Developing economic infrastructure; **3**. Developing production attaching to restructuring agriculture, restructuring the rural economy, raising income for people; **4**. Decreasing poverty and securing society; **5**. Developing education in rural areas; **6**. Developing basic healthcare and improving care for the health of people in rural areas; **7**. Improving the cultural life of people in rural areas; **8**. Getting environmental cleanliness in rural areas, as well as remedying and solving pollution and improving the environment in trade villages; **9**. Improving the quality and enhancing the Communist Party, administration, and political – social organization's role in building the new countryside; improving and raising the quality of public administration; ensuring and raising the accessibility to the law of people; **10**. Maintaining national protection, security, and rural social order; **11**. Improving the ability to build the new countryside, as well as supervising and evaluating the implementation of the program; communicating about building the new countryside.

Building the new countryside program tightly attached to *a Sustainably decreasing poverty program*. These are the 2 key points in the Communist Party and the government's projects and policies towards rural areas, farmers, the poor, impoverished areas, and areas with minority ethnic groups. In 2018, both national goals programs about building the new countryside and sustainably decreasing poverty completed the proposed goals, exceeding some quotas that Congress, Central Committee, and the government assigned, contributing an important part in the result of completing 12 economic – social quotas of the whole country. However, according to the government's judgment, the gap of the results of building the new countryside and sustainably decreasing poverty between different areas and regions are

still fairly high, as well as the rate of becoming poor again in some areas, the gap of the accessibility to basic services between different regions and between resident groups has not been narrowed, especially in the mountainous North West region, Tay Nguyen region, and West of central Vietnam[1].

5- The national strategy to develop housing until 2020, with 2030 vision, and housing issues for low-income people

Housing is an exceptionally important issue to ensure people's survival conditions. The Communist Party and the State of Vietnam believe: "solving the housing issue in the State, the society, and the people's responsibility". In 2011, the Prime Minister established ***the National Strategy to develop housing until 2020, with 2030 vision*** with a lot of important contents that are innovative in both awareness and guiding opinions to motivate social housing development, that is, housing development policy has to be suitable for the development policy of the market economy with socialist direction, therefore, solving housing issue for all resident classes step-by-step.

The national strategy to develop housing requires focusing on prioritizing social housing development, with the State's support to meet the demand of housing of 8 groups of subjects that cannot pay according to the market system. In that, solving the housing issue for people with low income, especially people facing difficulties with accommodation in suburb areas and workers in industrial sites is the most pressing problem.

Right from 2009, the State has established some systems and policies to motivate housing development for students, workers in industrial sites, and people living in cities with low income (Resolution number 18/NQ-CP, April 20th, 2009 and Decisions number 65/2009/QĐ-TTg, 66/2009/QĐ-TTg, and 67/2009/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister)

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1 Lê Phượng, "Building new rural area attaches to sustainable poverty reduction", February 1st, 2019, 10:21 a.m., Online Communist Review, http://www.tapchicongsan.org.vn/Home/PrintStory.aspx?distribution=54032&print=true).

In 2013, the government established Resolution 02/NQ-CP, January 7th, 2013, therefore, giving the 30.000 billion VND credit package with concessional loans to businesses, households, and individuals participating in developing social housing; lending confessionally to people with low income that buy and/or rent social housing; households buying or renting commercial housing with small size and low price (under 1.05 billion VND); loaning to people with low income for renovating and re-building housing with low interest, with long loaning term up to 15 years, etc. Also in the same year, the government established Decree number 188/2013/ND-CP about developing and managing social housing, with multiple favorable systems and policies for businesses, households, and individuals participating in developing social housing, such as: exempting land-using fee and land rent, exempting and reducing value-added tax (VAT) and profit tax; investors can have 20% housing and land fund to sell with the market price to compensate for the expenses, which helps to reduce the selling and renting price of social housing; using future housing to mortgage loans; if firms that are using workers participate in workers and labor's housing investments, they can include housing fees into production cost to support housing for people with low income that are facing accommodation difficulties.

In 2014, the Ministry of Construction hosted and coordinated with other relating ministries and industries to consult with the government researching to develop and submit *the Law of Housing* to the Congress with many important contents, including regulations about social housing development policy. The Ministry of Construction presented the Congress the draft, which later became Resolution number 100/2015/NĐ-CP about developing and managing social housing, established by the Congress.

The results of the policy mentioned above are:

About institution:

The legal document system, policy structure about management and urban development, housing development, and real estate trading,

especially policies about social housing development and management are being changed, complemented, and improved. *The Law on Housing 2014* (replacing the Law of Housing 2005) approved in XIII Congress, 8th meeting term, November 25, 2014, determined the goal of developing housing needs to ensure that it will create the environment and favorable conditions for developing two types of housing, including commercial housing and social housing. The Law of Housing 2014 specified preferential structure and clearly defined the responsibilities of relating institutions in developing social housing to serve people that are facing housing difficulties and cannot pay according to market structure…

However, solving housing problems for people with a low income during 2012-2013 was still sluggish and ineffective; therefore, the government has some institutionalized policy solutions to motivate social housing development, contributing to easing difficulties in business production and supporting the market. To housing in general and social housing specifically, Resolution number 02/NQ-CP, January 7th, 2013 and Resolution number 61/NQ-CP, August 21st, 2014 have opened concessional credit capital source in time for businesses participating in developing social housing, supporting administrative procedure reformation, adjusting business production activities, converting and adjusting project framework for real estate's businesses to sell inventories, and also adjusting housing products framework to suit the market's demand, etc. It created a condition under which housing issues of many low-income households in the society were solved. The result is *the increasing quotas of the average area and housing quality*. Besides, the solutions for the real estate market's difficulties have been executed along with implementing *the National Strategy to develop housing 2013-2016*, and they achieved positive results both theoretically and realistically[1].

1 Until 218, the country finished 184 projects of social housing for workers in suburb areas and industrial sites, including 84 projects for people with low income (about 33,400 houses); 100 projects of housing for workers (about 41,000 houses); 89 projects of housing for university students. Some social housing projects are

However, Vietnam is still facing problems in developing housing:

Firstly, the forms and structures used to mobilize financial resources for developing housing, especially social housing, have not met realistic demand and still rely on concessional loans and support from state funding.

Secondly, the land fund for investing in building social housing in big cities is still limited, especially in favorable areas. Some regions still have not had specifically required land fund for developing social housing. The lack of suitable housing for people with low income is still common. The implementation of housing development support programs for low income and poor households in some regions is slower than the timeline.

Thirdly, the administrative procedure in investing, building, and managing city and housing development investment projects, although reformed and shortened, is still time-consuming and complex for investment preparation and implementation.

The housing policy for low-income people in Vietnam can be said to be comprehensive but "The housing development program for people with low income in cities and workers in industrial sites" has not

large scale with a good model. Recently, regions all over our country continue to execute 207 projects for workers in suburban areas and industrial sites, including 135 projects for people with low income (about 81,000 houses), 72 housing projects for workers in industrial sites (about 88,000 houses). Some large-scale housing projects for workers are executed in Binh Duong Province by Becamex IDC Corp with 64,000 houses, in Dong Nai Province by IDICO Corp with 10,000 houses. Ho Chi Minh City finished 30 housing projects for workers in suburb areas and industrial sites, including 12 projects for people with low income (about 3,800 houses); finished 18 housing projects for workers (about 3,700 houses). In 2017, Ho Chi Minh City Hall established a Plan for developing and managing social housing from 2016 to 2020, in which, the set goals until 2020 will be building about 20,000 social housing, 35,000 concentrated accommodations for workers and laborers in industrial sites, and 10,000 concentrated accommodations for university students.

thrived or broken through so far. The core limits and inadequacies in building policies about housing for people with low income in suburb areas and workers in industrial sites, according to some professionals, lie in some points: (i) Not having a correct awareness about the "strategic range" of housing issue for people with low income in the national development strategy; therefore, the policy was built with not enough depth to motivate housing development for people with low income; (ii) Not yet creating a beneficial harmony between low-income people (with accommodations), businesses (with-profits), and the State (economic growth and social security); (iii) Still having "give-and-take mechanism" burden; therefore, neither low-income people nor businesses can access the State's policies[1]. The problems mentioned above require some solutions, which:

**About perception*: need to realize the importance of social housing and housing for people with low income. To balance the benefit between people with low income (buying houses), investors (investing in building and selling/leasing houses), and the State (establishing supporting policies), the "concession level" needs to be re-calculated to create a win-win strategy that is acceptable for every party, on the foundation of a realistic testing model instead of theoretical calculations, for both "house for sale" and "house for leasing", so that there is a basis for "adjusting current policy", creating "break-through policy", developing social housing and housing for people with low income.

* *About institution and mechanism*:

Continue *improving the institution*, complementing, and adjusting the mechanism of social housing and housing for workers development policy to fit the current situation. The Ministry of Construction hosts and co-ordinates with other relating ministries and industries to continue researching and improving the institution, complementing the mechanism and policies to motivate social housing development,

1 See: Nguyễn Đăng Sơn, "Solutions, mechanisms and policies on social housing for low-income people", *Architectural Review*, number 03 – 2016.

ensuring that it is suitable for the country's socio-economic conditions and each group's payment capabilities. Focusing on motivating developing housing for workers in industrial sites and people with low income in suburb areas: complementing the mechanism and policies that *encourage building* social housing for leasing and low price commercial housing; improving the mechanism and policies about credit relating to social housing, financial resources supporting Vietnam Bank for Social Policies, Housing savings bank models, credit co-ops, etc.; *complementarily establishing protocols and standards* about social housing, *researching, applying technical science, and using new materials, etc*. to decrease the price for social housing, structure suitable housing, and ensure technical infrastructure conditions, as well as essential social infrastructure for healthcare, education, and culture in social housing building projects.

About the mechanism: need to completely move from "give-and-take" mechanism to "service" mechanism, need to be "citizen-friendly" and "business-friendly"; therefore, the people and businesses can easily access the State's concessional policies for social housing. However, to eliminate the possibility of arising "unofficial fees" that create negativities, corruption, and quickly solved procedures, it is essential to use E-Government, Geographic Information System (GIS), and Land Information System (LIS) in land management.

** About organizing implementation*

People's Committees in different regions and cities under the jurisdiction of the Central Committee need to create a favorable environment about land and administrative procedures, etc. to mobilize the companies that use a large number of workers, and the people to participate in investing in social housing development, especially housing for workers in economic areas, industrial sites, and local industrial complex, as well as improving the quality of social housing.

People's committees in different regions and cities under the jurisdiction of the Central Committee need to build, adjust, and complement *the Local housing development based on the Law of*

Housing program. Including housing development quotas, especially social housing and housing for workers development quotas, into the 5-year economic – social development plans and annual plans. Reviewing and complementing urban planning and industrial site planning, ensuring enough land funds for developing social housing. Arranging adequate resources to invest in essential infrastructure such as schools, kindergartens, healthcare facilities, communal areas, culture, and sports, etc. included in and excluded from social housing projects, especially in areas crowded with workers and laborers. It is necessary to use 20% of the money collected from land funds in new suburb projects and commercial housing with the area under 10-hectare projects submitted by investors and supported by local budget to invest in developing social housing for workers in industrial sites, the poor, and people with low income in suburb areas according to the regulations[1]

Conclusion

To excellently solve the relationship between developing the economy and society to ensure achieving socialist goals, Vietnam has had break-through awareness and strong actions represented decisively and clearly that economic development has to attach to ensuring socialism and social progression. On the action aspect, Vietnam established and implemented comprehensive policies and measures with the hope to coordinately and effectively act to quickly reach the social development goals – one of the characteristics of socialism that Vietnam is pursuing. In reality, Vietnam gained several achievements that are recognized internationally. However, Vietnam is still facing many challenges, which require flexibility and sensitivity in adjusting the policies and organizing the implementation. This is also the core of harmoniously solving the relationship between economic development and social development that Vietnam adheres to in documents about the path of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

1 Nguyễn Trọng Ninh, "Developing social house for workers and low-income people: some results and major tasks", http://www.tapchicongsan.org.vn/Home/Van-hoa-xa-hoi/2018/48844/Phat-trien-nha-o-xa-hoi-cho-nguoi-lao-dong-nguoi.

SOME QUESTIONS POSED FOR VIETNAM FROM THEORIES OF ETHIC AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Nguyen Anh Tuan[1]

Introduction

Equity is the desire and core value in the social life of humanity at all stages of its historical development. The problem is that with the market economy whether who must have the main responsibility to ensure social justice: the market or the state? Markets ensure equity in a special way that promotes individual freedom, competence, and creativity which inevitably leads to inequality in society in many aspects. Resulting from policies to regulate the market and social security, the state partly guarantees social equality, but this also can compromise equity in the sense that the output must be corresponding to the input maximally.

Thus, there is a series of contradictions start to arise. First, a contradiction occurs between equity and economic efficiency: if equity is focused on, business efficiency will decrease as well as people work a lot

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who have good productivity, or quality having a large amount of capital or brainpower and not getting a fair share will reduce their motivation and contribution; another contradiction arises between economic growth and cultural development and environmental nurturing; between equity and equality; between investment and accumulation; ... In fact, all of them are transformations of the more embracing conflict in human life: the conflict between production and consumption. This paper draws several approaches that can reconcile them in today's Vietnam towards better equity.

Building an effectively integrated modern market economy in Vietnam requires asserting a certain number of values and motivations, of which the most important is respect for ownership and freedom in business, mutual trust, personal responsibility, rule of law. In that system of values, the category of justice necessarily is placed at a central place. Also, the study of this category is very urgent for Vietnam today because the economic system of Vietnam is undergoing a profound and dynamic transition which is related to fundamental changes in its structure and institutions.

"Justice" plays a role as a central category of economic ethics which is the most concentrated reflection of the most important hopes and aspirations of many generations of people which towards social balance in the context of conflict of interests that always arise due to the lack of resources. They are the ideal, the highest value, the motivation that motivates people to act. According to Kozlovxki, it is necessary to understand "justice is the practice of moral norms in human social relations, such as the position and what reality gives to each person just as they are entitled to"[1].

It is necessary to consider "justice" as the number of moral norms, on which each individual's well-being depends fundamentally on their realization. Maybe justice just becomes redundant in a world while

1 P. Kozlovxki, *Principles of ethical economics* (V.N. Belova translated from German), Green Peterburg, 1999, p. 135.

it's all too full. However, in a society that is still lacking, the issue of realizing the principles of equity is always at the heart of social relationships as well as scrutiny from all classes. One can share the lacking, but not accept the injustice, as Ho Chi Minh once said: "Do not afraid of lacking, just afraid of unfairness". Therefore, the study of justice is essential because of its role in the formation of the social value system and its influence on economic development processes.

1. Overview of the concept of fairness's history

Equity which is one of the major moral issues has always been the object of thought of thinkers of all ages. Since ancient times, people have been talking about justice, hence the intention of this concept has changed in different historical periods. The concept of justice has progressed from a religiously colored understanding to a philosophical general understanding, then to a particular economic understanding. Also, the system of factors, such as the special historical circumstances, the interests of classes, and also the thinkers' attitudes toward fundamental values that also influence the connotation of the notion of justice. But even in the approach of economics, the most important thing is still a social opinion. Nowadays, no individual can arbitrarily judge this economic behavior or other whether they are fair or not, because that assessment is always under the authority of broad public opinion.

But if we only consider the aspect of purely economics - philosophy, to evaluate economic behavior as fair or not need to be based on the compatibility or not between the economic behavior evaluated with the dominant mode of production. If there is a match, then from a behavioral economic perspective it is considered as justice.

K. Marx stated: "The righteous (fair - *author*) nature of the transactions that take place between the people in charge of production is that such transactions are born by relations of production which is a natural consequence. The legal forms in which these economic transactions manifest as agreed-upon acts between the interested

parties, as expressions of their common will, and as agreements but the state can force each signatory to enforce legally, - those legal forms, because they are just forms, it is impossible to decide the content of those transactions. They just say that content. That content is righteous (fair) as far as it is appropriate to the mode of production, as far as it is appropriate to the mode of production. The content is ill-gotten (injustice) if it conflicts with the mode of production. In the stage of capitalist production, slavery is ill-gotten, just like a deception of the quality of goods"[1].

Such a theoretical basis and methodological thesis were confirmed by history as soon as humans appeared. Primitive people know the principle of equal return, as shown at least by the phrase "blood debt paid in blood, life must pay life". That is the archetype of justice. The earliest conceptions in history about justice tend to be equal. According to B.F. Porsnhev, the norm of economic activity at the dawn of humanity is the act of evenly dividing all the output of labor: the collectivity of the primitive economy is not at all in the arrangement of the position of the hunters in the pursuit of beasts, not also in the rules of division of hunted animals… but in the maximum treatment and gift of one person to another. Giving, hospitality, and consecration are the main forms of product exchange in societies with self-sufficient economies. "Giving" is already the norm of relationships[2].

E.V. Davidovich very subtly observed that "Along with the notions of peace and work, freedom and equality, charity and happiness, justice has also joined the number of ideals chosen by history such as value can fully satisfy human needs"[3]. In ancient Greek philosophy, justice took a major place because the thinkers of that period exalted human personality, and economic processes were considered as part of the

1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 25, part 1, National Political Publishing House, 1994, p. 518

2 B.F. Porsnhev, *On the beginning of human history*, Moscow, 1974, p. 405.

3 See V.E. Davidovich, *Social justice: Ideal and working principle*, Moscow, 1989, p. 5.

overall task of consolidating the state into the state, where the outcome of settlement depends immediately on the ability of citizens to combine private with the public interests.

In the theory of Plato and Aristotle, justice expresses itself as virtue and the basic principle that builds society. According to Plato, "justice is in such a way that each person has his or her part and also performs his/her duties – obligations"[1]. "The division of labor, cooperation, and hierarchy (society) are all based on positions that are most ideally determined by the world of ideas that dominate the world of the temporary predetermined emotional objects"[2]. The ideal state can only be built on the basis of justice - who is in his place which is considered by Plato to be the principal principle of the emotional world.

For Aristotle, equity is a central category of social awareness. Because of following faithfully to the principle of "golden midpoint", he wrote: "Justice is a state between redundancy and deprivation, between more and less. The midpoint between them is equity, the midpoint is their equality"[3]. Aristotle divided justice into two categories: distributive justice requires equality in a free exchange of wealth; and fair repayment applies in the redistribution of wealth among equal citizens follow the rule of law.

Augustine was interested in economic problems and took a rather careful approach to them in medieval times in Western Europe. According to him, the concept of "justice" is the master concept because it defines the connotations of the concepts such as "fair distribution", "affordable price", "strict reward and punishment"... He said that only what is fair is legal. Both the entire social life and the whole system of economic relations, according to him, must comply with legal standards reflecting the principle of equity. The citizens of a society are bound by relations

1 Plato: *State* / *Selected Works* includes 3 volumes, volume 3, Moscow, 1971, p. 206

2 Excerpted from: E. N. Kamuchkova ..., *Economic thinking: Philosophical premise*, Moscow, 2012, p. 18.

3 Aristotle, *Selected Works* include 4 volumes, Moscow, 1976 - 1983, volume 3, p. 325.

of jurisdiction and justice. The same is true in economic relations. In economic life, Augustine also divided into two types of justice like Aristotle: the first is trade justice that regulates the relationship between at least two people in the purchase and sale of goods and all other material possessions; the second is distributive justice that regulates the relationships between the whole and its parts. "If exchange equity is based on the principle of pure arithmetic mean, then distributive equity - on a proportional balance ... Distributive equity is the fact that each person receives a portion of his or her dedication"[1].

However, in the context of a religious worldview, both before and after Augustine, people only dare to hope for absolute justice in the afterlife. As Russell writes: "Christians claim that the existence of God is necessary to prove justice in society. In the part of the galaxy that we know of, there is only immense injustice; typically those who are upright often suffering, while the bad ones succeed and they cannot know why the majority fail; but if they want to let justice dominate the planet, then they need to envision life in the afterlife, where the balance of life doesn't happen here, on earth, eventually will be restored. Thus, the Christians claim that God exists and there is also a need for heaven, hell, so that in the end, justice can prevail"[2].

In short, since ancient times there have been concepts about the equality of all people before God and of the inevitable domination of social justice. These are also key features of non-local religious theories and movements long before the peasant revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe. But these revolutions associated with the demands of will and justice, with the goodwill of bureaucrats and government, with the consideration that "all are equal". Having liberty and the right to demand fairness has satisfied many people.

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1 E. N. Kamuchkova, *Economic thinking: Philosophical premise*, Moscow, 2012, p.159.

2 B. Russell, *Why am I not a Christian?*, Moscow, 1987, p. 104.

However, to come to a modern-day understanding of justice, humanity must also go through the concept of the right to use management tools and influence. Spinoza, for example, asserted that justice or injustice can only be accomplished by and "expressed in the state"[1]. That is why the theory of justice from the beginning of the modern era has gradually shifted from the field of religious ethics to the rule of law philosophy, and then moved into economic theory.

In the process of forming market relations, economics has gradually separated from ethics, studies of equity give way to research on economic efficiency. The "invisible hand" theory of A. Smith has proposed a new understanding of the economy and the market as an automatic regulation mechanism: humans act only as a screw of a system of operating machines that depends on the person's will. Man acts not by voluntary choice, but only as a response to external changes, so all human actions are not governed by moral judgment as known as the ethic. Everything is related to freedom of action, choice of purpose, and so everything related to equity is out of the moral sphere to move somewhat to the realm of political economy.

The spontaneity of the market mechanism seems to have ensured the optimal functioning of the entire economic system. The problem was that A. Smith had raised the idea from the outset that optimization (i.e. maximizing general well-being) should be implemented into the market mechanism. He wrote: "Each special person, while only focusing on his interests, is driven by the invisible hand towards a goal that is completely out of their intention… While pursuing their interests, they are more likely to promote social interests more effectively than when they intentionally do so"[2]. It must be seen that the optimal state of the economic system causes the improvement of one individual's well-being which inevitably leads to the deterioration of another. The balance of the economy requires constant effort: meanwhile, the consumer buys

1 B. Spinoza, *Selected Works*, volume 2, Moscow, 1957, p. 299.

2 A. Smith, *Theory of Emotional Equity*, Green Peterburg, 1895, p. 112

the cheapest and best product, the producer maximizes their profits. That is the optimal state of the market since each person still takes care of their interests whereas they also promote mutual balance. This expresses Adam Smith's conception of justice. Almost all people often perceive equity plays a role as the most important social institution, a standard of human behavior. A. Smith writes: "The existence of society is impossible unless people follow to a certain extent the laws of equity because there cannot be any social relationship between people if they do not restrict to harm each other, then these statements will be seen as real principles that excite us to respect the laws of justice because of fear of being punished for violating them"[1].

This thought in the current approach has almost the following meaning: a social choice which determines the nature of the socio-economic system, depends not only on economic and political factors, but it is also on ethical reasons. The notions that have been affirmed in people's consciousness about justice also characterize the basic structures and moral principles of society. And if A. Smith still had a little lingering on to regard justice as one of the key moral emotions when he still called for people to turn to good, then the category of equity would later become the central category of economic theories about social prosperity. The effectiveness and efficiency of market combinations are not only an indicator of equity, as they allow discrimination of certain social values and purposes. State-controlled intervention becomes an economic necessity and a guarantee of social morality. Justice is understood as minimal virtue, mainly not doing anything bad to others. In competition, itself market will create equity.

2. The economic content of the concept of equity

In the framework of economic theory, the category of equity was completed in the first half of the 19th century in the works of J. Mill, Keynes, and other economists. The pioneer of utilitarianism is I.

1 A. Smith, *Theory of Emotional Equity*, Green Peterburg, 1895, p. 112.

Bentham (1748 - 1832) who affirmed that "the reasonable observance of one's interests is the criterion of moral behavior". His viewpoint is sometimes seen as very close to the "egalitarian" one, but in fact, he allows for a great difference (gap) in society between the richest and poorest members. If everyone is the identity in terms of their interests and desires, the principle of utility becomes the equalization principle. It is consistent with philosophical utilitarianism, J. Mill writes: "… the peculiar nature of man is his ability to savor the satisfaction of witnessing or creating the happiness of others. Social goodness becomes the highest form of personal goodwill. In that way utilitarianism turns economics into universal morality, attributing different motivations to the empty formula of goodness"[1]. In his critique of the mechanical approach to the analysis of economic phenomena, Mill introduced a new kind of moral and ethical interrelationship which are relationships depend on human thinking: "It is unlike the laws of production, the laws of distribution are somewhat created by man, meanwhile the method of distributing wealth in each society depends on customs and popular customary laws in it"[2]. Because of applying causal analysis to the realm of free human acts, Mill thus laid the basis for an approach that would later develop into the view that: human behavior is conditioned by external factors, in other words, there are objective causes, but it is different from the natural world, where the relationship between cause and effect is tightly determined, then man can choose options of different action. The breadth of choice depends on the strength of the individual's will, while the direction of choice depends on the individual's value scale or preferences - on the standard of morality.

"The conditions on which the power of social institutions governing the distribution of wealth must depend, as well as the way in which it affects distribution by different standards of behavior, what society has can be relied upon to perform reasonably that is also the subject

1 Quoted from P. Kozlovxki, *Capitalist Ethics. Evolution and Society*, Green Peterburg, 1996, p. 42.

2 J. Mill, *The Basics of Political Economy*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1980, p. 106.

of scientific research like any laws of nature"[1]. The analysis of the economic consequences of the various distributional laws established by the human will that based on their own opinions or speculations has become the task of the economic theory of distribution.

Economists of the late 19th to early 20th centuries began to divide economic science into constituent parts to separate pure theory from practical problems. As noted by J. Keynes in his work *The Objects and Methods of Political Economy*, political economics defines ethics as the responsibility of all individuals operating in the economic system and such as the ideal system of production, the most compatible distribution with equity and virtue requirements.

Consequently, in the process of forming theoretical economics that the category of justice has been "removed from the scope" of pure theory clearly which leaves it as the central concept of practical analysis. Economic reality spins very far around because of the unequal boundaries between costs and benefits across different social classes and people, hence the moral aspect is obscured. By the way, there must be a desire to reflect on economic relations from the perspective of equity.

Thus, it should be seen that the transition from traditional society to society with the market economy has also changed the way of doing justice. If justice depends on the morality – morality in traditional societies and customs of the people (theocracy and the supremacy to determine prices, interest rates, whether wages are so established as justice or not), while people's social position determines the level of reward and income, then "degree of income determines the social position in the market economy"[2] of each person.

If someone wants to understand the evolution of views on the economic content of justice, he must see that a market economy was formed in a period when the concept of "natural rights" was still

1 J. Mill, *The Basics of Political Economy*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1980, p. 106.

2 I.I. Agapova, *Economics and Ethics: Interaction Aspects*, Moscow, 2002, p. 100.

widely accepted. The classical political economists argue that justice in society needs to be done naturally in the process of market competition. Therefore, according to A. Smith as well as Ricardo, it is the market under fierce competition that establishes a fair reward for each factor involved in the production. This mechanism also influences the prosperity theory built by V. Pareto (the Italian economist) in the late 19th century: individual incomes are determined by the maximum output from factors of production that are individually dominated whereas man maximizes his prosperity within the means he has. Personal interests force producers to use the factors of production they have to maximize profits, that is, to create more value than their competitors. That forces the optimal use from the perspective of the social wealth of reserves. In that framework of concept, equity is done in the process of competition and forming market prices, so the justified approaches to trade justice and market prices have all been developed.

Many authors have given justice a special mission that it must be the driving force behind economic activity with benefits. According to them, only the state can realize the ideals of creating a just society by building legal provisions based on ethical requirements.

The development of institutional economics in the science of economics has allowed in a new way to look at the selection process based on a scale of values, and ultimately on the category of equity. From this point of view, equity as a socio-economic institution (set of rules) becomes an effective factor of the economy. In this context, the problem of realizing practical policy translates into choosing how to create the institution to ensure that the distribution structure matches the requirements of distributive justice in the best way. Equity meeting institutional requirements must include the following: formal rules; norms and informal mechanisms that perform the functions of both rules and norms. Structural institutions create repetitive interactions between economic actors, alleviating the search for alternatives. Besides, the quality and effectiveness of the institutional environment depend directly on how well economic relations comply with the principles of

equity. A fair economic institution is the set of rules and instruments that restrain economic behavior. Such a just social institution is an organized form of regulation and order of social life and human behavior in the economic field.

From the second half of the 20th century, the issue of distributive equity has been studied by famous people such as the American modern philosopher J. Rawls (1921 - 2002). His approach assumes that even more equality must be valued, otherwise, someone's condition will worsen compared to others. This approach assumes distributive equity in which economic inequality is allowed only when it provides the opportunity for the poorest members of society to attain higher standards of living. Nozik proposes a theory of equity requirements based on the fact that each individual has three core rights: the right to bodily security, unlimited freedom, and inviolability of property. Equity is realized through ownership, only if the owner obtains it by the lawful act. Hayek investigates the issue of social justice within the framework of business ethics related to the role of the state and civil society in realizing the principles of equity by both maximizing the freedom right of people and minimizing management focus in the hands of the state.

In the economic sense, the field of exchange is the realization of an impartial institution as a whole of norms and rules, once it is due to it that the interaction of the economic mechanism is based on the division of labor and system of economic relations. The logic is arranged from several successive stages. The interaction process has formed a system of social values and economic priorities. Each time determining the qualifications and structure of the division of labor determines the combination of different forms and exchange mechanisms. If the existing division of labor structure in society is not supported by compatible forms of exchange, it will not guarantee efficiency.

Thus, economic arguments have raised many notions of equity. Here, it is possible to conclude four main points of view, ranked in descending order of economic equality:

1/ Average - equal: all members of society receive the same share of wealth;

2/ Utility - maximizing the benefits of all members of society;

3/ Maximize the benefits of the weakest members of society (J. Rawls);

4/ Market - the market's operating costs are compatible with the greatest justice.

The fourth concept is not at all inclined towards linking equality in distribution with equity. This concept asserts that the operating costs of a competitive market are fair since it rewards those who are more capable and more diligent. Therefore, if society achieves a level of guaranteed prosperity that is compatible with the competitive equilibrium, the distribution of economic benefits will be considered fair. Any violation of competition conditions, whether it is the monopolization of state intervention, is considered too unfair.

In the framework of the market perspective, a principle of limited equality also exists for the distribution of incomes between producers and workers. In perfect (healthy) competition, the returns from factors contributing to production such as labor and capital are made under a universal principle: the greatest productivity. That ensures not only maximum efficiency but also ensures fair wages and rewards. The reconciliation from the factors that match the greatest productivity has got the standard function, but it is only in a narrow sense. In cases where a disagreement arises between the market prices of the factors and the maximum product in its manifestation of value that leads to a violation of the principle of justice. It is judged in the sense of Non-classical theory as the phenomenon of "exploitation" in incomplete competition conditions.

It should be added that the market view allows for a fundamental inequality in the distribution of income and that, the more equal the distribution will be the more unfair to the active economy which is more

dynamic and active. However, it is worth adding that the interrelation between competition and equity is much more complex than it is introduced in the above market view.

Therefore, we would like to suggest a formal standard of justice (optimization approach), whereby every action does not only harm anyone but it also improves the status of someone according to their confirmation which can be considered as justice, and this action should be accepted. Hence, that improvement does not contradict the principle of equity. Because of our country's status with very limited material resources, policy-making which uses them most effectively is building social justice in practice that reduces the gap between rich and poor as well as social inequality. For instance, the case of environmental pollution damage caused by Formosa 2-3 years ago to Central coast fishermen plays a classical example. They need to be respected if they want to use that compensation for any of their purposes, such as: changing their occupations or investing in constructing large ships which capable of living with the job of fishermen to find livelihood as a milestone of national sovereignty at sea. Such policies do not affect negatively either the interests or economic well-being of anyone who is not in the group needs to be supported. However, due to limited resources and ineffective use, perhaps the state has to redistribute by a set of social security policies. According to that, additional resources may be taken from the group of richer people are more affluent, which can lead to resentment among these classes. Because they think it is unfair to them, it leads to a reduction of their motivation for work and dedication.

Thus, there are some implications for Vietnam from the above approach, for example, in this case, the state must do everything to allow society to accept a certain degree of inequality to ensure that the living standards of the poor citizen are improved. However, if the living standards of poor people do not improve significantly, maintaining inequality to save equity is meaningless. The foregoing-mentioned optimization approach may sometimes be not drastic. In that case,

we boldly follow a slightly different approach allowing action to be considered good if it is judged by the beneficiaries that their incremental gains are greater than the sum of the losses for those who suffer the decrease. Of course, priority must also be given to the poor people, but in Vietnam due to all kinds of benefits led to the poor citizen still suffer. The incremental share of the small part of rich people is certainly much larger than the sum lost-part for many poor people. The rich who double their income will have little change in their lives while the poor halving their income, in many cases already standing on the border of life and death.

In general, what the Vietnamese state can do is not new, but still belongs to its social function: first, regulating relationships among different social groups, ethnicities, ages, so on which are different in the community. This state activity is carried out under the principles of social solidarity and social justice. Second, giving to social services to the population: creating a network of educational institutions, health care for the people, the transport and communication system ... The State of Vietnam also has both social functions.

The Vietnamese people strive to build a society of "wealthy people, strong country, just and civilized society". As mentioned in the *Introduction*, in a society where all people are rich, the concept of equity also becomes blurred and little important. But to have rich people, people must be free to do business and must be guaranteed democratic rights. Thus, democracy as a premise, a prerequisite, must be placed first, before the "rich people"; in other words, the market is not the most important factor that makes the people rich and the society more just, but democracy has the largest position in the value scale of modern society.

Conclusion

The purpose of reform in Vietnam is to create a society with an economic structure consistent with the qualitative characteristics. They are determined by the criteria for rational structural modification of

social relations, forms of ownership, investment in production which belong to production business activities. It is therefore very important to have specific approaches, programs, and forms of social change, management systems, and legal assurance of reform processes. And this report has only initially presented both a chronological and a broad range of such approaches.

ECONOMIC EQUITY AND SOME ECONOMIC EQUITY PROBLEMS IN VIETNAM RECENTLY

Nguyen Tai Dong[1]

1. Determining the problem

Before the *renovation* period, the planning economy focusing on creating equitable system with averaging and flattening directions did not help the economy to grow fastly or nicely solved social equity created by poverty and the lack of materials. Through more than 30 years, thanks to renovation policy with democratized economy and globalization, Vietnam has started to create a market system with basic factors and works by its own rules, especially building a more equal environment that are more suitable for international standards, clearer and more favourable for production, business, and economic development. Therefore, Vietnam has got significant improvements in economic growth, along with basic improvements in social equity and equality, especially with effectively implementing the goals of the millenium, along with significant results in hunger elimination and poverty reduction, healthcare, and education.

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However, along with the economic growth, many new problems arise around the solution of social equity in Vietnam recently. The Gini Index partly shows the tip of the iceberg. Social injustice does not only originated from historical legacy, social system, individual abilities, gender, social class, political influence or life opportunities, but also started from economic injustice. On the other hand, economic injustice is the origin of social classification and contradiction. Therefore, economic equity is an important factor affecting social equity implementation. It can also be said that economic equity is not only a component of social equity, but it is also a vital premise in order to solve social equity.

2. Economic equity theory from social equity point of view

From the point of view of international justice and social equity, the United Nations has emphasized on social equity. According to this opinion, although there have been many philosophers discussing about equity before, social equity is a relatively new conception. Eastern or Western philosophers from acient and mediaeval time, even until the Age of Enlightenment, had not seen the need of acknowledging equity or remedying unjustices from the social standpoint. The concept of social equity first appeared in the western political thought and language since the rise of industrial revolution and with it came the development of socialist doctrines. "It (social equity) emerged as an expression of protest against what was perceived as the capitalist exploitation of labour and as a focal point for the development of measures to improve the human condition. It was born as a revolutionary slogan embodying the ideals of progress and fraternity. Following the revolutions that shook Europe in the mid-1800s, social justice became a rallying cry for progressive thinkers and political activists. Proudhon, notably, identified justice with social justice, and social justice with respect for human dignity."[1] Social equity became more and more important, and

1 Department Of Economic And Social Affairs, Division For Social Policy And Development, The International Forum for Social Development "Social Justice in an Open World - The Role of the United Nations", United Nations, New York, 2006, pp. 11-12.

with the separation of science branches, social equity is acknowledged more from economics, politics, and society standpoints as time goes by, instead of from sole philosophy standpoint. "Social justice became more clearly defined when a distinction was drawn between the social sphere and the economic sphere, and grew into a mainstream preoccupation when a number of economists became convinced that it was their duty not only to describe phenomena but also to propose criteria for the distribution of the fruits of human activity."[1] Although acknowledging that the understanding and implementation of social equity of each country varies, depending on specific historical conditions, economic and political situations, cultural traditions, and national mental, etc., according to the opinion of the United Nations, social equity has aspects that are general and standards that must be acknowledged by many countries and international organizations. United Nations Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and International Covenants on Human Right emphasized 3 key fields of equality and equity; those are right, opportunity, and living conditions equity.

The International Forum for Social Development of the United Nations acknowledges that economic equity is a component of social justice. Economic equity in this case is understood as good job opportunities and equitable income distribution for production activities of individuals; therefore, economic equity is an aspect of social equity. Taking a step further in trying to define specific factors in the idea of social equity, the International Forum for Social Development determined 6 main fields of inequality of goods distribution, opportunities, and rights, which are: Inequality of income distribution; Inequality of property distribution; Inequality of job opportunity and paid work distribution; Inequality of knowledge acquirement distribution; Inequality of healthcare services, social security, and environmental safety distribution; Inequality of opportunities with citizen and political participation.[2] According to this opinion, from the approach of 3

1 "Social Justice in an Open World - The Role of the United Nations", ibid, pp.12.

2 "Social Justice in an Open World - The Role of the United Nations", ibid, pp.17-19.

prioritized fields of equality/equity and 6 fields of inequality, the concept of equitable distribution is understood with a wide meaning, covering every aspect of economic, political, cultural, social, and environmental distribution. This is a valuable referential frame when studying about economic equity model.

Beside the opinion of the United Nations, Catholic scholars have brought up the problem of economic equity multiple times. One of the declarations about this matter of the Catholic Church is the Pastoral Letter "*Economic Justice for All*" from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in November, 1986[1]. The letter was written when Reagan was deploying the implementation of freedom policies of Laissez-Faire Capitalism. The United States Catholic Church considered free capitalism against social equity, interdependent spirit, and communal doctrine.

William E. Mumiom, Philosophy and Region professor of Ramapo College, USA, founder of PhilosophyWorks, assumed the Pastoral Letter shows the rules of social equity, with implicit socialist and communist thought nature. He also assumed that the bishops came to these principles because they understood that equity – according to the Scripture – is the delivery of "priority for the poor"; to them, social equity doctrine was summarized in the principles similar to those in Marx's work "from each according to ability, to each according to need" and this principle of the bishops was also a contrast to the thought of American capitalists then. [2]

The priority for the poor is the first breakthrough in economic equity matter in the Pastoral Letter, simultaneously; this is also one of the most important contents of the Catholic social doctrine. The problem in this situation is the discrimination between equity based on

1 United States Catholic Bishops, "Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy",Washington, D.C., 1986.

2 Reference: William E. Murnion, "The Ideology of Social Justice in Economic Justice For All", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 8/1989, pp.847-857.

contribution and equity based on distribution. "The form of equitable principles includes a clause based on the foundation of contribution equity – the responsibility of each individual to contribute to general welfare – corresponding with the clause based on distribution equity – the right of each individual to share the benefits and drawbacks of the society. The disagreement in the opinions about these 2 clauses arises: what is the foundational nature, contribution equity or distribution equity? Therefore, the difference between social equity thoughts can be expressed by the mutual influence among their different concepts of the basis of contribution equity and distribution equity."[1] The foundational conception of distribution which is to base on ability or need affects the distinguishment between socialism and capitalism. According to that way of argument, William E. Murnion presented his understanding of communism's social equity: "Communism (or scientific socialism) assumes, on the contrary, like liberalism, that it is up to everyone to contribute to society whatever each is able to. And rather than supposing that freedom is the condition necessary for achieving equality, communism assumes equality is the condition necessary for achieving freedom. Equality means for both of the socialist ideologies, however, not just equality before the law (as for libertarianism) or equality of opportunity (as for liberalism), but an equality of respect and, indeed, of outcome."[2] Because of that, Murnion assumed the social equity thought in the Pastoral Letter *Economic Justice for All* is also the thought of the socialists. With this understanding, with economic equity, workers will actively participate in economic life, becoming independent, developing, escaping corruption and becoming free, wealthy, remedying inequality and social injustices.

So which principles does economic equity have to follow? Edward J. O'Boyle brought up 3 principles of economic equity, those are:

1 William E. Murnion, "The Ideology of Social Justice in Economic Justice For All", pp. 848.

2 William E. Murnion, "The Ideology of Social Justice in Economic Justice for All", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Volume 8, 1989, page 850.

equivalent principle, distribution equity principle, and contribution equity principle. *First* is the equivalent principle. Equivalent principle states that sellers and buyers in the market, as well as employees and employers at workplace have 2 responsibilities tying both parties. Firstly, they have to trade goods that have the same price. Secondly, they have to bear equivalent burden with the other party. *Second* is the distribution equity principle. The distribution equity principle determines the responsibilities of the superiors to their inferiors. To be specific, distribution equity requires the superiors to distribute benefits and burdens of the group that is under his/ her supervision between members following some general frames the same. It does not mean an absolute equivalence because there can be important differences among inferior employees and it is completely rational to pay attention to those differences. *Third* is the contribution equity principle. Contribution equity principle determines the responsibilities of an individual towards the group in which he/she is a member. In the extent of benefits one receives from the group, that person has the responsibility to maintain and support the group.[1]

Economic equity is an important matter arose from the current economic development process, an equity problem in conomic life. Economic equity is a premise for the market economy with socialist directions to develop fastly, healthily, and sustainably; and on the other hand, the market economy with socialist directions also creates conditions for implementing economic equity.

Economic equity is a specific expression of general equity in economics; it is the economic subjects in the market economy that depend on their resources to compete in order to achieve equity in treatment. The standards to assess economic equity are Procedural

1 Reference: Edward J. O'Boyle, "Principles of Economic Justice: Marketplace and Workplace Applications", Forum for Social Economics, September 2004, Volume 34, pp. 43-60.

justice and Distributive justice.[1] As a business moral type, economic equity is both the ethical foundation for economic development and the ethical premise for social equity, while being a rational mean for human to develop freely and comprehensively. One of the important contents of economic equity under the conditions of the market economy with socialist directions is that economic components have equal opportunity, rights and responsibilities, distributing according to contributing criteria and other social welfare criteria, etc.[2]

K. Marx assumed that human society has to have equity and capitalist society is a society without equity, in which "The more property a worker produces, as well as the power and his product volume increases, the poorer he becomes. The more goods a worker produces, the cheaper the good he becomes. As the value of product *increases*, the value of human *decreases*. Working does not only produce goods, it produces itself and produces the worker with *commodifiable* characteristic, in addition, producing at a rate used for producing general goods."[3] Marx mentioned of economic equity when he asked for implementing equity in production, trading, and distribution. However, from another point of view, although capitalism during Marx's time was so unjust, the amount of total social properties still increased non-stop. There was inequality among individuals but overall, the whole society progressed. Therefore,

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1 A scholar presented 3 principles/ aspects: equivalency principle, distribution equity principle, and contribution equity priciple. See: Robin Archer, *Economic Democracy The Politics of Feasible Socialism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, 2002, pp.61-67.

2 There is a concept relating to economic equity: "Intergenerational Economic Justice"; however, protecting the environment does not directly relate to the main topic; therefore, we will not discuss about it here. In addition, when discussing about equity in the economy, equity in judging is also mentioned by some international scholars. Please refer to Varun Gauri about this issue, Daniel M Brinks edited, "Courting Social Justice - Judicial Enforcement of Social and Economic Rights In The Developing World", Cambridge University Press 2008, pp.vii-xiii. However, in this report, we also have not had the chance to mention about this issue.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 42, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pg 128.

is there a connection or unification between working efficiency and social equity? Or in another way, in the market economy, the higher the working efficiency and the more material there are, the more needs and the more conditions to meet those needs about social equity increase.

The values of economic equity are expressed through its principles: (1) All parties are beneficial: respect and protect democratic, equal, and beneficial premises of economic activity's subjects, as well as asking these subjects to equitably and equally share the benefits, performing duties and taking responsibilities in order to reach the goal of benefits for all; (2) Honesty principle: Honesty has to be a basic moral principle of the society to regulate economic behaviors, suitable for the beneficial requirements of the whole society; (3) Equality principle: equality in economic social regime and relating laws, equality between economic components, etc. (4) Order principle: under the condition of the market economy, all economic activities have to follow specific rules and orders. It requires building a law and policy system to be the foundation of the sequential operation of economic activities, from production, distribution, trading, to consumption, so that there is a favourable environment for the economy to freely develop, as well as for the government to manage and regulate a better operation of the economy. (5) Fixing principle: detecting, fixing, and reorganizing economic behaviors which violate or go against equity principles, bringing economic activities back to the equity values. It is emphasized on the relationship between the government and the market in this situation. Considering from the scope of ethics, the above – mentioned principles meet 2 moral requirements of economic equity: (1) Ensuring the living right of human, especially natural rights of human. (2) Ensuring the freedom of human, especially human's dignity.

3. The opinion of the Communist Party of Vietnam about economic equity

Hồ Chí Minh always emphasized on an important trait of socialism, which is equity among human: "Only socialism can save humankind,

bring people… freedom, equality, humanity, solidarity, and prosperity on Earth"[1] and "Buiding socialism is creating a society without exploitation, hunger, and cold, everyone is prosperous and happy."[2]

The developing direction of Vietnam is "prosperous people, strong countries, democracy, justice and civilization", to sum up in economic aspect is the prosperity, in social aspect is equity and democracy. Meaning that the economy has to grow and everyone can benefit from that growth[3]. However, benefitting from the growth should not be passively receiving the re-distribution from the State or businesses; it should be the participation from the beginning, not only during the harvest process but also in the cultivation process, being equitable in every step and enjoying that equity.

The opinion of the Communist Party of Vietnam is fairly consistent about implementing social equity. VI Congress CPV Documents stated: "Solving an important part of creating jobs for workers and basically ensuring the distribution based on working. Implementing social equity, suitable for our country's specific conditions", "Basically implementing distribution based on working", it means not solely distributing based on working"[4].

VII Congress CPV Documents wrote: "Implementing multiple forms of distribution, mainly considering distribution based on working output and economic effectiveness"[5], "Taking distribution

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1 Hồ Chí Minh. *Complete Works,* Vol. 1, pg. 461.

2 Hồ Chí Minh. ibid*,* Vol. 9, pg 447.

3 XII Congress CPV Documents straight – forwardly evaluated: "On some aspects and fields, a part of the people have not fully and equitably received the result of the renovation". The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, pg 67, 68.

4 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 6th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1987, pg.45.

5 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Platform for national construction in the transitional period to socialism*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1991, pg.10.

based on working as the main form, encouraging enrichment along with eliminating poverty, raising social welfare, suitable for economic development level"[1]. National Representatives VII mid-term Congress asserted: "Distribution based on working is primary, encouraging and adequately treating talents; along with distribution based on contributing capital resources to production and business"[2]. VIII Congress CPV Documents clearly stated: Implementing multiple forms of distribution, considering distribution based on working output and economic effectiveness, along with distribution based on contributing other resources to production – business and distribute through social welfare"[3].

IX Congress CPV Documents stated: "The market economy with socialist direction implements distribution mainly based on working output and economic effectiveness, along with distribution based on capital and other resources contribution to production – business and through social welfare"[4]. XI Congress CPV Documents further developed: "Implementing the system of distribution mainly based on working output, economic effectiveness, as well as basing on the capital and other resources contribution and through social welfare"[5]. XI Congress CPV Documents wrote: "Distribution relationship ensures equity and creates motivation for development; resources are distributed strategically, following the projects and plans for the economic – social development; implementing the system of distributing mainly based on working output, economic effectiveness, as well as the contribution of

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Strategy to stabilize and develop the economy – society until 2000*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1991, pg.9.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 7th Mid – term National Congress,* National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1994, 47.

3 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 8th National Congress,* National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996, pg.92.

4 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 9th National Congress,* National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2001, pg.88.

5 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress,* National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, pg.26

capital and other resources and distribute through social security and social welfare system."[1]

XII Congress CPV Documents of the Communist Party of Vietnam continued to assert that social equity will not be sacrificed for economic growth; instead, it is required to "implement progression, social equity in each step and each development policy. Enhancing the controlling role of the people in economic – social development"[2]. Therefore, when mentioning about improving the leadership ability of the Communist Party, as well as the validity and effectiveness of the State's management of economy – society and enhancement of the controlling role of the people in developing the economy and society, the Documents urgently requires: "the States institutionalize the Communist Party's resolution, build and organize the implementation of laws and policies, ensure that different forms of market become more improved and operate more smoothly, equitably and equally compete and control business monopoly; continue to promote administrative and judicial reformation, and improve investing and business environment"[3]. The Documents also asserted: "With the restructuring of the economy and the implementation of 3 strategic breakthroughs, especially in some of the focus fields, the productivity, effectiveness and competitiveness of the economy have some improvements; ensuring a better harmony among economic growth, progression and social equity, protecting resources and the environment."

XII Congress CPV Documents also had some positive assertions directly relating to economic equity, specifically equity among economic components: "All businesses belonging to economic components, when operating, must go by the market system, are equal and compete under

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress,* National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, pg.74.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, pg.103.

3 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, pg.112.

the laws. Encouraging the promotion of business start – up process. Having policies promoting the development of Vietnamese businesses, both in quantity and quality, truly becoming the core force, leading in the industrialization and modernization. Ensuring the freedom of trading in fields that are not banned by the laws; building, synchronously and effectively implementing post – check system, improving the competition laws, enhancing the transparency towards the States and companies' monopoly, controlling trading monopoly". The role of private economy was emphasized: Improving the encouraging mechanism and policies, creating advantages for a strong development of private economy in most of the economic branches and fields, becoming an important motivation for the economy. Improving the policies supporting small and medium businesses and start-ups. Encouraging forming private economic corporations with multiple owners and private contribution to the States economic corporations."

4. Some shortcomings about economic equity in Vietnam recently

The renovation period has achieved important achievements; however, if considering the favourable conditions nationally and internationally in the last 30 years, some development achievements did not meet the expectations. Recently, economic equity in Vietnam is a hot topic, directly relating to the country's long – term development. Specifically, there are some inequal phenomena among subjects participating in the market. Many businesses still do not have faith in a transparent and equitable policies environment; the lack of democracy, transparency, and equity in approaching funding, social sources, and policy support among economic components still exists, causing the privilege, monopoly and monopolistic position of some businesses, resulting in losing the competing ability of the market and eliminating competitors in an inequal way.

There are some problems about economic equity existing in Vietnam nowadays, considering from the aspect of economic activity. *First*, economic inequity in production is shown through phenomena

such as chaotic production, destroying resources, etc. creating massive consequences, such as many businesses wildly following the market's demands without having enough outside premises to control and constrain in order to protect a health production environment. Many relating issues, such as beneficial groups, producing fake, duplicating goods, etc. seriously affect economic equity. *Second*, economic inequity in distribution is clearly shown through the gap between rich and poor, between regions and areas, between rural and urban incomes, and between different jobs' incomes, etc. *Third*, economic inequality in trading is shown firstly through trading in labor market. Although per capita income increased rapidly during recent years, the ratio of total income of worker over GDP is still low; in addition, there are still many problems about the social status and rights of workers, especially seasonal workers, rural workers in urban areas and industrial areas, and female workers. In good trading aspect, phenomena mainly are inequalities among subjects of eonomic activity, creating specific damage to the operating principles of the market economy; inequality can even create national security issues when there are more and more international investment businesses. *Fourth*, economic inequality in consumption is caused when the society over – consumes. The waste in spending of some unit will damage the rights of the people; along with the difference among consumptions will harm the rights of the disadvantageous people, etc.

Solving the issue of economic equity is an important premise to push social progression and social equity. Economic equity makes everyone become pro-active in equally participating in economic ativities, contributing to ensuring human's living right, especially natural rights of human; besides, ensuring the freedom right of human, especially dignity of human.

5. Some determined problems

Many scholars and international organizations mentioned about economic equity that leans more towards equity in distribution; or

in other words, social equity with significant meaning of distribution equity[1]. However, economic equity is not only equity in distribution. Economic equity needs to also be considered from the points of view of opportunity equity and principle equity. Economic equity is also understood as an environment for everyone and every economic component to participate equally in economic activities, from being legally equal, equal in approaching policies, fundings, credits, lands, etc. With this understanding, under the market economy conditions, the States, apart from playing the role of fixing the disabilities of the market by means of re-distributing assets, it has to create an equitable economic environment to be an inportant premise for social equity. Economic equity is the indispensable condition for the economy to rapidly and sustainably develop, the premise to increase social assets, welfare for everyone, and improving peole's lives.

Economic equity is becoming a more important issue emerging from the process of recent economic development, and is an equity issue in economic life. Economic equity is a premise to implement economic democraticization, as well as letting market economy with socialist direction develop quickly, healthily, and sustainably; conversely, democraticization in the market economy with socialist direction also creates conditions in order to implement economic equity. Economic inequity is also the root of social classification and contradiction. On the contrary, economic equity is one of the ways to solve social equity. Economic equity also needs to be focus on more through the scope of opportunity and principle equality.

After more than 30 years of *renovation*, Vietnam achieved many successes in implementing economic equity, starting to create an equal, healthy, transparent competition environment, specifically contributing to creating motivation for economic growth, as well as national socio – economic development in general. Liberating and developing

1 United Nations, *Social Justice in an Open World The Role of the United Nations.* United Nations, New York, 2006, pp.11-20

production force have created a material foundation for economic equity; the market economy mechanism has created a new thought about economic equity; the macro regulation of the institution of the market economy with socialist direction has protected economic equity values.

Economic equity has had several positive effects on social equity. From the point of morality and ethics meanings, economic equity focus on responsibility, obligation, and economic growth that does not affect the descending generations; ensuring the living right of human, especially natural rights of human; ensuring human's freedom and especially human's dignity. From the scope of human, with the role of totality of social relations, the modality of economic activities expresses the requirements of humanism in economic equity; economic equity breaks the limits and ties of human and motivates human to develop comprehensively. Besides, economic equity in Vietnam recently is not lack of inadequacies in awareness, guidelines, institution, ensuring mechanism, and operating method. Vietnam wants to develop quickly and stably during the hard time in the foreseeable future, and economic equity is a main point that needs to be taken care of and solved.

In order to implement economic equity, simultaneously implementing from various angles is necessary. From institutional angle, the institution has to be suitable for the requirement of production force development, macro regulation has to be effective towards economic equity; strengthen the legal systems in order to effectively implement economic equity. From economic activities angle, it is essential to equalize economic components; economic activities needs to be legitimate, legal, and suitable to objective requirements of economic development and subjective requirements of political direction, moral traditions, and national's cultural values; ensuring reasonable procedure so that economic circles and chains will operate smoothly, benefitting all parties.

Another problem determined is that the main mission of the economic policy is to solve economic or social issues. We believe

that, although economic policy itself aims to grow the economy, it can not abolish social equity purposes, and can even directly contribute in solving social issues or create a premise for different subject groups in the society to pro-actively grow. In other words, economic efficiency does not necessarily create social issues or damage the society, meaning we do not need social policies to make up to the limits of economic policies. However, an economic policy like so can only be under the premise and follow the principles of economic equity, which is also the principle of the market economy with socialist direction.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OWNERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION JUSTICE IN CONDITIONS OF DEVELOPING SOCIALIST-ORIENTED MARKET ECONOMY IN VIETNAM TODAY

Tran Hai Minh[1]

1. "Abolishing private property" as a premise for the realization of social justice on a macro scale

In Marx's thought, an important and indispensable premise for the realization of distributive justice is to realize fairness and equality of ownership, that is to abolish private ownership, establish the public ownership of the major means of production. In *Manifesto of Communist Party*, when emphasizing the role of the capitalist mode of production in promoting the development of the productive forces and creating an increasingly abundant source of wealth for the society, Marx and Engels also pointed out its fundamental weakness of capitalism that is the inequality between a dominant bourgeois minority and the majority of the working class (the proletariats – who own nothing except his labor power). That leads to injustice to the majority of workers in society. That is the majority of people who create a majority of wealth but enjoy

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only a small part of the wealth they created, due to the alienation of the workers from the means of production held by the capitalists. In the capitalist regime, the capitalist private property right is the legal and ultimate right. The law of the bourgeoisie affirms that private ownership is sacred. The workers in capitalist societies have their property rights but they cannot exercise that rights (because he owns nothing except his labor power). Therefore, some capitalists have advised young people: Life is inherently not fair, you just accept it. That reflects the essence of capitalism as an unfair regime, from a macro-level approach, as a social regime, not as a specific business firm practice. In today's conditions, modern capitalism has many changes, but the cause of this inequality and injustice has not been resolved, social justice under the capitalist regime is still bourgeois social justice. That is fairness to the people who have owned the basic means of production, while for the employees, social justice for them is very limited. The bourgeois distribution of wealth based on the principle of private ownership of the means of production (of which the bourgeoisie is the dominant class that possesses the main means of production) cannot bring justice to the working class. Therefore, social justice is done by non-economic methods such as social assistance and social security. The welfare state is an example of this way of realizing social justice. There is a model of the social market economy (as in Germany). It is easy to see that when implementing these equity goals, the seed factors of socialism are increasingly formed in capitalism itself. This is also the dialectic of social development. But if capitalism has not solved the problem of equity, equality of ownership for the means of production, it cannot completely solve the problem of social injustice at the macro level.

Therefore, in *Manifesto of Communist Party*, Marx and Engels most commonly outlined that the communists could write on their flag these words: "Abolishing private property". That is the qualitative difference between socialism and capitalism in terms of the ownership of the means of production. Elimination of the capitalist private property regime is a condition to establish a new social system that is more equal

and fairer. This thought of Marx and Engels still has the methodological orientation value in determining the path to socialism today.

The problem is when the private property regime of capitalism is negated, how will a new relation of production be established? This productive relationship will restore ownership of the means of production for the majority of workers, which is the public property regime for the main means of production. There is a view that when public ownership is exercised, the real owner cannot be determined and economic benefits to the public owner cannot be realized. This is the absolutization of private ownership when thinking that only things owned by a private person can bring benefits to that individual. Many public assets that bring about public interests, managed by the State on behalf of the people, still operate well, bringing benefits to the entire people. Or in the state-owned enterprises belonging to the state economic sector, presenting the public property regime, after deducting the costs, all profits are returned to the state budget for the public benefit. Also, state-owned enterprises produce a wide range of public goods and services that serve all people, not any separate economic sector. That is the factor that shows equity in distribution at the macro level. This cannot be seen from the perspective of an enterprise operating under the market mechanism. Moreover, the state economic sector also ensures the implementation of social justice, especially in difficult areas (remote areas, islands, ...) that the private economic sector cannot or does not want to do, by providing essential services but not high-profit rate, large capital investment but slow capital recovery, by providing important social services for social development such as education and health, even the country's defense. Even capitalist countries have the participation of state-owned enterprises or state non-business organizations (public schools, public hospitals, etc.)

Some people think that the Marxist idea of building a public property regime to replace the private one on means of production as a feature of socialism is outdated because today capitalism has changed a lot and continues to survive. However, the actual development of

modern capitalism shows the existence of the state economic sector and collective economic sector in the heart of capitalism. This shows that the germ of a new regime of ownership (public ownership) was born in the heart of capitalism, but it has not yet become dominant. In these countries, the relations of production are still based on the private property regime. That doesn't mean capitalism will last forever. This view is historical metaphysics because capitalism is not a perfect society, its biggest limitation is inequality and unresolved exploitation within the framework of capitalism. The conflict between the high level and the increasingly socialized nature of the production force and the production relationship based on the private property regime in modern capitalism is still requiring the replacement of the production relationship based on private ownership with a new and more progressive production relationship. Capitalism is continuing to make adjustments to resolve this contradiction. And the more it self-corrects, the more and more its negative factors form in the heart of capitalism.

2. The relationship between the ownership regime of the means of production with distribution justice in the period of transition to socialism in Vietnam today

Vietnam Communist Party has determined that the national path to socialism is transitionally going to socialism without going through the stage of capitalist developement, that is, without the establishment of the dominance of capitalist production relations and the superstructure, but still inheriting the achievements of the productive force, scientific and cultural development that humanity has achieved under capitalism (The document of the Tenth National Party Congress). This means that we do not establish production relations based on the domination of the capitalist private property regime in Vietnam. However, in the transition period, corresponding to the low and not at the same level of production force, the establishment of a complete socialist public property regime is not possible. We must diversify ownership, thereby, form an ownership structure consisting of many forms of ownership, corresponding to many economic sectors, with a socialist orientation.

In addition to all-people ownership, state ownership, and collective ownership, there is also private and mixed ownership. On that basis, there is the state economic sector, the collective economic sector, the private economic sector, and the foreign-invested economy. Currently, the concept of state capitalist economic sector is rarely used, but in our opinion, the corresponding form of mixed ownership between state ownership and private ownership (especially foreign private capital) can be considered as state capitalist economic sector. According to the classics of Marxism-Leninism, the state-capitalist-economy is a form of economic transition to a public economy. However, because we build socialism that has production relations based on the public property regime, in the multi-sector economic structure, the constituents of the public regime need to play a key role. Therefore, the state economic sector plays a leading role, and the state economic sector together with the collective one becomes the foundation of the economy is still a feature of ownership, demonstrating the socialist orientation in the market economy in Vietnam. The economic model in this transition is the socialist-oriented market economy. Such a socialist-oriented multi-sector economic regime has proved appropriate for the development level of the production force, consistent with the transition period in Vietnam today, significantly contributing to economic development and social justice in Vietnam. Not only has Vietnam affirmed the leading role of the public economic sector, but China, with the socialist market economy model, affirms that the public economy is the pillar, besides asserting an important role of the private sector.

The question is how to correctly understand the leading role of the state economic sector, about the role of the private economy in the socialist-oriented market economy? And how does this relate to social equity performance?

An important issue is, when implementing the public property regime, how to promote the role of the owner or promote the role of this public property to ensure the public interest, and to avoid corruption. To do this, we need:

+ Continue to promote the role of the state-owned enterprises that are the pillar of the economy. Strict management and strong promotion of the strength of resources in the state economic sector. Enhancing the fight against corruption in the state economic sector.

+ Promote the role of public resources in economic development. (land and other natural resources, capital, etc.) by assigning competent entities to exercise rights to use and contribute to economic development, through tax, sharing stock, and social policy implementation.

+ Promoting the role of the state economic sector in areas that the private sector does not want to do or cannot do well.

+ Promote the roles of the state economic sector in areas directly related to social justice (social welfare, ensuring social equity in education and health, etc.). The participation of a significant number of public non-business units helps stabilize society, ensuring that important social policies are guaranteed even in low-profit conditions that attract less private investment or are difficult for private investors to participate, or the private sector is not yet eligible to participate.

+ Promote the role of the state economic sector in the implementation of social policies, such as poverty reduction (Program 30A, in which state-owned economic groups are involved in supporting poor localities, is an example).

Thus, when building a new production relationship based on the public ownership regime, at the macro-level, it will create equity in terms of ownership, the basis for social justice at the macro level. Therefore, building a multi-sector economy, with many forms of ownership, many economic sectors, but ensuring the socialist orientation in the field of ownership is still an important prerequisite for equitable distribution in particular and social justice in general in the transition to socialism in Vietnam today.

SOCIAL JUSTICE SEEKING FROM ETHICS AND ECONOMY, ABILITY TO APPLY IN VIETNAM TODAY

Nguyen Thi Tho[1]
Le Cong Su[2]

1. "Social justice" is a human dream or ideal

Right from the moment of being on earth, living in a wild natural state with crude tools of stone labor, people had a sense of "social justice". That awareness is permanent in all communities, large and small, clearly reflected in the myths of many peoples with a happy ending motif, that is, good meets good, evil false evil. Many myths depict the struggle against social injustice, between the social forces representing good and evil. According to the interpretation of "Freudian Psychoanalysis", the myth reflects the collective dream, which is the release of aspirations that are unable to fulfill so they are suppressed.

As human thinking develops, the legendary worldview has been replaced by the religious worldview - which is the reason for the birth of many great religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism,

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and Christianity, Islam ... In the doctrine of religions, the issue of equality and social justice always puts on top priority, not talking about the differences in beliefs, beliefs, and religious status among the ages, social layer, that is, before God, everyone is fair and equal. All religions by different interpretations direct the believers towards the "Holy Land" with fair rewards, that is, the realization of a "social justice", even though it is fair in the meaningful promise. "Compensation for illusion" when people leave the world and return to the afterlife.

The formation of a mythological worldview and a religious worldview is a step in preparing the thought to form a philosophical worldview. Historical development mythology and religion recorded the development of philosophical thinking content and the expressiveness of that content. Through each stage of the development of mythology and religion, ancient people have more and more philosophical thinking. Hegel remarked that myth and religion contained philosophical content, the path from myth and religion to philosophy was the path from paranoid reason to scientific reason, from the form of expression through expression to form expressed conceptually. Thanks to a system of concepts as tools of expression, renaissance philosophers (Desiderius Erasmus, Thomas More, Tomado Campanella ...) reflect the human dream of social justice in two typical works: Utopia (Utopia, 1516) and Civitas Solis (City of the Sun, 1602), founded Humanism.

Thomas More's "Utopia" depicts a society on an imaginary island, which establishes the best common community by ideal institutions, in which the public regime of the means of production is practiced labor product is equally distributed, labor 6 hours a day, leisure time devoted to sports and entertainment, all members of society have equal rights, intellectual work, and foot labor, hands are equally respected. That community lived in a perspective of peace, hatred of war, and oppression.

In Civitas Solis, Campanella describes a happy republic on an unknown island in the waters of La Sonde. Urban dwellers adore the sun

- a reflection of the supreme because the sun is the fire that gives heat and life to all creatures. The city is organized in a pattern inspired by the natural religion, reconciling the sacred providence with the immortality of the soul, but rejecting all dogmas. Through the work, the author also wants to justify the traditional concept of ancestral sin dating back to the beginning of the world - that is the fall of Eva and Adam through disobedience to God. According to Campanella, all sin and evil in life do not start with Adam but by living people, the basic reason is that parents "let go of educating their children" and "poor educators". From the perspective of a radical monk and a politician loyal to the rights of the people, he sees the role of religion in the transformation of human nature, thus proposing the concept "man must be diligent mind with true religion and glorify the author of his life in the application of spirit and obedience to the holy laws"[1].

The basic contents of renaissance humanism can be summed up: 1) The thought of liberating man from social oppression, both physically and mentally. With the motto "I am human, nothing of man is unfamiliar to me", humanism has resisted the enslavement of people by feudalism and the church. Humanitarianism advocate for human rights and personality, criticize foolishness, false asceticism, and stoicism, and condemn the elite of elite philosopher and martyr. 2) Humanism arouses kindness, calls people to love and help each other. With kindness and ideas of freedom, equality, and charity, the renaissance humanists criticized contemporary unjust society, thereby outlining the ideal social model - socialism, there is no oppression, injustice, no more war, no hatred[2].

Although not meeting the wish in practice, the renaissance humanism together with the XVII-XIX century utopia socialism created

1 Bernard Morichere, *Western philosophy from primitive to contemporary*, Culture and Information Publisher, Hanoi, 2010, p. 373.

2 See: Arturo B. Fallico & Harman Shapiro, *The Philosophy of the Renaissance*, Culture and Information Publisher, Hanoi, 2006.

a theoretical premise for K. Marx Founders level, according to which "the history of all societies that existed up until today is only the history of class struggle. Free men and slaves, aristocrats and commoners, landlords and serfs, guild workers and companions, in short, the oppressors and the oppressed, always oppose each other, has conducted a relentless struggle"[1]. That struggle created a driving force for social history to develop towards the building of Communist society, in the first stage, socialism, with social justice as the core value.

To assert the primacy of socialism over privately owned societies about the material produced earlier, in his writings, K. Marx emphasized the problem of social justice. According to him, social justice is first and foremost manifested in the economic field as the foundation and source of all other social justice such as politics, culture, education, and health. Social justice is done according to the principle of "Distribution according to labor", because in socialism due to low labor productivity, after deducting the necessary amounts to maintain production, expanding reproduction as well as ensuring a community's life, "each producer will receive back from society a number of consumer goods equal to the amount of labor he provided after deducting his labor for social funds"[2]. This is the principle of fair distribution because everyone participating in production must have equal rights to participate in the social consumption fund. But realizing that, in terms of socialism, such a fair distribution has not ruled out the fact that one person is richer than the other. Therefore, "if we want to avoid all these shortcomings, the right to say is right to be not equal, not equal"[3]. This situation expresses the lack of the inevitable labor-distribution principle in the period of socialism, where social justice is not identical with social equality.

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1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 4, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 596-597.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 32.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995, p. 33.

Because, according to Marx's inference, while implementing social justice, social equality and justice may not be realized[1].

In the early years of the twentieth century, proletarian international leader V.I. Lenin applied the doctrine of the class struggle of K. Marx to the practice of the Russian revolution, successfully led the Great Russian Revolution, founded the Union of the Socialist Republic of the Soviet Union, or the Union Soviet, socialism from theory to reality. From an early state, real socialism was built up in the countries of East Europe, in some Asian and Latin American countries. The fundamental goal of socialism is the realization of social justice. But on the way to this goal, affected by the subjective and willful disease, the Communist Party of all countries took the wrong steps leading to a situation in the late twentieth century, in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, socialism fell into crisis, systems were broken[2]. This historical fact shows that the goal of "social justice" is not ethically feasible on a global scale, which "poses a problematic situation" when seeking answers to the question: Is the opinion of the Austrian economist - Friedrich Hayek (1899-1992) in "The Mirage of Social Justice, 1976"[3] have a practical basis? To answer this question, it is necessary to consult major thinkers[4].

The above-mentioned show that social justice is always posed as a moral issue, reflecting the noble dreams or ideals of human society. The remaining philosophical problem raised here is: How to look at social

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1 See: Nguyen Thi Tho and Le Cong Su, "Some thoughts on social justice and democracy in Vietnam, read Criticism of Marx's Gothar Platform", printed in: Nguyen Tai Dong, Tran Tuan Phong, Cao Thu Hang (co-editor), *The thought of K. Marx on justice with democracy and its present meaning*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, 2018, pp.128-141.

2 See: Du Thuy, *Moscow Winter and Spring - the end of an era*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995.

3 Gilles Dostaller, Hayek *Liberalism*, Knowledge Publishing House, Hanoi, 2008, p. 158.

4 See also: Jaque Derrida, *The Ghosts of Marx*, National Political Publishing House, 1994 and Rone Duymong, *An Inadmissible World*, Publisher. Hanoi, 1990.

justice from an economic perspective? Can humans achieve fairness by economic means?

2. Social division of labor - the economic basis of social justice

Division of social labor is a spontaneous phenomenon of human life that was generalized by the ancient Greek philosopher - Plato in his famous work "Republic", where he refers to "a republic" based on a high division of labor to produce diversified goods to meet living needs. "Let us now build an imaginary state ... it will start with our needs, whose first and greatest need is the provision of food to feed us,"[1] he wrote. Next, we need a house; and third, clothes are needed. To have those necessities, there are plowing farmers, builders, carpenters, tailors, blacksmiths, and craftsmen. Next is "the herders and shepherds to supply cattle and buffaloes for the farmers to plow fields, to provide cattle and sled animals for masons and farmers, and to supply wool and leather for weavers and thickeners…. hunters and fishermen"[2]. When the state has a sufficient production force, wealth is plentiful, "there must be a market, and a currency to be used as security for trading and trading ... there are shop owners. … Sitting at the market to buy and sell, different from merchants going from one country to another"[3].

In such a state with such physical conditions, people "would lay back on incense-wood beds and play with their wives and children, drinking after the party with flower crowns on their heads and singing in praise of the gods. That way they will live happily together, and a wise fear of poverty and war will keep them from overbearing the means they have"[4]. According to Plato, the state is an exaggerated image of man, in

1 Plato, Republic, volume II, *Collection of philosophical works*, Culture and Information Publisher, Hanoi, 2006, p.55, 56, 57, 58.

2 Plato, Republic, volume II, *Collection of philosophical works*. Culture and Information Publisher, Hanoi, 2006, p.55, 56, 57, 58.

3 Plato, Republic, volume II, *Collection of philosophical works*, Culture and Information Publisher, Hanoi, 2006, p.55, 56, 57, 58.

4 Plato, Republic, volume II, *Collection of philosophical works*, Culture and

human body and soul, so the state too, when the material conditions are met, the state needs: "sculptors, associations painting and music; poets with an entourage of reciting poets, dancers, producers, and builders of all kinds of household items, including jewelry puzzles for women"[1].

In the republic, the population grew, but the land was limited, resulting in the need for territorial expansion through wars. War "makes the community need an extra army to fight against the invaders, to protect the property of citizens". To protect the country, "defenders also need a philosophical spirit… that is to cherish unwisely. Thus, the natural qualities of being a noble defender of the country are agility, strength, courage, and the spirit of philosophy"[2]. Following the class of the guardians, Plato refers to the class of the rulers of the country - the philosophers, they are like the captains of a ship, if they want the ship to go in the right direction, it needs to be trained in a way fundamental how to understand the levels of cognitive processes, to distinguish truth and error, truth and falsification, the tangible and the shadow world.

Plato's view of the social division of labor is a valuable suggestion for later economists such as Aristotle, Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Karl Marx, Friedrich Hayek, John Keynes, ... to build economic theory, reflect social justice[3]. Although interpretations differ on the origin and nature of the social division of labor, for all economists are the most, the social division of labor plays a decisive role in social justice, that is, each person, group of people with natural abilities, the forte of work are "invisible hand" (in Adam Smith's term) arrange suitable work and work under the direction of "invisible hand". That means, for the

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Information Publisher, Hanoi, 2006, p.55, 56, 57, 58.

1 Plato, Republic, volume II, *Collection of philosophical works*, Culture and Information Publisher, Hanoi, 2006, p.55, 56, 57, 58.

2 Plato, Republic, volume II, *Collection of philosophical works*, ibid, p.58.

3 See: Mark Skousen, *The Three Giants in Economics: Adam Smith, Karl Marx, John Keynes*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2016 and Michel Beuaud & Gill Dostaler, *Economic Thought since Keynes*, Knowledge Publishing House, Hanoi, 2008

common development of the whole society as well as to "share" profits on the principle of "win-win" (mutually beneficial). And of course, when doing different jobs, there will be different income depending on the skill level of the producer and the law of supply and demand of the commodity market, the labor market. The market is an economic "testament", at the same time as the "judge" of the employee's capacity, from here all social justice is assessed in a truly fair way, without "interference card" of any mechanism.

In our view, the "invisible hand theory" in economics Adam Smith is the theoretical and methodological basis to explain the formation and nature of the "market economy". As explained, social justice is the aim of, an element of the truth of life, which should be assessed by life from both aspects: ethical and economic. The ethical aspect shows the common aspiration of humankind as a noble ideal. But this ideal wants to become a reality must be "supplemented", demonstrated by the economic aspect, that is, must be accepted by life. This is a contradiction that is difficult to solve both in terms of logical thinking and real-life but needs an invisible factor, hidden behind it as an economic - social mechanism. So "social justice" is shown in the market economy mechanism like? What factors could be influencing the implementation of social equity?

3. Market economy and social equity in a global context

The market economy is a product of economic management thinking of human society crystallized over centuries and applied in the first practice in Western countries, bringing about material prosperity and convenience of activities, diverse social services, creating a consumer society or a "modern capitalist social entity" as there are today. The efficiency, advantages, and preeminence of the market economy are undisputed. The problem that is worth discussing here is the relationship between the market economy and social justice?

In terms of nature, the market economy operates on the Law of Supply - Demand and the Law of Demand Growth, which means

that if the society has demand, there will be measures sooner or later (production, service) to meet that need, and the fulfillment of this demand generates new needs, making the society's needs more and more diversified, rich, creating a service-consumer society in all directions from economic to cultural, educational, emotional, spiritual[1]. The market economy is the inheritance of the positive values of the natural economy (self-sufficiency, self-sufficiency), and at the same time has basic adjustments under the dynamic development trend of modern society - a global society with the rapid development of information technology and the "4.0 revolution". The market economy has advantages such as liberating labor force, creating favorable areas for production, trading and circulation of goods, reasonable division of social labors according to each region, each branch, and suitable to each work object.

The practical basis of the market economy is the social division of labor, comparative advantage in natural resources, and labor human resources. In this presentation, the authors do not discuss this issue, but only exploit the aspect of the relationship between the market economy and social justice to answer the question: In the market economy mechanism, can social equity be guaranteed?

With a history of several hundred years of applying market economy to practice, European theorists have written many works analyzing the relationship between the market economy and social justice, typically "A Theory of Justice" (1971) by John Rawls (1921-2002) - American philosopher of ethics and politics, Harvard University professor. According to John Raws, the concept of equity is of a philosophical economic nature, because: 1) Social justice is associated with the appropriateness of distribution of wealth, and fairness is a recognized norm. and based on that to determine the distribution of social wealth. 2) Social justice is an inseparable concept of political

1 See: Vu Dinh Bach & Tran Minh Dao, *Characteristics of the socialist-oriented market economy in Vietnam*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006.

relationships when it comes to the fairness of laws, institutions, or the division of rights and obligations. 3) Equity is related to morality when people use it to evaluate the views and behaviors that are fair or unfair, fairness related to the distribution of wealth, and the mode and scale of income[1]. In general, social justice according to John Rawls is the concept of the intersection between economic-political- ethical, if looking more deeply, social justice is derived from "natural human rights" as mentioned by the French Enlightenment.

In the current international context, globalization is an inevitable trend, affecting all activities of countries and peoples in the world, regardless of political regime, geographical position, identity, culture, historical traditions, and many forms of religion. Faced with the impact of globalization forces countries to change their perception of the role of the state. Previously, as separate subjects, each state had national powers such as taxing, banning, and punishment. In particular, the taxation rights of the state create the ability to finance the distribution and supply of goods as well as interfere with prices when there are price fluctuations in the market. The right to punish and prohibit allows the state to protect personal safety, national security, and property rights. The right to unilaterally enable the state to exercise fairness in taxation, public service, etc. But in the current globalization context, the state cannot exercise these rights arbitrarily, but must "improvisation," according to the market economy mechanism and the general principles of international law and common market[2]. Globalization is related to other issues such as human rights, business freedom, political freedom, freedom of residence and has caused an influx of migrants from poor countries to seek jobs in the developed countries. Also, the issue of "social welfare", especially unemployment benefits, is being paid attention by countries to enhance

1 See: Tran Thao Nguyen, *Economic philosophy in "Theory of justice" by John Rawls*, Thế Giới Publishers, Hanoi, 2006.

2 See: Pham Thai Viet, *Globalization - Major changes in international political life and culture*, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006.

their political position in international politics. In short, the operation of the market economy mechanism of countries in the world in the context of globalization is a "golden opportunity" for countries to implement well the issue of social justice, slowing down the process to differentiate and shorten the gap between rich and poor, bringing economic problems closer to social justice, as desired by the French Enlightenment and the founders of Marxism-Leninism.

4. The ability to apply "social justice" in Vietnam today when realizing the goal of both economic development and social justice

In Vietnam, the innovation work initiated by the VI Congress is a big economic breakthrough. The core is to renew economic thinking, to change the way of thinking, to do the economy. The economy has changed from the planning, centralized, bureaucratic, subsidized, administrative, and imperative mechanism to the multi-component commodity mechanism. There is state management, according to the socialist orientation, that is, the market economy mechanism in the current way of speaking[1]. However, stemming from specific political conditions, Vietnam applies the market economy mechanism with a prudent attitude based on selective and creative inheritance. Studying and studying economic models in the world, Vietnamese theorists believe that the applied market economy in Vietnam must be a socialist market economy under state management. At the 7th Congress, the Communist Party of Vietnam affirmed: "The mechanism that operates the socialist-oriented multi-sector commodity economy is a market mechanism under the state management"[2]. From that point of view, the Party continues to define, "economic growth goes hand in hand with cultural development, step by step improving people's material and

1 See: Bui Kim Dinh (editor), *Communist Party of Vietnam leading the reform*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2009.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 7th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1991, p. 66.

spiritual lives, implementing social progress and justice"[1]. Perception is so simple, but when it comes to real life, we can see that the relationship between the market economy and social justice is quite "sensitive" and equally difficult and complicated. The key problem is that social justice is a question of morality, while the market economy belongs to a purely economic category based on the law of competition and profitability.

In this article, the authors approach a basic issue of land ownership and use - a prominent issue in Vietnam today - the cause of many "big crimes," causing public frustration society is also the basic cause of the rich and poor differentiation, because "real estate" is a rather "crowded and fertile" market, easy to take advantage of or "circumvent the law" in Vietnam today. The view of the Party and State is that all economic sectors are equal before the law, all forms of ownership have the opportunity to bring into play their advantages, but from theory to practice is a difficult problem, not easy. The implementation in a mechanism is not organized closely and is not perfect like now. State-owned enterprises are often given more priority in applying for land to relocate or expand the premises, more preferential in bank loans, and more open in commercial transaction licensing, while private businesses are more disadvantaged. The situation of land and forest allocation is also having many problems, requiring legal documents to specify the difference between the ownership and use rights, the term of use and exploitation for people to invest, and more effective forest protection, associating responsibility with rights.

In recent years, the "abuses" of the law in the real estate sector have mainly come from local state management agencies and enterprises. This "abuse" occurs through two aspects: 1) Land use planning (subjective, arbitrary from the investor) and 2) Recovery of agricultural land use rights of the people to build construction of commercial zones, industrial projects, social welfare. In legal terms, the right to plan and

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 9th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2001, p. 89.

use land belongs to the owner of the land. Under the current law, if the landowner is "the entire people", the people must participate in the planning. But in reality, as the "owner agent", the local authorities hold full power in project formulation and planning revision. The abuse process begins when there are dominant "interest groups", resulting in the planning no longer serving the common purposes of the population, but mainly to support or serve interest groups. seek profits through projects.

Before Doi Moi, all-natural resources belonged to state ownership, managed by the state, so the law on ownership seemed to be overlooked. When the market economy is opened up and industrialization and modernization are carried out, ownership has become a problem, especially the ownership and management of land and natural resources. That explains why in recent times, the land has become a hot spot in civil lawsuits. Statistics show that, in the current lawsuits, more than 90% are related to the ownership and the use of land. This has been proved through the fact that over the past 20 years, Vietnam has adjusted and revised many times on land law, but has not yet improved the dispute situation in the site clearance for the construction of works. infrastructure, industrial zones, cultural and social works.

Through analysis of a few "highlights" in the above socio-economic panorama, it shows that the rich and poor differentiation, social stratification (and inevitably lead to the difference in lifestyle). In Vietnam is happening at a fast speed, the implementation of social justice in the market economy conditions is still difficult and complicated, requiring theorists and politicians to study and examine the tissues international image as well as summarizing the practical theory of the country through which to find a feasible plan for "both economic development and social justice".

INCOME INEQUALITY IN VIETNAM: THE SITUATION AND SOLUTIONS

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The research problem

Vietnam is a low middle-income country in the world. Although this country has made remarkable achievements in the recent reform years, there is an inequality of income distribution among population groups leading to an increasing disparity between the rich and the poor groups, or an increasing inequality in economic development among regions and areas of the economy. If this situation is not improved, it will be a major barrier to the sustainable development of the country. The study discusses the methods of measuring income inequality, thereby examining the current situation and causes of income inequality of Vietnamese people. Indeed, some solutions are proposed to contribute to limiting and solving income inequality in our country - that is

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important and essential for the economic development and towards the "prosperity sharing" goal: economic development associated with social justice in Vietnam.

1. Income inequality

Inequality is a common phenomenon in a class-divided society, where one group of people controls and exploits another group in society. In the *Wikipedia dictionary,* "*Inequality* is an inequality of opportunities or benefits regards to different individuals within a group or groups in the society". In which, opportunities are considered all the favorable conditions of material, assets, income, and benefits in education, health care, social welfare... Opportunities are also understood as the realities of material benefits, accompanied by the actual choice of a social group, whether the members of the group are aware of it or not. In a specific society, one group of people may have an opportunity, while other groups may not, and that is the objective cause of inequality.

The notion of *income distribution* appeared in *Wealth of Nations* (1776) by Adam Smith and then was systemized into the income distribution theory by David Ricardo (1817). Income distribution theory continues to be developed by economists around the world in later years and aims to explain the nature of income distribution as well as factors affecting the income distribution process or problems arising from income distribution such as income inequality, poverty... According to many researchers, the income distribution is divided by the principle of ownership in the income distribution or the appropriate distribution of national income. In other words, based on selection criteria, income distribution is divided into two basic forms: the object (the individuals or households) and the function (how national income is distributed to factors of production). However, the method of income distribution by individuals or size is the most commonly used by economists today. Because this approach considers how much income each individual receives and whether or not income is equally distributed among different people groups in the society (Todaro, 1998). The drawbacks

of this approach are that it is not possible to show where the income is derived (from wages, hire, bank interest, other profits or money from inheritance or income received from social welfare programs ...) and not consider the backgrounds of the career (industry, agriculture, services ...).

Income inequality is seen as a condition in which there is an income disparity between one group of people and another group, along with a difference in opportunity and ability to access sources of income in a given space or time. This concept is proposed by many researchers, in which Kuznets (1955) state that, income inequality is the situation where most people live below the average income level, while there is only a small fraction of the population have a relatively high income in a country or region. Fletcher (2013) argued that income inequality is the result of inequality in wealth distribution, or difference in wealth level, or income among individuals, groups in the society, or among countries.

In general, all the above views show the phenomenon of inequality of income distribution among individuals, households, organizations (or groups of people), which is the situation where a part of the population lives below the average level or the difference in the distribution of assets, or income is not evenly distributed among individuals, thus their livelihood capability and their quality of life are not guaranteed.

2. Income inequality in Vietnam

After more than 30 years of reform, Vietnam has made remarkable changes in all aspects, including achievements in economic growth. From an underdeveloped country, Vietnam has become a developing country, and their people's lives are increasingly improved, thereby creating opportunity and equality for all social classes of people, contributing to ensuring social justice. According to the statistics of the World Bank, in the first stage of innovation (1986-1990), the average annual GDP growth rate was only 4.7%, but in the 1991-1995 period, the average GDP growth increased sharply to 8.2% per year, both the

1996-2000 period and in the 2000-2005 period its average GDP growth increased by about 6.9% per year. In the period 2006-2010, despite the impact of the global financial crisis and economic recession, Vietnam soon overcame and maintained the macroeconomic stability and its growth rate with the average annual GDP growth rate of 6.3% and 5.9% in the period 2011 - 2015. However, the report of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam (2015) mentioned that along with rapid economic growth, income inequality or *the gap between* the *rich and poor* tends to increase, and illegal social stratification happens complicatedly, which is a corollary, a difficult problem needs special attention in Vietnam today. Also, Duong Loan (2017) indicated that "Vietnam is among ten countries in the world having a big gap between the rich and poor people and the fastest-growing number of super-rich people. While the wealth increasingly accumulates in a very few people in the society, the rate of income mobility of the poorest group to higher income groups is slowing down. The rich-poor gap is widening". Income inequality, which exists not only between urban and rural areas but also between the poorest and the richest groups, is increasing and widening.

According to the result of the Vietnam Household Living Standard Surveys 1999, the average income at current prices increased in the period 1996 - 1999. In 1996, for the whole country, the monthly average income per capita was 226.7 thousand dongs in 1999 increased to 295.0 thousand dongs, corresponding to an increase of 8.78%. However, the income per capita has a significant difference between urban and rural areas in the period 1996 - 1999. Specifically, the monthly average income per capita in urban areas was 2.71 times in 1996 and 3.7 times in 1999 higher than that in urban areas. The urban-rural income gap indicates that the rich and poor differentiation has emerged alongside the country's economic development achievements since 1986. The rich and poor gap between the urban and rural areas after 10 years of innovation has been identified by the Communist Party of Vietnam in Central Resolution 4, Session VIII as follows: "Distribution in the society is still unreasonable,

the country is poor, but it still consumes overcapacity, has not put effort into development investment and has not been able to prevent illicit enrichment tricks. Bureaucracy, corruption, wasteful use of the budget, and public property are widespread and serious. The disparity in development level between regions and income among population classes in the society tends to widen. Employment and many social problems are posed harshly. The presence of socialist democracy is still limited. These problems negatively affect the economic environment, reduce the growth rate, and bring potential risks of socio-economic instability".

The Vietnam Household Living Standard Surveys 1999 report of The General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSO) also showed that the rich-poor gap tends to widen. Specifically, the income of the rich and near-poor households in the period 1996-1999 increased, but the annual income growth rate of rich households was 14.5% faster than that of poor households was 7.2% (not exclude price slippage). Also, if income is divided by five income groups from low to high-income groups, the difference between the rich group (group 5) and the poor group (group 1) in each area, each region in 1999 increased; compared with the difference in 1996, the whole country increased by 1.6 times, in which the difference increased by 1.8 times and 0.2 times in urban areas and rural areas respectively. According to the World Bank (2012), "Vietnam's achievements in economic growth and poverty reduction in the past two decades are very large. If using the "basic needs-based" poverty line as agreed in 1998, the per capita poverty rate fell from 58% in the early 1990s to 14.5% in 2008 and following this standard the poverty rate is estimated to drop below 10% by 2010". However, along with the recent achievements in economic growth and poverty reduction, Vietnam has been facing many challenges. "It is a problem that is more difficult for the remaining poor people to access, they face difficult challenges such as isolation, limited assets, low education levels, poor health - and the current speed of poverty reduction is no longer in line with economic growth as before. Poverty among ethnic minorities presents a prolonged challenge. Although 53 ethnic

minorities in Vietnam account for less than 15% of the total population, they accounted for 47% of the poor people in 2010, compared with 29% in 1998. Following the updated poverty line reflecting the living standards in 2010, up to 66.3% of ethnic minorities is classified as poor groups, compared with only 12.9% of the Kinh people" (the World Bank, 2012).

In the period 2010 - 2016, the income gap between urban and rural income groups continues to increase. The monthly average income per capita between the highest income group and the lowest income group in both urban and rural areas has a large difference over the years, ranging from 7 to 8 times. However, the rich-poor gap in urban areas tends to decrease, whereas in rural areas the gap tends to widen over the years. Specifically, the gap in the monthly average income per capita between the highest and the lowest income groups in rural areas has steadily increased from 7.5 times in 2010 to 8 times in 2012, to 8.2 times in 2014 and 8.5 times in 2016 (The General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016).

Moreover, if comparing the highest income group in urban areas with the highest income group in rural areas, and the lowest income group in urban areas with the lowest income group in rural areas, we confirm that this difference is relatively large and tends to widen. In the period 2010 - 2016, the income in urban areas was twice higher than that in rural areas. Specifically, the difference in the monthly average income per capita between the highest income group in urban areas and the highest income group in the rural area is 2.02 times in 2010; 1.88 times in 2012; 2.02 times in 2014, and 1.89 times in 2016. The difference in the monthly average income per capita between the lowest income group in the urban area and the lowest income group in the rural area tends to increase gradually from 1.9 times in 2010 to 2.11 times in 2012 and 2.24 times in 2014, but in 2016 this income gap tends to decrease slightly to 2.17 times (The General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016). This also shows that the rich-poor gap in rural areas is higher than that in urban areas.

Another indicator of income inequality is the GINI coefficient. The GINI coefficient of urban and rural areas in Vietnam in the period 2010 - 2016 shows that income inequality in rural areas occurs faster than that in urban areas. The income inequality coefficient in rural areas tends to increase and contrasts with the trend of income inequality in urban areas. Specifically, according to the World Bank's criteria, urban areas in Vietnam have a GINI coefficient between 0.4 and 0.5 in 2010, thus income inequality is medium. Then, in the period 2012 - 2016, urban areas in Vietnam have GINI coefficients ranging from 0.385 to 0.397, meaning that the level of inequality in urban areas of Vietnam during this period was low. In contrast, in the period 2010 - 2014, the GINI coefficient in rural areas in Vietnam ranged from 0.395 to 0.399, and in 2016, the GINI coefficient was 0.408. This means that income inequality in rural areas is moderate, higher than income inequality in urban areas in Vietnam (Figure 1).

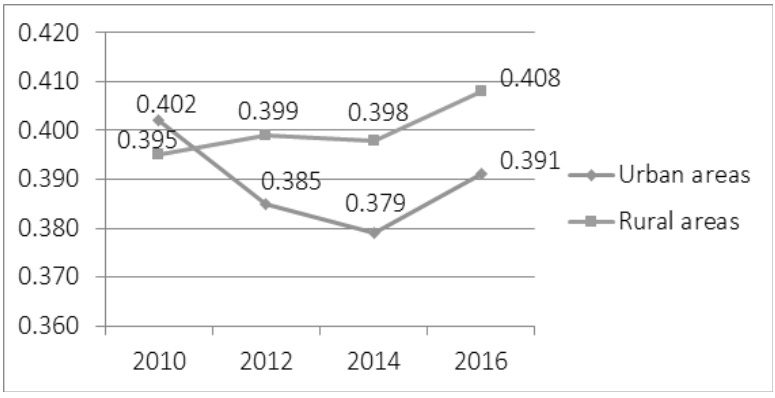

Figure 1: The GINI coefficient by urban and rural areas in the period 2010 - 2016

Figure 1 also shows that the income gap between residents in urban and rural areas tends to increase over the years. Nonetheless, the coefficient of the income gap between these two regions is gradually narrowing, from 1.018 times in 2010 to 0.965 times in 2012 and continues to decrease to 0.952 times in 2014 and then slight increases to 0.958 times in 2016.

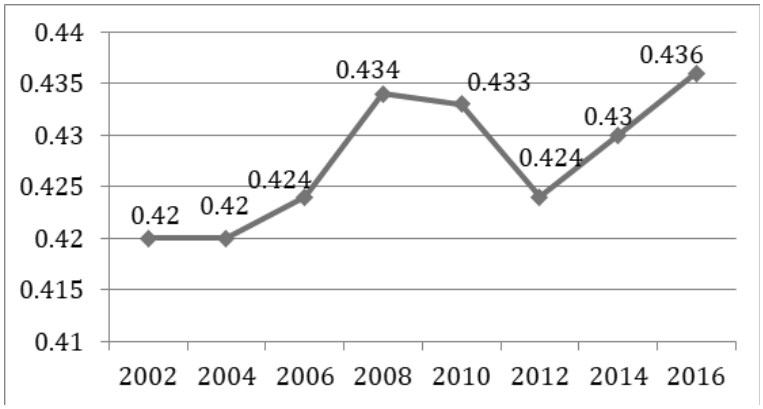

Figure 2: The GINI coefficient of income inequality in Vietnam in the period 2002 – 2016

In the period 2002 - 2016, the situation of income inequality in Vietnam fluctuated erratically. The GINI coefficient increased sharply from 0.42 in 2002 to 0.434 in 2008, gradually decreased to 0.424 in 2012, then increased again and reached the highest value of 0.436 in 2016. Although the value of the GINI coefficient does not fluctuate much (ranging from 0.42 to 0.436), the value shows that the level of income inequality in Vietnam has always been moderate over the past 14 years (as shown in Figure 2). However, if we consider the GINI income inequality coefficient in Vietnam in comparison with other countries, inequality in Vietnam is significantly lower than that in the fast-growing economies in East Asia and Southeast Asia. Long-run growth in Vietnam is quite equitably and the country has reached a "shared prosperity" since the early 1990s. If considering over the past 20 years, income inequality in Vietnam has increased lower than the other fast-growing economies in Asia (the World Bank, 2014).

Regarding the structure of households' income in urban and rural areas in Vietnam, the results of the General Statistics Office indicate that, in urban areas, in the period 2002 - 2016, the income from salary and wages accounts for the largest proportion and tends to increase gradually over the years. Specifically, the proportion of this income increased from 44.2% in 2002 to 54.56% in 2016. In contrast, the

incomes from agriculture, forestry, fishery, and other incomes tend to decrease gradually. Meanwhile, the proportion of income from non-agricultural activities is relatively stable, fluctuating around 29%. Similarly, in rural areas, the income from salary and wages also accounts for the largest proportion and increases rapidly over the years, from 22% in 2002 to 41.57% in 2016. The proportion of income from activities of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries tends to increase slightly, from 17.8% to 19.98% in the period 2002 - 2016.

Thus, based on the per capita income in urban and rural areas and the GINI income inequality coefficient, it can be concluded that the income inequality between these two regions is still relatively large, but it gradually narrowed. However, when considering internally by region, inequality in urban areas tends to decrease, while inequality in rural areas tends to increase. Inequality stems from many different factors and aspects in terms of economy, politics, culture, and society, but the salary and wage dominate the income gap of Vietnamese households in both urban and rural areas. On the other hand, considering the general income inequality in Vietnam, the overall GINI coefficient is not low, but when comparing with the fast-growing economies in Asia, income inequality in Vietnam is significantly lower. This confirms that Vietnam's economic growth still goes hand in hand with social justice.

3. The main causes of income inequality in Vietnam

Income inequality in Vietnam stems from many different causes, in which several issues need to pay attention to. More specifically:

Geographical location: In Vietnam, the distribution of the population creates inequality due to different access opportunities of jobs, production, and public services (education, medical and healthcare systems, and social services) that make the ability to improve livelihoods difficult, slow to escape poverty, and even those who escape poverty are at high risk of falling back into poverty, leading to income inequality or the rich-poor gap.

The skills shortage in the labor market: Rural workers have a much lower starting point, often lack many necessary skills, and are difficult to compete with urban workers in the labor market; hence they cannot earn a high income. Indeed, the dependent mentality (waiting for support from the Vietnam government), the lack of will and effort to raise them makes it difficult for them to escape poverty.

Besides, *the opportunities to participate in the labor market are not equally divided among working-age people*. The distribution of labor in some places is redundant and in some places is insufficient, leading to the difference in starting income among occupational groups in the economy. Furthermore, the income level from labor is not reasonable and although the current salary policies and the state of Vietnam have gone through many reforms, it still has some limitations and has not been able to keep up as well as respond to the rapid fluctuation of life. The basic salary is too low, thereby making it very difficult for a large part of workers cannot survive on salary. Also, the "distribution of power" towards those in power contributes to income inequality in Vietnam.

In particular, the income inequality in Vietnam today *is dominated by salary and wage factors*. The World Bank report (2012) also points out that "Vietnam is predominantly a wage economy, more than 54% of households earn the most from wages, and 70% of Vietnamese households receive at least an amount of wage income. Most of the poor Vietnamese households today also receive wage income, but more than half of those wages come from agriculture, the lowest wage in the industry" (Nguyen The Phuong, 2015). In general, wages in the agricultural sector are the lowest due to the objective inequality in economic factors. These are low input costs, the low cost of agricultural products, long production time leading to large waste, risks of natural disasters, weather that also reduces income in agricultural production.

Also, the land for agricultural production is increasingly narrowed, thus lead to many farming households do not have land use rights as well as subjects to work with. The reason for the shrinking of land in

agricultural production is the shift of the economy from the agricultural sector to the development of industry, services, tourism… which has led to the shifting of agricultural land to the construction of factories, industrial parks, and tourist resorts. Moreover, the narrowing of the land in agricultural production can be caused by natural disasters, floods, climate change… which makes the farmers' land unable to cultivate and raise livestock and they lost their land and are forced to migrate to other regions to survive. Consequently, these migrant farmers do not have the right to own new lands, have to work as hired labor for low wages, or have to sublease the land to cultivate and raise livestock, so their income is also divided into parts that make them just enough to maintain their daily minimum standard of living, not accumulate to escape poverty.

Then, it is necessary to mention *the objective causes* from the government, such as inadequate social policies, tax and fee policies ... that affect poor and vulnerable individuals in society. For example, the government decides to increase hospital fees that have a direct impact on income and reduces the accessibility of health services of people who have not participated in health insurance, which mostly poor and near-poor persons. Or the current resettlement policy of the government is still inadequate. In urban areas, due to the loose management, the resettlement houses are of low quality, lack social infrastructures such as markets and schools… In rural and mountainous areas, the resettlement houses are not suitable for the culture of the people, far from the place of production, schools, and hospitals, and lack of domestic water source ... that make the poor people poorer after resettlement.

If income inequality is not addressed, it will be the root of conflicts in society. These are potential conflicts between rich and poor people and between urban and rural areas. However, that does not mean that managers have to use rigid macro policies to eliminate the rich-poor gap, but rather we need to accept it at a certain threshold and consider it as an engine pulling the economy to develop sustainably.

4. Some solutions to reduce income inequality in Vietnam

From the situation of income inequality in Vietnam, finding the main causes of income inequality, the authors propose some solutions to restrain and minimize this situation.

First, the Vietnam government must aim to encourage and create opportunities for poor citizens and disadvantaged groups in society to participate in benefiting from economic growth. This can be done through supporting policies to develop infrastructure for production, land, credit capital, agricultural extension, and product consumption. The poor people and disadvantaged groups also need to be allowed to participate in and have the right to economic development and poverty reduction for themselves and their locality, especially in mountainous districts. In the future, rural areas will continue to be inhabited by a part of the population, especially the poor residents. Therefore, rural areas as well as the disadvantaged groups in urban areas need to be properly invested in infrastructure so that people can increase the productivity and the values of agriculture, handicraft, and fishery. These measures include investment in and upgrading of transport systems, post-harvest preservation, and processing to connect with other economic sectors.

Second, it is necessary to ensure that the results of the development are shared for the citizens by considering three key areas: Education, health social security network. Regarding education, the Vietnam government must ensure all citizens to access quality education, especially in mountainous areas. With the current population structure, the number of school-age students at all levels in the coming time will be relatively stable, so the education system has an opportunity to improve its quality without being under overload pressure. Besides, the education and training system needs to focus on vocational training and skills training to meet the requirements of businesses and create jobs for citizens.

Health systems with moderate cost will help many families avoid the poverty trap due to too high medical expenses and their income

reduction when someone in the family is sick. The government must give the highest priority to the provision of adequate physicians, doctors, medical equipment, and the necessary financial resources for medical units at the grassroots level. Providing a social security network for the poor and vulnerable people due to natural disasters or the shocks of the economy is necessary to ensure all citizens sharing their achievements and help the development become more harmonious and sustainable.

Third, to bring the results of economic growth to all citizens, it is essential to implement social justice in many aspects. It is necessary to constantly create conditions for people and the entire social community to have equal development opportunities, access to common resources, and equitable distribution of public interests, create a material, intellectual and cultural foundation for the following generations. To overcome this situation, in addition to creating jobs for people in these areas, the government needs to have appropriate policies for them to enjoy the results of the economic growth process, especially in mountainous areas. Only such, we will soon reduce the lagging gap between urban and rural areas and between the poorest and richest groups.

Fourth, the government needs to reform the policy of distribution of assets, income, and development opportunities towards ensuring equity and targeting poor people. The success of poverty reduction is closely linked to policies that encourage the wider use of poor people's primary asset - that is labor power. However, the high protection for the state economic sector and the incentives for this area are damaging industries that have the potential to create more jobs. Hence, performing aggressive, open, and transparent adjustments to this "interest group" is an effective measure to soon create real equality among economic actors in production activities. The equality of opportunity is more important than the equality of income. Thus, the Vietnam government needs to protect its rights to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to use development opportunities and achieve success. Once these rules are established, the government has less intervention to change the

results of the income distribution. Also, it is necessary to conduct a fierce struggle with close guidance from the highest management level, using many combined measures to effectively prevent and repel the phenomenon of illegal enrichment, corruption because this is a factor that not only harms the overall economic growth but also creates the greatest social injustice.

Fifth, it is necessary to form a large middle class in the society. This is a worthy idea in the work of Galor and Zeira (1993) and needs to be considered. Of course, reducing poverty or increasing the middle class is just a problem. However, if the government only focuses on poverty reduction, the inequality can still increase, because the speed of enrichment of the rich people can be much faster than that of the poor people. The goal of creating a large middle class will encourage poor people to get rich more, and at the same time redistribute the income of the rich people. The tools that can be used for this redistribution should focus on wealth aspects, such as inheritance, investment taxes, and property taxes. However, it is also necessary to set up a tax system in a way that does not cancel out the motivation to get rich of the rich people and avoid the dependence of the poor people.

Conclusion

Vietnam has been moving rapidly on the path of integration and development in the world. Indeed, the remarkable improvement of people's lives and the poverty reduction policy is considered a highlight in Vietnam in recent years. However, in addition to these achievements, there are still many difficult issues that significantly affect the general policy of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Vietnam government regarding narrowing the income gap between rich and poor in our country today. Therefore, assessing the situation of income inequality properly and then proposing solutions to limit this inequality in Vietnam is currently a major topic that needs to be considered comprehensively because social inequality in general and income inequality, in particular, is a phenomenon that cannot be eliminated quickly. We cannot rush to

eliminate the inequality immediately, we can only control and minimize the rich-poor gap towards the goal of "a rich people, a strong nation, and an equitable, democratic, and civilized society."

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COMPLETING PRODUCT DISTRIBUTION RELATIONSHIP THROUGH SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM FOR THE SAKE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN VIETNAM TODAY

Nguyen Thi Nhu Hue[1]

Product distribution is one of the most important contents to implement social justice. According to Karl Marx, the total product of social will be distributed partly for production activities, partly for storage, the rest will be distributed for social and personal consumption. All of these are necessary to ensure the development of society. Product distribution includes two processes: the first distribution and the redistribution. In the socialist regime, due to the existence of many types of ownership, including all-people ownership, the State on behalf of the people owns the means of production under this ownership.

Therefore, the state will participate in the first distribution process. After the first distribution is made in the manufacturing area, the national income is redistributed. The redistribution of national income in socialist society aims to adjust the income level of workers in the direction of ensuring the living standards of the people to reach the goals of equity and social development.

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In Vietnam, distribution through the social security system is one of the indispensable forms of distribution to contribute to ensuring all people have a living standard in minimum normal conditions, to promote labor production activities and the development of all aspects of members in society for the sake of social justice.

At the XI Congress of the Party, a new form of distribution was added: "distributing through the social security system"[1], to the 12th Congress, our Party continued to affirm: "continue improving social security policy to be suitable for the process of socio-economic development. Expand the beneficiaries and improve the efficiency of the social security system for all people; create conditions for effective assistance to the disadvantaged, vulnerable or those who are at risk in life .... Move from humanitarian assistance to ensuring citizens social security right"[2].

Thus, in Vietnam today, there exist three basic forms of distribution: distribution mainly through labor results, economic efficiency; distribution through to the share of capital and other resources and distribution through the social security system. In particular, the form of distribution through the social security system is increasingly playing an important role in the implementation of social justice and is focused on by the Communist Party of Vietnam.

According to the United Nations, the social security system includes: "the social insurance system; social assistance system; general social assistance system and private subsidy system"[3].

A social security system must have at least three basic components and, accordingly, will perform the three main functions of the social security policy, which are:

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2011, p.74.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress,* Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, p.127.

3 Thien Phuong, "Social security work in Vietnam", 2013, pp.63-64, http://www.tapchicongsan.org.vn

The first component is the policies and programs to prevent risks. The core content of this component is "policies and programs on active labor market such as vocational training; supporting job seekers, self-creating jobs or improving skills for employees"[1].

The second component is the risk reduction policies and programs. "The most important content in this layer is the forms of insurance, based on the principle of payment - benefits such as social insurance, health insurance, unemployment insurance, etc."[2].

The third component is the policies and programs to overcome risks. This last floor has the function of "ensuring the safety of social members when they encounter risks that they cannot overcome themselves such as unemployment, underemployment, low-income people, the elderly, the disabled, orphans, the poor"[3].

Although the main contents of social security in Vietnam differ from the perception of many countries, they all aim to carry out the three strategic functions of the current social security system in the world, namely risks prevention, risks reduction, and overcoming risks.

With three strategic functions of risk prevention, risk reduction, and overcoming risks, the social security system is not only a tool to reduce social inequality, but also a vehicle for the state, the society to implement policies to warrant social justice, ensuring a stable society and sustainable development. As we know, "Social equality is a concept that integrates many fields of social life, used to indicate equality in the relationship between people and people through the principle of distributing benefits (both material and spirit), which is a fit between dedication and enjoyment, between obligations and benefits, between

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1 *Social security in our country: Some theoretical and practical issues*, in www.molisa.gov.vn

2 *Social security in our country: Some theoretical and practical issues*, in www.molisa.gov.vn

3 *Social security in our country: Some theoretical and practical issues*, in www.molisa.gov.vn

rewards and penalties... and at the same time with the distribution of social welfare and social security"[1]. Therefore, social security and social equality are similarly oriented towards the goal of social equality.

However, social security specifically implements social equality in creating basic conditions for each member of society to avoid or escape the risks impacted from objective conditions and society; while social justice is equality, shown as equal contributions and equal enjoyment. In terms of the purpose, the implementation of social security is the basis for the implementation of social justice and with Vietnamese practice, the implementation of the social equity goal is always shown as a key content of social security. society. In that sense, social security is a condition, a content of social justice, and a criterion of social progress.

The social security policy system in Vietnam is in a socialist-oriented market economy, under the management of the state. The current social security system in Vietnam consists of the main contents: Insurance, Social Relief, and Social Concessional Assistance. Compared to the social security system of countries around the world, preferential treatment for people with meritorious services is a particular policy of Vietnam. This policy is to repay and repay the special sacrifice and great dedication of those who made merit to the revolution, to the country.

The social security model in Vietnam also adapts to the social security structure of the countries, creating the basis for the integration process but it also has specific characteristics of the socio-economy of Vietnam. The content of the social security system has been affirmed in The document of the 10th National Congress of Deputies: "Settling well labor and employment income for workers, ensuring social security. Continue to improve social security policies in line with socio-economic development. Expand the objects and improve the effectiveness of the social security system for all people; facilitate effective assistance to

1 See: Pham Thi Ngoc Tram, "Building and perfecting the social security system - An important tool to realize social justice in our country", 2009, www.thongtinphapluatdansu.edu.vn

the underprivileged, vulnerable, or at risk in life. Develop and complete well social insurance, unemployment insurance, and occupational accident insurance policies.

Shifting from humanitarian support to ensuring social security rights of citizens ... Good implementation of housing support policies for policy beneficiaries, the poor, those who are living in remote and poor areas; develop social housing for low-income people, export processing zones and students ... Develop a variety of charitable forms, promote the movement of the entire people to participate in helping the vulnerable "[1]. Thus, distributing through the social security system is an essential part of implementing the goals of social equity and progress.

In the social aspect, social security contributes to improving the living standards of members of society, especially those with difficult economic conditions and "disadvantaged" in society. In the economic aspect, social security is a tool to redistribute income among people in society, done in two directions: The first direction is: "Redistribution between the healthy and the sick, between people who are working and people who are jobless, between people who have not had children and people with family burdens; between regular contributors to social security funds and beneficiaries under defined circumstances and conditions "[2]; The second direction is: "The redistribution of wealth and purchasing power of high-income people for those with too low incomes, for "the disadvantaged" "groups in society. Redistribution is done in many different ways such as taxes, fees, and fiscal tools...; or indirectly through social assistance, through public services such as social insurance, education, health, housing "[3]...; From a human rights perspective, social security policies and systems are the guarantees of fundamental human rights.

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress,* Office of the Party Central Committee, Hanoi, 2016, page 137.

2 *General overview of social security*, www.hids.hochiminhcity.gov.vn

3 *General overview of social security*, www.hids.hochiminhcity.gov.vn

It can be affirmed that the way of distribution through the social security system is indispensable to achieve the goal of social justice. Distribution through the social security system in Vietnam increasingly affirms this role, which is:

First, the distribution through the social security system contributes to reducing the poverty rate in society, which is an inevitable part of ensuring social equity. Because, "distribution in social security is a redistribution in the beneficial direction for low-income people, the income division of healthy people who are fortunate to have stable jobs for the people who are sick and encounter risky events in production and life"[1] such as being sick, unable to work, unemployed, thereby it contributes to supporting, partly compensating income for these objects. Thanks to that, the employees can soon overcome the difficulties, stabilize their lives and labor.

Second, the social security system contributes to economic growth and social equality, ensuring a safe and stable socio-economy. To prevent and limit losses, employees must strictly comply with labor safety regulations as required by agencies and enterprises. "The social security fund, including the social insurance fund, is a fairly large financial source, is used to pay the benefits for employees and their families, and the unused part is invested in production activities and business to preserve and increase the fund. In terms of payment for the regimes, as well as investment in fund growth, all the activities of the social security fund contribute to promoting economic growth and complete the goal of social justice "[2] .

Third, "the social security system, including social insurance, enhances the close relationship between the employee, the employer, and the state. Employees, employers and the state all contribute to the

1 *Social security issues with socio-economic development in Vietnam*, www.hids.hochiminhcity.gov.vn

2 *Social security issues with socio-economic development in Vietnam*, www.hids.hochiminhcity.gov.vn

social insurance fund" and therefore, workers have more responsibility at work, in the production process, and the employer who pays to the social insurance fund for the employees enjoying the social insurance regimes also clearly sees their responsibility towards the employee, the State both contributes and regulates the activities of the social insurance fund, ensuring fairness and equality for all beneficiaries"[1].

However, the relationship of product distribution through the social security system for social justice in Vietnam today still faces difficulties and challenges that need to be solved.

First, the system of policies and regulations on social security and the implementation of the organization has not met the requirements of the socialist-oriented market economy as well as the development trend of the world. The system of social security policies lacks cohesion and overlaps with subjects, contents, and locations have not attracted members in society to actively participate, policies have not yet achieved high efficiency. Employees and employers have not complied with policies and regulations on social security. Many social security policies are not set properly and on par with economic policies. We tend to eliminate subsidies in a rampant way while there are still a lot of social security issues that require major investment from the state budget; On the contrary, some social security policies tend to be heavily subsidized in the form of a grant with the ask-give mechanism - so people are susceptible to great inertia, passively relying on the support and subsidies of state, also thus prone to negativity.

Second, the management of the income sources of different subjects has not been implemented effectively, there exists the phenomenon of revenue loss from those with upper-middle and high incomes, and those with low and unstable incomes do not receive distribution satisfactorily from the social security system. Socialization, mobilizing contributions from other sources, from the private sector, communities, especially in

1 *Social security issues with socio-economic development in Vietnam*, www.hids.hochiminhcity.gov.vn

rural areas, is still limited. The participation of agencies, unions, and society in the social security system is fragmented. Awareness of the importance and inevitability of distribution toward social security for the sake of social equality of some officials, party members, businesses, units, agencies, and people is not complete and correct.

Third, the people's demand for receiving social security policies is increasing while the state's investment resources for social security are inadequate, social insurance and social security are only partially met, also, the subsidy level is not high, so the ability to prevent and overcome risks is not effective. "The fast differentiation in the market economy has made the disadvantaged social groups weaker and more vulnerable due to limited competitiveness and the ability to prevent risks in the marketplace. The flow of job mobility and labor movement takes place at an increasing speed, creating great pressure to ensure the rights and opportunity to access to basic social services, the right to enjoy welfare policies of vulnerable groups"[1]. This issue also poses challenges in terms of employment, job restructuring, income, housing, education, health care, increases unemployment, income stratification, and social inequality. Moreover, in our country, the current population structure tends to age, and thus in the future, this elderly population will create more pressures and difficulties on the social insurance system, the health system, and other social care services.

Fourth, the poverty reduction has not been sustainable, the gap between rich and poor is still high. People between regions and groups still have differences in access to and enjoyment of social services. The Party pointed out "The results of hunger eradication and poverty reduction are not yet solid, and the risk of falling back into poverty remains great. The disparity in income and living standards between classes of people and between regions tends to be widened"[2]. In terms

1 *Social security in our country: Some theoretical and practical issues,* in www.molisa.gov.vn

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2007, p. 63.

of insurance, the number of employees participating in insurance is not high, especially for voluntary social insurance and unemployment insurance.

To improve the product distribution relationship through the social security system for social equality in Vietnam today, it is necessary to focus on solving the following basic issues:

First, the Socialist State builds a system of policies, organizes the implementation, checks, and supervises the implementation of policies and the legal system on social security.

In terms of the nature of power, in addition to the political function of the class, there is also a social function, one of the basic manifestations of the social function is that the state sponsors and guarantees safety for people through a system of social security policies. The State needs to continue to complete policies and solutions to ensure social security and the legal system of social security; Strengthening the management, inspection, and supervision of social security funds, organizations implementing social security policies, and social security beneficiaries. The distribution under the social security system must ensure fairness, prevent wastefulness, fight corruption and losses, and control the income of all citizens.

Second, social security policies must be implemented in parallel, coordinated with employment, salary, and income policies as well as active support programs, sustainable poverty reduction. "Consolidate and upgrade the system of social protection facilities, develop models of care for people with special circumstances in the community, and encourage the participation of the private sector in implementing models of care. the elderly, orphans, the disabled, especially the nursing home model"[1]. Implement and solve well social housing policies for low-income urban people, workers, and their families in industrial

1 http://dangcongsan.vn/nghe-cong-tac-xa-hoi/su-can-thiet-phai-phat-trien-mang-luoi-cac-co-so-tro-giup-xa-hoi-270125.html

zones, adopt policies, and create favorable conditions for pupils and students. Students away from home are allowed to live in the school dormitory. To do so, the state should encourage and adopt favorable and preferential policies to attract organizations, units, and businesses to invest in, build and develop social housing projects in the city. market, in industrial zones, and dormitory in the school.

Third, promote the implementation of income tax forms and voluntary contributions of high-income individuals to social welfare funds and charity funds to narrow the income gap between objects in society. This will improve effectiveness in the implementation of social security policies; It is necessary to thoroughly implement the distribution of labor results and economic efficiency, capital contribution, and other resources to strongly stimulate employees and investors, attracting resources to participate in the business production process, promote production force to develop. When production develops, it will create favorable conditions for distribution through the social security and social welfare system.

Fourth, "Diversifying resources and implementing methods for eradication of hunger and poverty reduction towards bringing into full play internal resources and combining effective use of international assistance. The State focuses on investment in building socio-economic infrastructure and supports production conditions, improves knowledge so that the poor, poor households and poor regions can escape poverty by themselves and sustainably improve their living standards; combines the State's policies with the direct and effective assistance of the whole society, the well-off people for the poor and poor households, especially in extremely difficult areas. Preventing falling back into poverty... Continuing promoting the role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and mass organizations involved in hunger eradication and poverty reduction"[1], and "Diversification of resources and methods of poverty reduction

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*,, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2006, p. 217.

associated with the development of agriculture, rural areas, developing education, vocational training and creating jobs to eradicate hunger and reduce poverty sustainably; creating conditions and encourage people who have escaped from poverty to get rich and help others get out of poverty"[1], in which "focus on effectively implementing hunger eradication and poverty reduction programs in remote areas, extremely difficult areas"[2]. Doing this will reduce the burden on the state budget on social security.

Fifth, strengthen and promote the implementation of health and education programs and projects to ensure universalization of sustainable education, and improve health care services for people in remote regions; Priority will be given to the poor, remote, and ethnic minority areas to enjoy universal education and health policies at the minimum normal level.

Sixth, to encourage and reinforce the participation of people in the implementation of social security policies, the State should do well in propaganda on various types of social security policies, disseminate views, policies, guidelines of the Party, regulations of the state, expand democracy in the implementation of social security policies. The state should have a strategy to strengthen international cooperation, take advantage of international resources, and cooperate with social security experts.

In conclusion, the mobilization of the strength of the political system, the responsibility and commitment of the executive system, combined with the socialization of activities to ensure a good settlement of the systematic product distribution toward the social security system not only contributes to helping Vietnam limit inequality, reduce the gap between the rich and the poor, but also create favorable conditions for implementing progress and social equality in Vietnam today.

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p. 229.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p. 229.

PART 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN CULTURE, EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENT

EDUCATIONAL INJUSTICE IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION: REFLECTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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Introduction

Globalization is an overwhelming phenomenon at our age. It influences and changes most aspects of human life and our understanding of the world. While people enjoy the conveniences these changes bring, these changes are not all positive and could cause some big problems, e.g. environmental pollution and extremer distribution of wealth.

In this paper, some educational difficulties and injustices in this new age will be demonstrated and analyzed. The paper will unfold in four parts: In the first part some characteristics of globalization are indicated. In the second part two educational models will be compared and analyzed, which one is better fit the age of globalization. The third part will present the special educational injustices nowadays. The fourth part shows some suggestions for what should be taught in the age of globalization.

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1. The Characteristics of the Age of Globalization

In the human history there were already many large scale exchanges of people and their culture in the world, e.g. the Crusades and the Age of Discovery. These events, however, compared to the modern globalization, are not qualified to be called "global".

1) Global Capitalism

The modern globalization since 1970s is marked by de-territorialization and hyperlinking of the world. There could be several factors for this phenomenon, but the main motor of this phenomenon is global capitalism, which seeks for the international markets to sell the products and the cheap supply chains to reduce the cost. This eager pursuit for profit drives people to go around the world.

2) The Development of New Technologies

Another factor marking the new globalization is the development of new technologies, especially the information technologies. With the help of the new technologies the most parts of the world are linked and the information can be exchanged immediately. The transportation of people and things are very convenient and quickly. Almost the whole world forms a global market.

3) Exchange-value

These two factors could be understood as "commercialization" and "digitalization". These two terms seem not harmful. But the point is they not only change the world on the surface, but penetrate the value system of a society and people's thought: only the things or behaviors, which can be bought and sold, are "valuable"; everything can be digitalized as a price to exchange. In the age of globalization "exchange-value" has become one of the main considerations.

3) Efficiency and Effectiveness

In the age of globalization everything is inter-connected in various nets. If one thing changes, it will affect many other things very quickly

and effectively.[1] Fortune and infortune will appear very quickly. Under these circumstances the survivors or winners are only those who can obtain the newest information and act and react immediately.

4) Education is Reduced as a Business

Education, the activity about the transition of knowledge, also meets the challenge of the new age and is reduced as a business: "Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange. Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its 'use-value'". (Lyotard 1984, 4-5)

2. Comparison of Two Educational Models

Here two educational models are indicated, in order to clarify the nature of education and the possibly different reactions of the educated under the two models.

1) The Diversity Model

The English term "education" comes from Latin "educare", which is combined by "e(x)" (out) and "ducare" (to lead, to draw). This etymological interpretation reminds us the Socratic ideal of education, the allegory of "midwife": to "draw out or unfold the powers of the mind." Under this idea of education the multiple development of individual is encouraged, because people believe that everyone is a unique individual and has his/her own specialty and ability. Under this model the task of the educated is to investigate his/her own life and try to develop it. The work of school or family is to provide consultation and help to the educated. With this model diversity and difference will be well kept in the society.

1 For example, on the 5th May 2019 Donald Trump sent a tweet and then in the next day the global stock market declined sharply and totally lost ca. 1.36 trillion US dollars.

The educated under this educational model of diversity can survive well in the age of globalization, in which everything changes with high speed, because they have been trained to develop themselves with different challenges with their self-exploration.

2) The Identity Model

The Chinese term of education is "Jiao Yu" (教育). Jiao means "to teach" and Yu "to bring up (children)". Apparently this term seems charming, because it gives education the warm emotional, moral relationship of bringing up besides the (possibly cool) activity of teaching. In reality, however, in China it has become a strong power relationship of patriarchy: The school and teacher set a pattern or criteria in advance, and then force the educated to fit this pattern. If the educated don't follow this, they will meet moral and social censure.

In the Chinese history this idea of education was cleverly combined with Imperial Examination (科舉), the system of selecting civil servants, since Western Han Dynasty (西漢, 202 B.C. - 9 A.D.). Since then the Chinese elites were encouraged to fit the standard form designed by the authority.[1] This Chinese idea of education along with the Imperial Examination system was spread to other countries and areas around China with the development of Chinese Empire, e.g. Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Vietnam…etc. Under this model the society asks the individuals to be identified with the standard form and answer.

This identity model of education is good for the government to select the people they need, but not good for the development of individuals. The educated under this identify model could not be competent to the rapidly changing challenges in the global age, because they were trained just to follow the standard form set by the authority.

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1 Tran indicates further: "The history of Chinese education is a history of ideological indoctrination… Before the educational reformation advocated by Tsai Yuen-pei, the education in China was just an ideological training to build bureaucratic system, aiming at training political technocrats, in order to defend the interests of the ruler." (Tran 1999, 1)

3. Educational Injustices Nowadays

Globalization brings the structural change of society. Along with this some serious educational injustices appear.

1) Education and Social Mobility

In China the system of Imperial Examination was abolished in 1905, in the end of Ching Dynasty (1636-1912 A.D.), but its spirit didn't perish and obtained its Incarnation with another appearance: Diplomaism. In these areas influenced by the identity model most people and companies judge one's ability mainly through their diploma, just like to judge a commodity through its brand, because they don't have the ability really to judge the content. The labels of famous schools and universities, then, become the synonym of success and the object of desire.

In order to make the competition fair, the government and educational institutions, on the one hand, design different examinations to evaluate the educated. The educated and their families, on the other hand, have to spend much time and money to overcome these challenges. If their families don't have enough money to support the educated the extra tutoring after the school, most of them can't pass the exams well and get excellent grades to apply for good universities.[1] The difference between social classes could be just duplicated again and again in the long run: the students from rich families enter the good universities and then have good job and remain rich, and vice versa. That education can promote the social mobility becomes a myth.

2) Examination leads Education

Examination was initially an instrument to evaluate the learning situation of the educated, but now it becomes the goal of education.

1 Luoh (2002) indicates, "for the years 1997–2000, compared to a national average of 0.89%, the probability of becoming a NTU student for an 18-year-old in Taipei city is 3.06%, while the probability for Ta-An district is 6.10% and only 0.19% for Taitung county". (Luoh 2002, 147) NTU (National Taiwan University) is the best university in Taiwan, and Ta-An district is the richest district in Taipei.

What is taught in the school is less about the knowledge, but more about the techniques to obtain high grades in the exams. Education is reduced to a technical training and far away from the humanistic ideal mentioned by Confucius (Cf. Wang 2018, 70-74) or by Wilhelm von Humboldt (see below the fifth point).

3) A Case from Quantitative Change to Qualitative Change in Education

In the age of globalization many countries have the trend of less population. The change of population structure could be an important factor influencing education. The birthrate in Taiwan has been one of the lowest in the world for several years, and in 2019, finally, Taiwan obtains the champion of low birthrate in the world. (Lim 2019) Suffering from the rapidly decreasing number of students, four colleges were closed since 2014. One hundred seventy two departments in universities and colleges will stop enrolling new students since academic year 2019. (Tsunami of Fewer-child-ization! 2018) Every graduate from senior high school can enroll in the university, if he/she wants. The positions are much more than the number of high school graduate.

Facing this trend of fewer children all universities, on the one hand, try their best to attract more students to enroll, including the students in South-Eastern Asia. Because of this new task most instructors have to join the activities to entertain the high school students; on the other hand, the universities must lower the requirement of grades for the students, to keep them stay in the universities and not to kick them out. (Jian 2019) The result would be: The instructors have less time to do their research, the quality of the students becomes lower and the whole level of university will go down. This tragedy now is on stage in Taiwan, but it will also happen in other countries, if their governments don't attach importance to the influence of population structure.

4) Information Technology and Fair Chances of Education for People

E-learning is an important topic of education in the age of globalization to promote educational justice. Many famous universities,

for example, upload their various courses in internet, in order to share knowledge with the world. Through the help of internet people can visit as huge amount of courses as they want. The online courses have these advantages:

a. The courses can be provided over the limitation of space and time. The educated could manage his/her own time to take the courses.

b. Many courses are for free.

c. People have many different choices of the courses.

The corresponding difficulties are worthy thinking:

a. The penetration rate and quality of internet have an effect on it. They depend on the economics and basic construction of a country. Some countries even block the internet to prevent people to access some websites.

b. Most general and old-fashioned courses are for free, but the special and newest knowledge could be expensive. Finally the capitalist logic still dominates the circulation of knowledge.

c. Before people suffered from too less knowledge and information, but today, on the contrary, from too much, and don't know how to select the good one.

5) The Ideal of *Bildung* Withdraws

The German concept *Bildung*, which means (self-)cultivation, was advocated by Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), who was one of the most influential officials in German education. In a letter to the Prussian king, he wrote: "People obviously cannot be good craftworkers, merchants, soldiers or businessmen unless, regardless of their occupation, they are good, upstanding and – according to their condition – well-informed human beings and citizens." (cited from Günther 1988, 127) In other words, education doesn't only train the educated the professional techniques, but should cultivate them as sound human beings. In the age of globalization, however, technical

training is much emphasized and humanistic education is just like a decoration.

4. What Should be Taught in the Age of Globalization?

Here some points are indicated for education in the age of globalization:

1) To Face and Solve the Questions

In the age of globalization, because everything is inter-connected and then changes very fast, many questions and would happen very quickly and suddenly. In the traditional society risk and crisis were seldom, but now risk and crisis become a "normal" state in the society. (Wang 2018, 64-65) The educated should always be reminded about this new reality and to keep calm to face and solve them, and not just escape from them.[1]

2) To know how to obtain help

The challenges in the new age could be various and incredible. Some challenges could be solved easily, but others could not. The educated should be taught where and from whom they can obtain help, e.g. legal problems by some legal institutions, financial problems by some financial institutions. Of course the society should provide some corresponding services.

3) Critical thinking

Advertisement is an important strategy in marketing. The information in advertisement is always decorated and not very real. It is very influential, however, to make people trust it, when it appears in front of people through different media everyday. The global businesses even spend much money on advertisement to produce an impressive

1 In Taiwan there is a neologism called "strawberry generation", which means the people born in 1982 and beyond who "bruise easily" like strawberries, an allegory that they cannot withstand social pressure or work hard like people befor.

and positive image, to "brainwash" people, in order to make them to consume their products.

In the age of globalization there is much, or too much information around us. To select the useful and reliable information is an important task in this age. Therefore, critical thinking, which teaches good reasoning, argumentation and logic, should be well imparted, to expose the fake mask of malice propaganda.

4) Tolerance

Because of the convenient and quick transmission in the age of globalization, multi-cultural and multi-value society gradually becomes the common landscape of the world. The opener a society is, the more chances of progress it has. Intolerance against other races, values and opinions, however, has always existed in most parts of the world. (Cf. Tran 1998, Ch. 5) How to respect others and to tolerate the different opinions which we don't approve is the essential morality in the new age to keep the progress and harmony of the society.

Conclusion

People enjoy many conveniences in the age of globalization. It is a new age of human culture. Many questions could be solved through the new technology, but there are also many questions, which evolve to a more complicated form and still remain. Educational question belongs to one of the latter. The content and goal of education should be appropriately adjusted or changed according the new circumstances, otherwise the educated would waste their time and money on the inadequate educational activities and the society also can't reach huge progress from the raising of human quality. The age of globalization is a multi-cultural and pluralistic age. The educational planning should follow this trend, and then can obtain the fruitful achievement.

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GENDER EQUALITY IN ACCESSING TO EDUCATION IN VIETNAM - ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

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I. Introduction

Equity, democracy, and equality are three closely related issues. Implementation of these three issues is to ensure the rights and obligations of all social classes in society, and all ethnic groups in each country. Approaching from a philosophical perspective, we see that solving one as well as three issues at the same time will affect many other problems: economy, politics, culture - society ... of a country. In this article, we focus on analyzing one issue of the three mentioned, that is the issue of gender equality in accessing education in Vietnam in recent years; thereby showing that the implementation of gender equality in accessing education also aims at how to build gender equity in particular and social justice in general.

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II. Achievements and remaining challenges in the implementation of gender equality in accessing education in Vietnam in recent years

As we know, the principle "Women are equal to men in all aspects" is inscribed in the first Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, issued in 1946. Subsequently, the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam issued in 1992 continued to assert this principle more clearly**.** Vietnam is also one of the first countries to sign a Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW[1]), aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. A document of the United Nations also clearly stated: "Gender equality is that men and women are recognized to have equal social status, have the same conditions to fully attain human rights, have equal opportunities to contribute to and benefit from the country's political, socio-economic and cultural development" (Vietnam Women's Union, 2004). With efforts to implement gender equality in access to education, Vietnam has made remarkable achievements, but there are still some limitations that need to be overcome in the coming period.

1. Achievements in the implementation of gender equality in accessing education

Investment in education development is one of the special priority policies in Vietnam. The Government has made great efforts to implement gender equality in the field of education, especially in budget allocation for education. This is reflected in the rapidly increasing spending on education over the years: 16.6% in 2002, 18% in 2005 and 20% in 2008 in the total state budget. The results of these priorities have contributed to narrowing the gender gap in education (Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs, 2006). Specifically, after more than 20 years of implementing the policy of universal primary

1 It is an international convention approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1979, which is seen as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for Women, effective from September 3, 1981.

education, in 2015 nearly 95% of the population of Vietnam aged 15 and older is literate. In 2014, the gender equality index by education level showed that there was almost no gender difference in primary and lower secondary education. At the upper secondary education level, the percentage of girls attending school at the right age is 68.3% compared with the rate for boys at 58.2%. The proportion of women in the total number of people with master's and doctoral degrees has improved significantly, specifically, if, in 2009, women only accounted for 22.7% of the total number of people with master's and doctoral degrees, by 2014 this rate had increased to 40.2% (UN Women, 2016).

However, Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country with 54 ethnic groups. The majority of the population (85.5%) belongs to the Kinh ethnic group and 53 other minority ethnic groups in Vietnam make up the rest of the population with a total of about 13.4 million people. Ethnic minorities live in remote and mountainous areas of the country. This is also the objective reason causing the inequality between the Kinh and the ethnic minorities still wide and slow to be overcome, especially in education and training, employment and income, health care and reproduction (Department of Ethnic Minority Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs and UN Women, 2016).

Recognizing that the gender gap between ethnic minorities still exists, the Vietnam government has built up a legal framework to facilitate gender equality and women's empowerment at the national level, including policies to promote gender equality in ethnic minority areas over the years. Specific clauses to promote gender equality in ethnic minority areas are included in the Law on Gender Equality (2006), the National Strategy on gender equality 2011-2020, and the National Program on gender equality in 2011-2015 and 2015-2020. Also, there are several policies specific to ethnic minority areas such as the National Project on Ending child marriage and inbreeding marriage in ethnic minority areas for the period 2015-2025 and the National Project to support gender equality activities in ethnic minority areas for the period 2018-2025. These policies are designed to create positive

changes in gender equality, to enhance the status of ethnic minority women, and ultimately contributing to the achievement of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-2020 (Department of Ethnic Minority Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs and UN Women, 2016).

2. Challenges, obstacles for women in accessing education

Vietnam has made a lot of efforts to enhance gender equality in access to education. The fact has proven that Vietnam has a certain improvement in gender equality in access to education over the past years. However, in general, women's education level is still lower than that of men. Specifically, the illiteracy rate among women is nearly twice as high as that of men (6.8% versus 3.4%); The proportion of illiterate women is higher than that of men in most age groups but particularly high in women group aged 55 and older. This is a historical issue as the rate of illiteracy increases with age and the majority of illiterate people are concentrated in the highest age groups. In 2014, nearly 25% of women over 65 years of age were illiterate, while the corresponding rate of illiterate men was only about 8% (UN Women, 2016). The gender gap in the educational attainment of women compared to men through data reported by the Ministry of Education and Training in 2007 shows that the proportion of women who were awarded the title of associate professors was only 11.67. % meanwhile for men is 88.33%; for professors, women occupied only 5.1% while men were 94.9%; In terms of degrees, for doctoral degrees, the gender gap is still very wide in scientific doctoral degrees, men account for 90.22%, meanwhile, women account for only 9.78%; As for doctoral degrees, men make up 82.98% and women only 17.02%.

Another problem is that the training of female workers is still facing more difficulties than men. Although the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in Vietnam has set a target to increase the percentage of female workers being trained to 35%, of which attending vocational training is 21% by 2010. The 2009 Vietnam Population and Housing Census showed that women make up a higher proportion of

the population without technical and professional qualifications in the population aged 15 and over, and men have a higher rate than women at all professional and technical qualifications, except for college degrees. When compared to men, the biggest obstacle for women to improve their professional qualifications and seize training opportunities is traditional gender roles. If housework and childcare do not significantly affect men, it is a significant problem for women in accessing training opportunities (Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs, 2006). Also, Vu Quoc Ngu (2004) also mentioned that, in families where parents have low education, girls are more disadvantaged because parents often leave girls out of school when the family is in economic problem. The project Support to the Renovation of Education Management (SREM) funded by the European community has shown one of many research contents when surveying representative samples in disadvantaged provinces in three regions of Vietnam include the provinces: Lai Chau, Dien Bien, Ha Giang, Phu Yen, Gia Lai, Kon Tum, and Kien Giang that women have to work twice as much as men, many cases due to perceptions of traditional gender, husbands do not share work with their wives, this affects self-study, education to improve qualifications and develop the profession[1].

Besides, another factor is that gender stereotypes are still quite common in textbooks, teaching materials, and learning methods. A joint research project conducted by international organizations: World Bank, ADB, DFID, and CIDA has the report "Gender situation assessment in Vietnam 12/2006" showing that, in the process of renewing content in textbooks, gender stereotypes are still manifested in educational materials and textbooks such as housework sharing, discrimination in the labor force and other behaviors risky for young men and women. The survey conducted by the Ministry of Education and Training "Reviewing primary textbooks from a gender perspective" (December

1 From the survey and discussion about the SREM Project, some female education staff suggested that the criterion "family management" should be assessed as a criterion for appointing the principal for women, because family management work is related to the principal's functions and duties.

2009) also strengthened this fact. For example, surveying the textbook of Civil Education Grade 9, the study showed that women appeared in 5/20 cases; male stories appear 11/20 and neutral characters appear in 4/20 cases. This is one of the factors that reinforce the traditional gender role. Accordingly, girls and boys are often oriented to different fields of learning and training, this orientation is often dominated by the stereotypes that society has "labeled"[1] which profession is appropriate for men and which is suitable for women. This affects their future career prospects and impedes their potential (United Nations in Vietnam, 2016). The fact also shows that, due to gender stereotypes in career choices, gender imbalances among teachers appear at all three levels of general education, most evident at the primary level. In 2014, at the primary level, the number of female teachers was 270.9 thousand people, 3.5 times higher than the number of male teachers, 76.9 thousand people (UN Women, 2016).

In terms of investment in education in Vietnamese households, there is generally no gender disparity when looking at data on educational expenditures at the household level. However, if we analyze the data by regions, urban-rural areas, and ethnic groups, we see that there are still gender gaps. For example, in 2014, the average household expenditure for female members to go to school was 4.5 million VND per person per year; the average expenditure for male members was 4.6 million VND per person per year. Female spending for family members' education is higher than that of men; specifically, the average expenditure for schooling by a household having a female head is 5.3 million VND per person per year, which is higher than a household having a male head who spend 4.3 million VND per person per year (UN Women, 2016).

Also, although the gender gap in primary and secondary education has largely narrowed over the past years, women still face many challenges. In particular, women and girls from ethnic minorities and poor households have fewer opportunities, and the rate of dropout and

1 The author put this word in quote to highlight its figurative meaning.

illiteracy in ethnic minorities and poor households is also higher. The rate of children attending upper secondary school attendance rates living in rural areas, poor households, and ethnic minorities are still much lower than children living in urban areas and Kinh children (UN Women, 2016).

The survey on the socio-economic situation of 53 ethnic minority groups in Vietnam (firstly conducted in 2015 by the General Statistics Office) shows that gender inequality in ethnic minority areas is still serious and these problems need to be improved. In ethnic minority communities, women and girls face more disadvantages in accessing opportunities and resources because social norms tend to position women lower than men and limit their livelihood options and strongly attach them to reproductive activities and chores. The intersection of discrimination based on both sex and ethnicity has the most significant impact, creating **double inequality**[1] for ethnic minority women and children (Department of Ethnic Minority Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs and UN Women, 2016).

Although the gender gap in general education and vocational training has narrowed significantly over the years, this process has not taken place in ethnic minority areas. There is still a wide gap in access to education between children among ethnic minorities and the Kinh, especially the gap is wider in the higher education. The average literacy rate of the ethnic minorities is 79.09% (male: 85.53%, female: 72.70%), significantly lower than that of the Kinh, averagely 96.1% (male: 97.81%, female: 94.69%). The elderly in ethnic minority groups have a higher rate of illiteracy, especially women. Among those 65 and over, only 65.87% of ethnic minority men and 39.08% of women can read and write in Vietnamese. In fact, at the primary level, the gap is 0.38% (Kinh: 89.21%, ethnic minority group: 88.83%). However, this gap increased to 11.12% at the lower secondary level (Kinh: 83.72%, ethnic minorities: 72.60%) and to 32.87% at the level of high school (Kinh: 65.2%, ethnic minority group: 32.33%).

1 The authors bold these words to highlight its meaning.

We also see that the proportion of children who do not attend school in ethnic minority groups is higher than that of the Kinh group at the lower secondary and upper secondary levels and increases significantly with higher educational attainment. The widest gap is found in upper secondary education, with 47.2% of ethnic minority students dropping out of school, mainly due to early marriage and early participation in full-time jobs. It is also worth noting that, many boarding schools are still far from population areas and another factor is the schools with general infrastructure and facilities of lower secondary schools are often inadequate and unsafe. This has a lot of potential for insecurity for ethnic minority children, especially girls.

Although the State has invested heavily in boarding schools, in recent years the number of schools has increased a lot to meet the learning needs of ethnic minority students, the quality of the facilities does not meet the required standards of the schools. According to the Ministry of Education and Training, over five years (2011-2015), the number of boarding schools increased from 127 to 852 in 28 provinces, serving 146,000 students. However, only 30-50 percent of schools have solidly constructed infrastructure. The infrastructure of the remaining schools is semi-permanent, temporary, and uncertain. About 98,400 ethnic minority children (67%) are placed in schools, while the rest of the students have to rent out-of-school accommodation. Notably, at higher education levels, about 1.8% of students set up tents around their schools as temporary accommodation.

It can be said that most of the education and vocational training policies for ethnic minorities are sex-neutral, meaning that these policies are not specifically targeted at men or women and can maintain existing gender inequality. For example, the Education Law (amended in 2005 and 2010) and the Law on Vocational Education (2014) provide measures to narrow the gap in accessing general education and vocational education for ethnic minorities; The Law on Gender Equality stipulates gender equality in education, ... However, the specific gender issue for ethnic minorities is not included in the Law.

III. Conclusion

Through the above analysis, we can see that the Government of Vietnam has made great efforts and achieved remarkable achievements in promoting gender equality and women's rights after Doi Moi (Renovation) since 1986. This paper discusses Vietnam's programs and policies that have been implemented to promote gender equality in education access and significant improvements in narrowing the gender gap in education in our country over the past years. In addition to these achievements, many remaining challenges and obstacles for women in accessing education are also analyzed, highlighted. Although the gender gap in the literacy rates of men and women has narrowed in recent years, in general, women's educational attainment is still lower than that of men, and the higher gender gaps are larger at the higher educational level, especially in poor households and ethnic minorities.

The biggest obstacle for women to improve their professional qualifications and seize training opportunities is gender stereotypes and the practice of traditional gender roles. Here, the cognitive factor is a major obstacle that society needs to make a strong and urgent change. Gender equality must be understood by its true nature as social equity and as such, gender equality in access to education is also an aspect of showing social equity. To solve this radical problem, it is impossible not to consider the dialectical relationship between the existing infrastructure and superstructure that has been specified in philosophy. Also, the authors found that ethnic minority women and girls still have many disadvantages in the current policies on education, and there should be specific policies to support ethnic minority women and girls to ensure their access to better education now and in the future.

The Industrial Revolution 4.0 is having a strong impact on all aspects of social life. The quick preparation of human resources for this Revolution is, indeed, an opportunity, but it poses many great challenges for Vietnam now and in the future as women face the biggest problem, that is unemployment. Factors: scientific knowledge, labor skills,

productivity, labor quality, ... to meet the needs of the labor market in a high-tech environment is an obstacle for women. Therefore, the serious implementation, especially the quick revision of current policies and issuance of new policies on gender equality, in which women's access to education is very important for the sustainable development of a fair, democratic, and civilized society in the period of deep and wide international integration.

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DEALING WITH THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY IN VIETNAM TODAY: CURRENT SITUATION AND PROBLEMS

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1. Current situation of dealing with the relationship between economic growth and social security in Vietnam today

The economy has achieved a relatively stable growth rate over the past years ("the average rate was 5.91% in 2011-2015, 6.21% in 2016, 6.81% in 2017")[3] and created necessary physical foundations for implementing social security programs. State budget spending on social security and poverty alleviation is constantly increasing, creating conditions to expand programs and policies on social security, and then social security itself is guaranteed to have a positive impact on the growth of the economy. The practice of dealing with the relationship between economic growth and social security has achieved several important

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3 Ministry of Science and Technology, General Statistics Office, *Press release on socio-economic development in 2017*, p.1.

results at all pillars: economic growth with the implementation of programs and policies on labor market development; economic growth with the implementation of programs and policies on social insurance, health insurance, and unemployment insurance; economic growth with the implementation of programs and policies on social incentives and assistance, specifically:

First, job-related and labor-related problems have been paid close attention and the implementation of policies to link economic growth with solving job-related problems in each development program has contributed to creating jobs, reducing the rate of unemployment for the economy. In the period 2011 - 2015, the country created jobs for more than 7.8 million people, in 2016 and 2017 created jobs for 3.2 million people. "The rate of trained workers in the working-age group in 2017 reached 21.5% of the total number of working laborers"[1]. The unemployment rate witnessed a decreasing tendency, from 2.33% in 2015 to 2.24% in 2017[2]. The relatively high economic growth rate in recent years has had a remarkable impact on the increase of real income of the people. Findings of the survey on living standards and household living standards show that in the period 2011 - 2017, GDP per capita increased by 64%, from 1,532 USD/person in 2011 to 2,838 USD/person in 2017[3].

The growth of the labor market and the quality of the labor force have had a positive impact on the economy, the proportion of labor contribution and the total factor productivity (TFP) to GDP has increased. In the period 2006-2010, "the contribution of labor was 19%, of TFP was 23%, and in the period 2011 - 2015, they increased by 23% and

1 Ministry of Science and Technology, General Statistics Office, *Press release on socio-economic development in 2017*, p.40.

2 Ministry of Science and Technology, General Statistics Office, *Press release on socio-economic development in 2017*, p.40.

3 Ministry of Science and Technology, General Statistics Office, *Press release on socio-economic development in 2017*, p.40.

25.5%, respectively"[1]. This has an important meaning in transforming economic growth from being extensive to being intensive, promoting sustainable economic growth.

Second, Vietnam's economic growth in recent years has created necessary physical conditions to promote the development of social insurance, health insurance, and unemployment insurance systems. The relatively high economic growth in the market economy results in the constant increase of the demand for social security, on the other hand, the growth brings income to the national economy, creating necessary physical conditions for people and economic entities to expand their participation in the social insurance, health insurance, and unemployment insurance systems. Subjects who participate in social insurance are constantly expanding. At first, the subjects were only officials and employees in the state sector, but then gradually expanded to members of co-operative groups, individual business households, all wage earners of all economic sectors as well as the authorities of communes, wards, and towns with a tendency towards low-income and vulnerable groups in society such as the poor, students, and laborers, etc. Income from social insurance and insurance health care is more and more suitable for market economic conditions, contributing to reducing pressure on the state budget. The contribution of social insurance participants replaced the state budget as the main source of payment for social insurance with increasing revenues: "from 86,742 billion VND in 2010 to 245,766 billion VND in 2016"[2]. The health insurance fund also had a higher growth rate than the economy, the revenue growth rate from 2011 to 2015 was always over 10.5%. By October 2018, "the number of people participating in the compulsory social insurance had been 14.19 million people; in voluntary social insurance had been 251

1 Hoang Truong Giang, "Motivating Vietnam's economy in the process of economic integration", *Communist Review* (http://www.tapchicongsan.org.vn/Home/PrintStory.aspx?distribution=34170&print=true)

2 https://www.gso.gov.vn/SLTK/

thousand people; in unemployment insurance had been 12.13 million people; in health insurance had been 82.33 million people, reaching a rate of 87.62% of the population"[1]. The forms of social insurance and health insurance are also increasingly diversified, meeting the increasing demand of the people: compulsory social insurance, voluntary social insurance, compulsory health insurance, voluntary health insurance, life insurance, unemployment insurance, etc.

The Vietnam insurance system that has been constantly being built and completed in recent years has had a positive impact on economic growth, contributing to socio-economic stability, contributing to the proportion of GDP and investment into the economy, contributing to creating jobs and income for workers. The contribution of the Vietnam insurance system to socio-economic stability is constantly increasing. On average, in the period 2011 - 2017, our insurance industry's spending on this activity increased by 29.1%, insurance industry's spending on socio-economic stability in 2011 reached VND 21,848 billion, by 2017 it had increased to VND 75,075 billion, 3.4 times higher[2]. The insurance industry has gradually expanded the function of risk reduction, compensating income for employees through damage compensation and insurance payment, contributing to stabilizing the socio-economic situation. The insurance system's contribution to GDP has continuously increased, in 2011 the insurance industry's contribution to GDP was 1.85%, in 2077 it increased to 2.64%. The insurance system also implements policies to reinvest into the economy with idle money from the social insurance fund at an increasingly high rate: it was 83,439 billion VND in 2011, was 198,150 billion VND in 2016, and was 247,815 billion VND in 2017. Also, the insurance system contributes to job creation for the economy through the development of a contingent of

1 http://thanhtra.com.vn/xa-hoi/y-te/ngan-sach-chi-hon-37-nghin-ty-dong-cho-bhxh_t57c9n140747

2 Ministry of Finance, *Vietnam Insurance Market 2017*, Finance Publishing House, Hanoi, 2018, p.8.

management staff and insurance agents. In 2017 alone, the insurance industry has contributed to creating jobs for 786,795 workers[1].

Third, Vietnam's economic growth in recent years has created necessary physical conditions to expand programs and policies on social assistance and social incentives. The level of preferential subsidies for people with meritorious services has continuously increased according to the economic growth rate. It was 876,000 VND/month in 2011, was 1,110,000 VND/month in 2012, and was 1,515,000 VND/month in 2018, an increase of 57.8% compared to 2011. Up to now (2017), "the whole country has recognized and supported policy beneficiaries with 8.8 million people with meritorious services, ensuring that more than 95% of families with meritorious services have an average standard of living"[2]. In the period 2011 - 2015, "the state budget spent 60 trillion VND to support the purchase of health insurance cards for policy beneficiaries; 35 trillion VND in support of learning conditions for more than 10 million poor students and ethnic minority students; and 5 trillion VND to provide 350 thousand poor workers with free vocational education"[3]. The social assistance policy system has been supplemented and developed, and beneficiaries of regular social assistance and unscheduled social assistance have been significantly expanded. By 2017, the beneficiaries of social assistance were estimated over 20% of the population, including: "over 10 million elderly people, 7.2 million people with disabilities, 2.5 million children in special circumstances, 8.8 million people with meritorious services to the revolution, more than 12 million people participating in social insurance, purchase of

1 Ministry of Finance, *Vietnam Insurance Market 2017*, Finance Publishing House, Hanoi, 2018, p.8.

2 Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, *Project on building a national database on social security, applying information technology to addressing social security policies up to 2020 and orientation of development. development to 2030*, Hanoi, 2017, p.8.

3 General Statistics Office, *Socio-economic dynamics and situation 5 Vietnam 5 years 2011 - 2015*, Statistics Publishing House, Hanoi, 2016, p.18.

health insurance for nearly 70 million people (75% of the population), over 9.9 million people participating in unemployment insurance, 2.33 million poor households (9.8% of households), 1.23 million near-poor households (5.22% of households), 2.73 million monthly-based beneficiaries of social benefits, and over 2 million households receiving unscheduled assistance every year"[1]. Many models of social assistance are built up according to the needs and characteristics of each target group. Attention on these target groups is also increasingly socialized, at present, "the whole country has 408 social assistance organizations, including 194 public and 214 non-public organizations"[2].

Although some encouraging results have been achieved, the integration of economic growth with social security in recent years still has many shortcomings and limitations as follows.

First, the quality of the Vietnamese labor market still does not meet the growth requirements of the economy. The number of jobs created annually is relatively large, but most of them are unskilled and simple jobs and related to agriculture and low-income sectors. Labor structure by qualifications and occupations is not yet reasonable, there is a shortage of highly qualified specialists, professional management teams, good businessmen, and skilled workers. The number of unskilled workers without professional and technical qualifications accounts for a very large proportion: 79.4% in 2016 and 78.5% in 2017[3]. This situation has a great impact on the size and quality of the economy's growth,

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1 Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, *Project on building a national database on social security, applying information technology to addressing social security policies up to 2020 and orientation of development. development to 2030*, Hanoi, 2017, p.7.

2 Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, *Project on building a national database on social security, applying information technology to addressing social security policies up to 2020 and orientation of development. development to 2030*, Hanoi, 2017, p.7.

3 Ministry of Science and Technology, General Statistics Office, *Press release on socio-economic development in 2016 and 2017.*

causing a decrease in labor productivity and national competitiveness. Although the unemployment rate of the economy has decreased but is still high (2.24% in 2017), which becomes a burden, inhibiting the growth of the economy and raising many complex social problems. The income gap and the rich-poor differentiation are increasing. The income gap between the highest income group and the lowest income group was 8.1 times in 2002, then by 2010 it had increased to 9.2 times and in 2016 it was 9.7 times[1]. This shows that the benefits from achievements brought about by economic growth in a large part of the population are still low, and the relationship between growth and welfare has not been harmoniously resolved.

Second, the social security system in the field of social protection and health insurance does not keep up with the growth of the economy and the increasing demand of society. Although the legal regulations in the field of social insurance and health insurance are continuously supplemented and developed, they are not really synchronous and complete, the management of the insurance fund still has many factors, and the revenue-expenditure related mechanism is not yet flexible, some new types of insurance such as unemployment insurance still witness many obstacles when deployed, leading to derogation and loss of the insurance fund. Also, social insurance and health insurance funds are increasingly in danger of budget deficit due to overspending. In 2016, the health insurance fund's overspending was more than 5100 billion VND, the social insurance fund faced the risk of imbalance in the impact of population aging, salary reform, retirement pension modification, minimum salary adjustment, and social insurance incentives. According to forecasts, the revenue-expenditure balance can be guaranteed until 2020, then witnesses a decreasing tendency, and by 2030 there will be a possible imbalance unless proper solutions are implemented.

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1 General Statistics Office, *Survey Results on Vietnam's Living Standards 2002, 2010, 2016*, Statistical Publishing House, Hanoi, 2003, 2011, 2017.

Third, although the beneficiaries of preferential subsidies and social assistance have been continuously expanded and the level of subsidies has also been improved, basically they have not met the needs of the society and have not kept up with the growth of the economy. According to the provisions of Decree No. 136/2013/ND-CP of the Government, the standard level of social assistance is 270,000 VND/1 person/month, which is inadequate if compared with the minimum standard of living, only equal to 80% of the current poverty threshold in Vietnam. The activities of social incentives and social subsidies are mainly implemented with the state budget, the mobilization of social resources for these activities is still limited, leading to increased pressure on the state budget. The expansion of preferential policies and social assistance has increased the burden on the economy, especially in today's problematic socio-economic conditions.

In short, the relatively stable economic growth over the years has created the necessary physical foundations for strengthening social security programs and policies. However, economic growth has also begun to manifest its negative effects, giving rise to more and more social security problems that need to be addressed. Also, social security policies and programs have been better and better solved, having a positive impact on economic growth, contributing to rapid and sustainable economic growth. However, the implementation of social security, in general, has not met the increasing demand of society and the demand of economic growth; Sometimes, social security has put increasing pressure on the economy, hindering the speed and quality of economic growth.

2. Raised problems in dealing with the relationship between economic growth and social security in Vietnam today

Firstly, in dealing with the relationship between economic growth and social security in Vietnam today, economic growth is considered a necessary condition, creating the necessary physical foundations for the implementation of social security programs and policies. However,

Vietnam's economic growth in recent years has not achieved the desired results both in speed and quality. Growth mainly depends on factors of resources, capital, and labor, so in the long term, there is a risk of instability. The constantly increasing demand for social security requires measures to sustain and promote fast and sustainable economic growth.

Secondly, to effectively deal with the relationship between economic growth and social security, besides the high economic growth, the implementation of a rational and effective social security is also important to bring necessary assurances to help people stabilize their lives, to create a foundation to achieve the goals of sustainable development. However, the system of policies and laws in the field of welfare in our country is not yet complete and synchronous; Some basic pillars in the welfare system have not been shaped; the implementation of social security programs and policies is still limited. The task of building, completing, and implementing the social security system in Vietnam is now urgent.

Thirdly, the relationship between economic growth and social security is a mutual relationship, in which the efficiency of combining economic growth with social security depends on the efficiency of dealing with the relationship between economic growth with each basic pillar of the social security system: economic growth with the implementation of programs and policies on labor market development; economic growth with social insurance, health insurance, and unemployment insurance; economic growth with social incentives and assistance. Dealing with these relationships still has many limitations and shortcomings, which inevitably lead to the poor harmonization of the overall relationship between economic growth and social security.

Fourthly, the relationship between economic growth and social security is a dialectical relationship that is both unified and contradictory. In which, economic growth and social security are the foundations and also the results of each other's development, at the same time it is possible to inhibit and eliminate each other. Dealing with the relationship

between economic growth and social security in our country in recent years has shown many signs of opposing and repressing impacts: economic growth has caused many complicated security issues, in contrast, the implementation of social security produces pressures on the economy and inhibits its growth. To achieve the desired outcome in dealing with this relationship, attention must be paid to overcoming the mutually inhibiting impact of economic growth and social security.

3. Some solutions to effectively deal with the relationship between economic growth and social security in Vietnam today

Firstly, to promote rapid and sustainable economic growth to create necessary physical foundations for the implementation of social security programs and policies. Vietnam's economy over the past time has achieved a relatively high growth rate, but mainly extension-based growth with the slow shift of economic structure and based much on the contribution of capitals and labors, which can potentially destabilize in the future. Therefore, to promote fast and sustainable economic growth, it is necessary to transform the economic growth model from being extension-based to being intention-based and associated with the restructuring of economic sectors; to vigorously develop all economic sectors in association with production and business organizations; and to improve productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness of the economy.

Secondly, it is necessary to build and perfect the system of policies and laws on social security in all the basic pillars, create a complete legal framework on social security; raise people's awareness of social security; promote socialization of social security activities, build public-private cooperation models in ensuring social security; build a network of social security throughout the country, mobilize resources to effectively implement social security programs and policies to create sustainable jobs and stable income; increase coverage of social insurance, unemployment insurance, and health insurance; strengthen social assistance and relief, and well implement the social preferential policies for people with meritorious services.

Thirdly, it is important to link economic growth with each basic component of the social security system in each specific step and each development policy: economic growth with the implementation of programs and policies on labor market development; economic growth with social insurance, health insurance, and unemployment insurance; and economic growth with social incentives and assistance. Accordingly, each policy to promote economic growth must create the necessary resources and human resources to expand and develop the social security system. On the contrary, in each policy to implement social security, it is necessary to prevent, minimize, and deal with risks for people, thereby creating social stability towards sustainable development.

- Link economic growth with programs and policies on labor market development so that people can have jobs and income for risk prevention and self-welfare, thereby contributing to promoting economic growth. Solutions to link economic growth with labor market development need to be built synchronously and systematically, covering from mechanisms and policies on business development support to the provision of public services, improvement of human resources quality, and enhancement of the qualifications and competencies of actors in the economy. Specifically, it is necessary to invest in the development of vocational training institutions to meet the needs of the economy, towards vocational universalization for the young-aged workforce; to formulate policies to actively support enterprises to play a key role in producing skilled workers, creating conditions to support workers in vocational training. Different localities and regions need to focus on creating jobs through the implementation of socio-economic development programs. It is necessary to strengthen the provision of information, analysis, assessment, and forecasting of labor market demand; and establish linkages between career guidance, vocational training and consulting, and job placement with companies, enterprises, and employers.

- Continue to study, supplement and complete policies and laws on the insurance system in the direction of rationally linking between the economic capacity and the actual income of employees with the

participation mechanism and regulations on the rate of payment - benefit of social insurance and health insurance. In each policy, economic growth promotion must be associated with promoting the implementation of social insurance, health insurance, and unemployment insurance; it is important to expand the coverage of the insurance system, to expand the subjects of paying and benefiting to create conditions for people to contribute a part of the income from economic growth to contribute to the implementation of the risk reduction. At the same time, it is essential to improve the management capacity of the insurance fund, to pay attention to the use of the idle insurance fund to re-invest into the economy, thereby contributing to economic growth. It is important to develop plentiful and diversified types of social insurance and health insurance to meet the increasing needs of the people.

- Link economic growth with the implementation of programs and policies on social relief and assistance. *On the one hand*, the implementation of subsidy and incentive mechanisms must be based on the country's economic development capacity in order not to put too much pressure on the budget, ensuring that beneficiaries of subsidies and incentives have a minimum standard of living; *on the other hand*, through economic assistance, it is necessary to create conditions for those who need social assistance to support themselves and their families and contribute to the development of the country. It is also necessary to focus on raising the level of social assistance and the number of beneficiaries; socialize the activities of social incentives and social assistance based on promoting the tradition of "healthy leaves protect torn leaves", "eating fruits, remember the planters" to reduce spending from the state budget; connect programs, preferential policies, and social assistance with other policies within and outside the social security system such as policies on labor and employment, insurance policies, and credit loan policies, etc. to create conditions for the poor and vulnerable groups to access financial resources and markets to create jobs, to rise out of sustainable poverty, and to contribute to economic growth.

EQUALITY AND EQUITY IN VIETNAM'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Hoang Thi Thuy An[1]

Equality: Opportunity for all

The equal rights of every citizen in terms of learning opportunities and accessing education regardless of their ethnicity, religion, belief, gender, and social status were legislated in the Education Law of 2005. Public education, which is free for all students in public schools at kindergarten and primary levels, is the key strategy for Vietnam to realize the equal right of learning opportunities. Since 2000, Vietnam has made significant progress in achieving universal primary education. According to the Decision approving the 2011-2020 education development strategy[2] by the Prime Minister, in the 2001-2010 period, the rate of school-age students increased rapidly, of which 5-year-old kindergarten students increased from 72% to 98%; primary school students from 94% to 97%; junior high school students from 70% to 83%; high school students from 33% to 50%. Vocational

1 Ma., Institute of Philosophy, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.

2 The Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Decision approving the 2011-2020 education development strategy, 2012, https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Giao-duc/Quyet-dinh-711-QD-TTg-nam-2012-Chien-luoc-phat-trien-giao-duc-2011-2020-141203.aspx

training scale increased by 3.08 times, in which vocational training for secondary education increased by 2.69 times. The scale of higher education increased 2.35 times. In 2010, the number of college students per 10,000 people reached 227. The number of students studying in schools, universities, colleges, vocational schools has been increasing over the years. There were nearly 1.5 million university and college students in the school year of 2018-2019.

In addition to free public education for students at kindergarten and primary levels (for junior high school students is coming up), to provide better, more equal opportunities for all, students from marginalized groups such as poor households and ethnic minority have received governmental incentives and financial support to pursue their studying. For instance, Decision No 157/2007/QĐ-TTg requires the government to give loans for orphan students, students with a mother or father incapable of working, students from poor households with difficulties due to accidents, diseases, and natural disasters certified by the People's Committee of the commune where they reside. The maximum loan amount is VND 1,500,000/month/student; the interest rate per month is 0.5%. Or Decree 74/2013/NĐ-CP on freeing and reducing tuition fees, providing learning expenses for children in kindergartens, high school students from poor households, or students with an ethnic background studying at vocational and higher education institutions were practiced. Students from ethnic minority even are encouraged to go to schools by ethnic policies such as the Resolution 24-NQ/TW on ethnic works approved by the Central Party Committee in 2003 or the Decision 775/QĐ-TTg on the target program for education development in mountainous areas, ethnic minority areas and disadvantaged areas in the period 2016-2020 approved by the Prime Minister.

Since the Reform Period (Doi Moi) in 1986, the private sectors, including Vietnamese individuals, international educational institutions, are permitted to officially participate in the education market by opening private, semi-public schools at all levels. The participation of private sectors in education was named socialization and legislated by laws,

resolutions, and decrees. Resolution 90/CP/1997 on the advocacy of educational, medical and cultural activities in 1997, Decree 73/1999/ND-CP[1] on policies to encourage socialization in education, health, culture, and sports or Term 12[2], Education law 2005 are the instances. The Resolution 35[3]/NQ-CP/2019 on strengthening the mobilization of social resources for investment in education and training development in the period of 2019-2025 points out, the number of private educational institutions in 2018 was 2955 institutions, accounted for 6.68 % of more than 44 thousand educational institutions in the country. There were 1.3 million pupils and students spending their school time in private educational institutions, made up 6% total of 22.5 million. The role in supplying the education system as a part of welfare has been no longer the responsibility of the government only.

The education sector itself raises its voice to the work of providing the educational opportunity for every child by developing the unified national curriculum implemented by all schools in the country. The national curriculum, which had been drafted and published, addressed the education goal of each educational phase, learning outcomes (knowledge and skills, attitudes included of students), teaching and learning content, materials, testing, assessment methods of educational performances of students. Implementation of the unified national curriculum has led to significant achievements of the education system acknowledged in the Education development strategy 2001-2010 and

1 https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Giao-duc/Nghi-dinh-73-1999-ND-CP-chinh-sach-khuyen-khich-xa-hoi-hoa-doi-voi-cac-hoat-dong-trong-linh-vuc-giao-duc-y-te-van-hoa-the-thao-45589.aspx

2 The National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (2005), Education law, term 12: Xã hội hóa sự nghiệp giáo dục, https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Giao-duc/Luat-Giao-duc-2005-38-2005-QH11-2636.aspx

3 The government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (2019), Resolution No. 35 / NQ-CP of the Government: On strengthening the mobilization of social resources for investment in education and training development in the period of 2019 – 2025, http://www.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/chinhphu/hethongvanban?class_id=2&mode=detail&document_id=197167

2011-2020. Especially in 2015, the results of Vietnam's 15-years-old students in the international PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) test run by OECD ranked the 12th position that was higher than students in several developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The high-test scores in the PISA test (mainly in Math and Sciences) contributed to Vietnam's place in the World Bank human capital index. Vietnam was "ranked 48 out of 157 countries and territories in terms of the human capital index (HCI), second in ASEAN behind Singapore"[1]. The country's education success stands out relative to its wealth.

Or chances for some?

Oxfam Vietnam conducted surveys on Vietnamese living standards and showed that 45% of households in the poorest quintile of 2004 jumped to the higher income quintile after 4 years, but this rate dropped to 37% between 2010 and 2014. Regardless of ethnicity, while 49% of Kinh households (the majority) in the poorest group in 2010 moved to the higher income groups in 2014, only 19% of ethnic minority households could do the same thing[2]. Moreover, the intergenerational income mobility in urban areas is higher than in rural areas, and Kinh people are higher than ethnic minorities. One of the reasons for low social mobility in terms of income and social status is the poor educational background of people. It means, although the government announces a load of policy incentives to practice and ensure equal rights for people in education, not so many people benefit from it, particularly ethnic minority and poor households. Students in the ethnic minority still perform worse academic levels than students in the majority (Kinh

1 The World Bank in Vietnam, Vietnam: Overview, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/vietnam/overview

2 Oxfam Việt Nam, *Dịch chuyển xã hội và bình đẳng cơ hội việc làm tại Việt Nam: Xu hướng và các yếu tố tác động*, 2018, https://cng-cdn.oxfam.org/vietnam.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/Oxfam_Social%20mobility%20and%20equality%20of%20opportunity%20in%20Vietnam_VIE.pdf, page 7

people) although they learn in the same curriculum and experience the same content, testing, and assessment papers.

Oxfam Vietnam presented, as of 2017[1], Vietnam has about 12 million ethnic minority people, 15 million small-scale farmers, and 15 million internal migrants. In terms of all three aspects: skills, employment, income, these three groups are at a low level. In terms of skills, ethnic minority people are more disadvantaged than Kinh people due to the large gap in access to education at the high school and college levels. The proportion of ethnic minority people with the highest level of education who graduated from university in 2004 and 2014 was 0.9% and 3.1% respectively, while that of Kinh (and Hoa) people was respectively 5.1% (2004) and 11% (2014)[2]. In light of this pattern, equality in education for marginalized groups doesn't make sense.

Đỗ Thiên Kính (2005) analyzed the surveys on Vietnamese living standards and pointed out, inequality in education tended to grow up in terms of areas and educational level. Urban areas always witness the highest rate of school enrollment among children at all levels while the lowest always goes to children in rural and mountainous areas. The higher levers in education, the more inequality can be. The highest rate of inequality in education can be found at the higher education level which strongly influences on employment opportunity of students later.

Looking far away from the marginalized groups' education, it can be seen, government expenditure on education has increased moderately over years. According to the statistics, the percentage of GDP expen-

1 Oxfam Việt Nam, *Chuyện bất bình đẳng*, 2018, https://cng-cdn.oxfam.org/vietnam.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/Chuyện%20Bất%20bình%20đẳng%20số%202_0.pdf, page 8

2 Oxfam Việt Nam, *Dịch chuyển xã hội và bình đẳng cơ hội việc làm tại Việt Nam: Xu hướng và các yếu tố tác động*, 2018, https://cng-cdn.oxfam.org/vietnam.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/Oxfam_Social%20mobility%20and%20equality%20of%20opportunity%20in%20Vietnam_VIE.pdf, page 8.

diture on education was 5.66 as of 2013[1], peaking at 5.8 as of 2019[2]. Compared to ASEAN countries, Vietnam stands as the top country investing in education since 2017 by spending 5.7%[3] of GDP on average. These shreds of evidence show the great concern of the Vietnam government goes to public education. Yet the government also has planned to boost the percentage of private actors' investment in education in the coming years. The expected numbers are 8.75% of private educational institutions and 8.9% of pupils, students in 2020, perspective 13.5% of the former and 16% of the latter in 2025[4].

Apart from the rise of government expenditure, ordinary people or households' spending on education has grown up as well. UNESCO[5] reported in 2013, Vietnamese households spent more money on children's learning in non-public schools. The average cost paid by parents and students in non-public schools increased greatly. The average in 2012 was three times higher than in 2008. According to the Vietnam Human Development Report 2015 on Inclusive Growth, "the shift from state-funded to private-funded education has worsened inequality and inefficiency"[6]. In 2012, the enrolment rate of secondary education of the

1 Vietnam-Public spending on education, https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/vietnam/public-spending-on-education

2 VOV, "Vietnam spends 20 pct of budget expenditure on education", 2019, https://english.vov.vn/society/vietnam-spends-20-pct-of-budget-expenditure-on-education-391636.vov

3 Vietnam News, "Vietnam's education makes a leap", 2018, https://vietnamnews.vn/society/468603/viet-nams-education-makes-a-leap.html#62k857RltqpJv6fF.97

4 The National Assembly, Resolution on increasing the mobilization of social resources for investment in education and training development in 2019-2025 (Nghị quyết về tăng cường huy động các nguồn lực của xã hội đầu tư cho phát triển giáo dục và đào tạo giai đoạn 2019-2025) https://luatvietnam.vn/chinh-sach/nghi-quyet-35-nq-cp-chinh-phu-173365-d1.html

5 Ministry of Education and Training, General Statistics Office, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Education financing in Vietnam 2009-2013*, 2016, http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/vietnam-nea-report.pdf

6 UNDP in Vietnam, *Growth that works for all: Vietnam Human Development*

two lowest income quintiles was very low, 50% and 40% respectively, while it was 100% for the upper-income counterpart. This gap does not show any sign of closing, and the social differentiation becomes clearest considering post-secondary education. The higher education enrolment rate of the highest income quintile was 75%, three times higher than the lowest income quintile. At the same time, we know that attaining higher education level truly brings about economic benefits and social advance, because the average salary of university graduates was 173% higher than those with vocational college qualification (UNDP, 2015).

The establishment of private and semi-public schools has increased the supply of education services, reducing the budget burden on the government, but financially, people have to take more responsibility for their needs for training. So far, the well-being of any children or students has depended tightly on the wealth of their parents. It has never been truer than the ability to pay of the individual families influence the chance of learning while education is supposed to be public goods, a part of welfare provided by the government as the essential means for remedies of market failure[1]. In this case, equality in Vietnam's education system hasn't been realized like the fact reported by OECD, education, especially public education failed to be the "equalizer" since students' social background still impact strongly on their learning performance[2].

The education system itself, the matter of inequality comes from the curriculum implemented identically along with the country. Despite different geographic areas, family backgrounds, personal desires, and capabilities, students learn the same content, enjoy the same teaching

Report 2015 on Inclusive Growth, http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/growth-works-all-viet-nam-human-development-report-2015-inclusive-growth

1 "Market failure is the economic situation defined by an inefficient distribution of goods and services in the free market." (https://www.econlib.org/library/Topics/College/marketfailures.html)

2 OECD, PISA 2012 results: Excellence through Equity: Giving Every Student the Chance to Succeed (online), 2013, source: https://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-volume-II.pdf

method, perform their academic capabilities and skills through the same standard assessment. This "uniform" character of the former national curriculum created *the sameness* among students in cities, towns, rural and mountainous areas though students are in nature different.

For example, to get a chance to study in famous public high schools, high-end private schools, or universities, students have to pass some standard tests such as National High School Examination, Grade 6 or Grade 10 Entrance Examination, even Grade 1 Admission Examination in the big cities like Hanoi. In this context, most people might think *sameness is equality.* However, it is not. On the one hand, these called "normative tests[1]" simplify students' complex competencies into simple skills like reading comprehension, doing math, or speaking English for ranking to enter educational institutions at higher levels. On the other hand, it favors students from better-off backgrounds more than those from disadvantaged lower-status backgrounds since the former or parents of the former have financial resources to let their children do extra classes or private tutoring. In this way, the normative test participates to maintain the pre-existing social status although this is the traditional method of the society to differentiate its people to various social functions like being doctors, police officers, or manual workers… Furthermore, the normative test can harm students from disadvantaged lower-status backgrounds in respect to the fear to be outperformed (Autin, Batruch and Butera (2015) and loss of academic confidence in comparison with students from the better social backgrounds. When the education system treats students who are in nature different in the same way, is it an equal system?

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1 Normative test is "a form of evaluation based on a quantifiable measure of performance (example: numerical grades, letters, percentages or value judgments) that allow comparison to a social standard defining success."
Frederique Autin, Anatolia Batruch and Fabrizio Butera, "Social justice in education: how the function of selection in educational institutions predicts support for (non) egalitarian assessment practices", Frontiers in Psychology, 2015, 6:707. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00707

Equity: Considering the differences

"...Equity is not the same as equal opportunity. When practiced in the context of education, equity is focused on outcomes and results and is rooted in the recognition that because children have different needs and come from different circumstances, we cannot treat them all the same"[1].

To attack the sameness of mistaken equality in the education system, the national curriculum needs to be flexible and updated to the development practice of the country and students' learning demands. The latest National curriculum 2018 was developed by MOET based on a competency-based approach that has been introduced and run by OECD countries and our neighbors like Singapore for years. The competency-based approach concentrates on the ability of learners to conduct successfully any activities in real life. Instead of requiring students to absorb academic knowledge for passing tests and assessment forms as much as they can, the mixed set of intellectuals, behavior, skills, and attitude performed by the students are the core of the competency-based education. According to statistics from the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs[2], Vietnam currently has 1.1 million college and university students, with about 300,000 graduates each year. Since 2015, the number of unemployed graduates has remained stable at 200,000. High-quality human resources, able to directly participate in the labor market after leaving school in Vietnam only accounted for 22.1% while most of them had to retrain or train continuously by the employers. Recently in 2017, the investigation[3] of ILO on the transition

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1 Source: https://www.johnwest-burnham.co.uk/index.php/leadership-for-diversity?start=1

2 Thanh Lich, "Number of unemployed university graduates in VN remains high" (online), 2018, nguồn: https://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/education/203123/number-of-unemployed-university-graduates-in-vn-remains-high.html

3 ILO, *Báo cáo tóm tắt quốc gia Điều tra chuyển tiếp từ trường học đến việc làm*, 2017, https://www.ilo.org/hanoi/Informationresources/Publicinformation/Pressreleases/WCMS_541531/lang--vi/index.htm

from educational institutions to the employment of Vietnamese youth showed, the average time of new university graduates to seek a job stable and satisfied was 7.3 months while that of those who were just high school graduates was 17.8 months. The investigation pointed out the persistent matters of 15-to-29-years-old Vietnamese youth were inconsistency with job requirements, low productivity, and mostly engagement with low-qualified jobs. Regarding the competency-based approach in education, these matters are expected to be solved. Vietnamese youth are more ready and confident to participate in the labor market and contribute to the country's development.

In addition to focusing on student competency performance in real life, the National curriculum 2018 is more open and adjustable than its predecessor in the way that it empowers schools and locals to design or develop their programs, covering learning outcomes, content, and assessment methods. This character of the new National Curriculum is expected to correct the mistakes of the old ones that didn't consider the unlike geographic, gender, or social background of students seriously. The students in rural and mountainous areas where find difficulties in approaching schools and learning materials do no longer have the same learning experiences as those are in cities or towns. Thanks to that, educators and teachers can put suitable learning contents following vocational training and local culture orientation to integrate learning to local practices.

The learning outcomes are also taken into account carefully. Accordingly, differentiated instruction or teaching in schools has been encouraged by the Ministry of Education and Training to ensure that; every individual student is learned by their desires, needs, and ability. Teaching students in the differentiated method is to respect them for their different selves. It is a dimension of equity in education.

Autin, Batruch, and Butera (2015) mentioned, "normative assessment through testing and competitive examinations is rooted in tradition, methods, conceptions of knowledge and standards that serve the dominant groups". In parallel with implementing differentiated

instruction in educational institutions, transforming from normative assessment originated from grade-based evaluation of students' performance to formative assessment providing detailed feedback for students' process in the National curriculum 2018 is a key to practice equity in education from a bottom-up perspective. Formative assessment aims to foster students' learning and teachers' teaching activities instead of favoring elite students. It "was developed to improve the learning of all students. Reducing the gap between individuals who are unequal at the beginning of the pedagogic action" (Autin, Batruch, and Butera (2015). Although formative assessment can't fulfill the selection function[1] of education, it doesn't limit the learning performance or hinder confidence of students from lower-status or disadvantaged backgrounds, then shares its role in reducing inequality reproduction in society. After all, "equality, in this case, is not defined as the same treatment of all individuals during the process but as the equality of outcomes at the end of the learning process, obtained by a differentiated treatment of individuals as a function of their needs. Formative assessment is thus grounded in two egalitarian principles of justice: equality and need".

As for the marginalized groups like an ethnic minority and poor households, another solution suggested by Oxfam Vietnam is that it is essential to reduce the disparity in the equality of education between ethnic minority and Kinh majority, between rural and urban areas by building more, better public schools from kindergarten to high school levels (primary, lower secondary, high school...). The Decision 775/QĐ-TTg on the target program for education development in mountainous areas, ethnic minority areas, and disadvantaged areas in the period 2016-2020 decided to support investment in boarding ethnic

1 Autin, Batruch and Butera defined, a selection function of education is to sort "individuals into different programs, and ultimately social positions, based on individual merit" while "an educational function that promotes learning for all". Frederique Autin, Anatolia Batruch and Fabrizio Butera (2015), Social justice in education: how the function of selection in educational institutions predicts support for (non) egalitarian assessment practices, Frontiers in Psychology, 6:707. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00707

minority schools, such as buying teaching and learning materials, school facilities so that students from ethnic minority backgrounds can have better schools for their studying. The teaching methods based on mother languages for children are needed to be applied broadly as a way to help ethnic people keep their habits and customs. The qualified and the number of teachers for schools in rural and mountainous areas also need to be concerned. Although some legal documents are presenting the government's financial support for teachers, including Decree No. 116/2010/ND-CP[1], Joint Decree No. 08/2011/TTLT-BNV-BTC[2], the hardness of the teachers' livelihood working in rural and mountainous areas can be easy to realize. It causes their hesitation in contributing to education. The increase of career-oriented activities for students in rural and mountainous areas before entering higher education is a need to help them to choose jobs leaning on the demand of the labor market. When they have stable and satisfying jobs, social mobility can happen and the social gap between income quintiles based on income can be narrowed. The vicious circle of failure in finding a seat in higher education institutions, unemployment, inequality, loss of social mobility can be repaired.

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1 Decree No. 116/2010/ND-CP# of the Government on policies for cadres, civil servants, employees and wage earners in the armed forces working in areas with particularly difficult socio-economic conditions
https://luatminhkhue.vn/nghi-dinh-so-116-2010-nd-cp-cua-chinh-phu---ve-chinh-sach-doi-voi-can-bo--cong-chuc--vien-chuc-va-nguoi-huong-luong-trong-luc-luong-vu-trang-cong-tac-o-vung-co-dieu-kien-kinh-te---xa-hoi-dac-biet-kho-.aspx

2 Joint Decree No. 08/2011/TTLT-BNV-BTC# of the Ministry of Finance-Ministry of Home Affairs on guiding the implementation of a number of articles of Decree No. 116/2010/ND-CP dated December 24, 2010 of the Government on policies for cadres, civil servants, employees and wage earners in the armed forces working in areas with particularly difficult socio-economic conditions, Joint Circular 11/2005/TTLT/BNV-BLĐTBXH-BTC-UBDT stipulating guidelines for implementing regional allowance
https://luatminhkhue.vn/thong-tu-lien-tich-so-08-2011-ttlt-bnv-btc-cua-bo-tai-chinh-bo-noi-vu---huong-dan-thuc-hien-mot-so-dieu-cua-nghi-dinh-so-116-2010-nd-cp-ngay-24-thang-12-nam-2010-cua-chinh-phu-ve-chinh-sach-doi-voi-ca.aspx

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5. http://www.hids.hochiminhcity.gov.vn/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=c3553773-15fd-44f6-a748-b3d555a31fd3&groupId=13025
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SOME ISSUES OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN VIETNAM

Pham Van Duong[1]

Environmental justice is an aspect of social justice in enjoying the environmental benefits of social groups. Today, the implementation of environmental justice in the process of economic development is a difficult problem for many countries. To solve this problem in the process of socio-economic development, the state needs to pay attention, consider many benefits, and choose a sustainable economic development model. In this paper, we try to take into consideration some issues of environmental justice in the current economic development in Vietnam.

Production of human society is inseparable from the natural world, because the natural world is the source of energy, raw materials for material production, and it is the human living environment. The natural world is involved in human material production as means of production as well as the object of human labor. In this process, people with the skills of using labor tools impact on nature to exploit or use natural resources to make valuable articles, goods for life. In the work *Economic and philosophy Manuscripts of 1844*, K. Marx affirmed that: "In a sense,

1 Ma., Institute of Philosophy, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.

nature provides life material for labor, that is, without things that labor can affect, labor cannot survive; on the other hand, nature itself also provides materials for life in a narrow sense, that is, materials for the physical survival of workers themselves. "[1] In the work *The Critique of the Gotha Programme*, once again, C. Marx emphasizes this. He wrote: " Both the natural world and labor are sources of use-value (because the material property includes these values)..."[2]. The natural world not only plays a role as the source of all human labor materials but also the human living environment. "The natural world is an inorganic human body. Humans live in the natural world. This means that nature is the human body, and to survive, the human body must maintain constant communication"[3]. Thus, it can be affirmed that nature is the source of all working materials as well as the human living environment. "People live by the natural world"[4]. This is the basis for coming to the concept of environmental justice that we are concerned with.

In the early stages of human social history, people lived in harmony, the products of labor were shared by communities. Everyone is equal in receiving the products of labor and nature. Therefore, in this period, the issue of environmental justice has not been raised. Along with the development of society, as people become more and more aware of the laws of nature and apply that knowledge to the material production process, the human impact on nature more and more powerful. Over the past three industrial revolutions, the level of human exploitation and use of natural raw materials has increased more and more, even reaching the level beyond the self-healing capacity of nature and

1 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 42, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2000, p.130.

2 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 19, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1993, p.26.

3 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 42, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2000, p.135.

4 K. Marx and F. Engels, *Complete Works*, Vol. 42, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2000, p.134.

causing disaster with the environment. In this process, human society gradually differentiated into different classes and groups, they have different positions in the production process of society. Therefore, they also have different interests in the distribution process. The group of people who hold the means of production of society has more opportunities to exploit and use natural resources than those who do not own the means of production. In particular, the group of people possessing means of production with more advanced tools of labor is the group that dominates in production as well as in the exploitation of natural resources. They are the group that earns huge profits from the exploitation and use of natural resources. Thus, in terms of interests, those who possess advanced means of production will benefit from nature more than those with no means of production, or those with more outdated means of production. On the other hand, the production process of this group also causes environmental pollution such as air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution ... negatively affecting the production as well as the lives of other groups in society. Groups with more outdated tools of labor will be economically constrained, gradually becoming disadvantaged groups in society. They are also the ones who will suffer the heavy consequences of environmental pollution caused by overexploitation of resources by the other group. At this time, the issue of environmental equity has been raised, it requires the state and the government to have policies to implement environmental justice for groups and limit the emergence of disadvantaged groups in the process of socio-economic development.

The natural world is the living environment and also the inorganic human body, so the issue of environmental justice is also associated with human values, that is, the human right of existence. The issue of environmental equity, which represents an aspect of social justice in the distribution of resources from natural resources, the opportunity to use the resources of groups of people to serve their lives. In addition to the right to enjoy nature's resources, environmental equity also demonstrates people's right to live in a safe and healthy environment for their health.

Every human being has the right to live in a clean environment and does not contain harmful wastes and pollution. Therefore, the state must have legal systems to protect these human rights. In society, poor communities or disadvantaged groups are groups that always suffer disadvantages. Because they often live in places where the production of other groups seriously pollutes the environment, but they have no benefit or only a small part of the economic development achievements. The state also needs to formulate social security and vocational training policies so that disadvantaged groups have the opportunity to change their professions and participate in the production and social service processes to ensure the coordination of interests to social groups in the process of economic development. From a policy perspective, the implementation of environmental justice requires the state to ensure that all citizens are protected from environmental hazards at the same level. Ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups do not have to bear the burden of environmental pollution caused by the production of other groups. It is especially important to protect poor communities and minorities from environmental pollution and food contamination.

At present, it is a very difficult problem to solve the environmental justice of social groups in the process of economic development in Vietnam. There are still fierce conflicts of interest because some groups benefit from the environment when developing resources, while others suffer the consequences of environmental degradation, environmental pollution, and floods caused by such exploitation. These conflicts of interest have led to spontaneous protests by residential groups demanding environmental justice because they have suffered the consequences of pollution caused by other groups' resource development and production; or traditional wharves, fisheries, and their healthy habitats for generations are monopolized by other groups. The protesters demand the right to live in a clean and safe environment that does not contain hazardous waste and pollution that may adversely affect their health and livelihoods. Faced with this fact, if the state and local governments do not take satisfactory measures to solve the problem of

environmental justice, it will easily lead to the risk of conflicts between social groups, leading to social instability. Here, we have considered the environmental justice of many economic development projects in Vietnam in recent years.

1. Environmental justice issues in industrial development projects.

In the early stages of industrialization in Vietnam, insufficient attention was paid to the issue of ensuring ecological safety, and the regulations on waste indicators and environmental laws were not strict. Therefore, factories and industrial parks with outdated production technologies have been formed, causing environmental pollution. According to the "Foreign Investment Law" promulgated on July 31, 2000, and Decree No. 24/2000/ND/CP, when the central government grants provincial governments the autonomy to attract investment funds, they actively formulate policies to vigorously attract investment capital into my country. The provincial government adopts a "red carpet" policy to attract foreign investors and often pays attention to attracting investment funds. Failing to pay the necessary attention to production technology and environmental pollution. Many places, because of their achievements in attracting investment funds, enable foreign investors to invest in industries that produce hazardous substances, import outdated production technologies, and cause environmental pollution. In the planning, permitting, construction, and operation of industrial projects, the authorities did not pay attention to ecological safety and people's interests. This has caused environmental pollution and serious environmental accidents in industrial zones in many regions of our country.

The lack of attention to ecological safety in industrial projects has led to environmental inequality among people. The air, water, and noise pollution caused by the outdated industrial area hurt the health and livelihood of the people in the area. Their production stalled, crops and animals died. Environmental pollution makes the lives of people living near industrial areas more difficult. In our country, many factories

and industrial areas have caused pollution for a long time, and have caused serious consequences to the economy and living environment of the people in the area[1]. Vedan is one of these factories. This plant caused serious pollution, which lasted for many years and poisoned the Thi Vai River, which is the source of life for thousands of aquaculture farmers and tens of thousands of farmers who cultivate with water. When the river is polluted, cage farmers lose their source of income and many people have to leave their hometowns to find new jobs. For many years, the residents here have not received any compensation, nor have they received any help for career changes. The serious environmental incident caused by the Formosa company in Ha Tinh discharged untreated wastewater containing toxic chemicals into the environment, which seriously affected the marine environment of the central region and severely reduced the source of seafood. The incident caused huge economic losses to the fishermen in the central region. For a long time, thousands of fishermen have been unable to go fishing and have no source of income, and the debt burden on banks has become heavier. In Dong Nai province, there is another factory AB Mauri Vietnam Co., Ltd. in Dinh Quan District, which has also caused serious pollution to the environment and negatively affected people's daily life and production. Many people worry about their health and have moved to other places. In the past 20 years, people here have felt very frustrated and filed many class actions. To overcome environmental pollution in 2009 and 2011, the company was forcibly closed twice by the Provincial People's Committee. Recently, on May 16, 2019, thousands of tons of fish were raised in cages on the La Nga River near the AB Mauri Company factory, causing massive deaths, causing serious economic losses. On May 31, 2019, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Dong Nai Province inspected the company's wastewater treatment system. The company was not only fine, but also suspended for the third

1 Linh Bach, "List of pollution", *Forbes Vietnam*, https://forbesvietnam.com.vn/doanh-nhan/danh-sach-o-nhiem-89.html

time[1]. It can be seen that in the past few years, environmental pollution caused by our factories and industrial parks has caused more and more economic losses to people.

Environmental pollution around the industrial zone not only affects people's production and economic losses, but also reverses people's lives and activities, seriously affects people's health, and causes many dangerous diseases, especially cancer. On the territory of Vietnam, due to the serious environmental pollution caused by outdated industrial zones, there are many cancer villages in all regions[2] 2. Data from many surveys in the Cancer Village show that air pollution and wastewater indicators have exceeded the permitted standards many times. In the cancer village, families with financial conditions have to leave their homes in remote areas. Unconditional people must still stay to accept environmental pollution and disease risks. When people suffer from serious illnesses, people who lose their ability to work and have to pay for additional medical expenses will worsen their family's economy and their children will not be able to learn. Most farmers living near industrial areas have not yet benefited from these projects; but they have been hit hard by environmental pollution, fear of diseases, and stagnant

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1 Xuan Hoang. "Suspension of operations of the Mauri Company", *Labor Newspaper*, May 31, 2019. https://nld.com.vn/thoi-su/dinh-chi-hoat-dong-cong-ty-mauri-20190531212859225.htm

2 Announced 10 cancer villages with the most polluted water sources in Vietnam. Newspaper http://www.doisongphapluat.com, February 1, 2015: Project of Investigation and Search for Clean Water Supply for Domestic Water Supply for some "cancer villages" in Vietnam "period 1 by the Central Vietnam Water Resources Planning and Investigation Federation - Ministry of Natural Resources has surveyed 37 villages, spread across provinces and cities nationwide. In which, 10 villages are identified as the result of water pollution in the provinces of Hanoi, Bac Ninh, Thanh Hoa, Ha Nam, Ha Tinh, Nghe An, Quang Nam, Binh Dinh, Binh Thuan, Phu Tho. Up to 1136 people have died in the past 5-20 years from various cancers. In which the most people die from cancer is Thach Khe, Thach Son commune, Lam Thao district, Phu Tho province with 136 people dying in 10 years because of water contaminated with toxic chemicals.

production. It can be said that the environmental pollution around the industrial zone is the environmental inequality of the people in the area, which directly affects people's health and production. Environmental inequality can easily lead to conflicts between people and enterprises. In many places, people protested and prevented cars from entering and leaving industrial areas and factories to protest environmental pollution. If the issue of environmental justice is not paying attention to and resolved by the competent authorities at all levels, it will lead to conflicts of interest, make people feel frustrated and dissatisfied which may lead to instability society.

Also, the lack of uniformity in the construction of industrial zones in our country, lack of proper wastewater treatment centers, emissions, and solid waste, partly caused environmental inequality. As of September 2015, there are still nearly 40% of industrial parks without centralized wastewater treatment systems. Therefore, with the development of industry, in recent years, groundwater pollution has become more and more common and serious in the local area. Water and smoke containing hazardous wastes that are not treated or treated inappropriately are still discharged into the environment, causing serious pollution and destroying people's living and production environments. In early May 2019, the sale of 20,000 tons of hazardous exceeding Vietnam's environmental safety standards by Formosa Company in Thai Nguyen, alarmed the management process and handled hazardous wastes in our country's industrial parks.

Not only the planning and construction of my country's industrial clusters and industrial belts have caused environmental inequality, but there are also many shortcomings in the planning and development of the Craft Village. In many places, craft villages were formed spontaneously without any plan, so production and management households were not separated from residential areas. There are more than 1,200 recognized handicraft villages and 3,200 handicraft villages

in the country for business[1], but most of them do not have proper planning, are small in scale, have an outdated technology of production, and have no waste disposal systems. As a result, the environment of the Craft Village was severely polluted in terms of water sources, noise, and air. "The environmental quality of the craft village is almost below the standard, 95% of which are dust pollution; 85.9% of heat pollution and 59.6% of chemical pollution. The survey results of 52 handicraft villages across the country show that 46% of the above three types of handicraft villages are polluted by the environment; "27% of handicraft villages are moderately polluted, while 27% of handicraft villages are slightly polluted."[2] Due to the polluted living environment, the lives of people living in the handicraft village are also seriously affected. Pollution caused by wastewater and waste gas in the Craft Village is the main cause of local diseases. In recent years, the proportion of the population suffering from skin diseases, respiratory diseases, digestive tract diseases, cancer... in the handicraft village has shown a high trend. Residents living in the craft village not only face the risk of disease due to pollution but also worry about fire and explosion. There have been many large and small explosions, and people have inhaled toxic gases from old military weapons in the craft village of recyclable materials. These threats threaten the property, safety, health, and lives of residents. Recently, the sound of an explosion caused by the recycling of the old ammunition warehouse in Quan Do Village, Van Mon Commune, Yen Phong County, Bac Ninh Province, has aroused people's awareness of defects in the planning and management of the Craft Village[3].3

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1 Khanh Huy, "Wastewater pollution in the craft village is rising", http://nhandan.com.vn/khoahoc/item/32486802-o-nhiem-nuoc-thai-tai-cac-lang-nghe-tiep-tuc-gia-tang.html

2 Khanh Huy, "Wastewater pollution in the craft village is rising", http://nhandan.com.vn/khoahoc/item/32486802-o-nhiem-nuoc-thai-tai-cac-lang-nghe-tiep-tuc-gia-tang.html

3 Chung Hoang, "Don't say that the government doesn't know the time bombs in Quan Do village", tuoitre.vn dated January 4, 2018.

The spontaneous developers and lack of planning of the Craft Village have led to environmental inequality among the villagers. Only a few professional families benefit from their production activities. But they polluted the environment and affected the economy, health, and safety of local people. Environmental inequality is causing conflicts in craft villages and conflicts among population groups. "According to the survey results of some handicraft villages, there are conflicts among the population groups in the handicraft village communities, such as expressing dissatisfaction with polluters and complaining to the authorities, especially punishing each other"[1].

It can be seen that in the planning and development of industrial zones and handicraft zones, our country still has disadvantages that cause environmental inequality. The new level of government focuses on local economic development and corporate economic interests; however, it does not pay enough attention to the ecological security and economic interests of the people. To ensure environmental justice, the Vietnamese government needs to formulate plans and choose a model of sustainable economic development to make full use of the potential of the region and its natural and social advantages. The government also needs to improve the legal system, monitoring mechanism, and choose green and sustainable production technologies; resolutely eliminate outdated industries and production technologies that pollute the environment. When formulating social and economic development policies, the government should comprehensively consider and evaluate the interests of the country and social groups. Economic development policies must aim to maintain equitable interests among all groups and not allow this group to benefit from the exhaustion of resources, environmental pollution, and degradation that harms the habitat and livelihoods of other groups and their legitimate interests. To solve environmental justice issues, the legitimate rights and interests of the people must be considered. These projects must create a sustainable economic model

1 Le Hong Anh, Nguyen Hong Hanh, "Environmental pollution in a craft village in Vietnam", http://vea.gov.vn, dated December 26, 2009.

that does not cause damage to the ecological environment. Therefore, many different interests must be taken into consideration in the problems brought to decision-makers such as the interests of local economic development; the interests of investors; and the interests of the affected people. From the approval of investment projects, technology selection to production operations, environmental standards must be ensured. The government should give priority to investment projects that use green technology, clean technology, closed production, reuse of industrial by-products, and reduce consumption of natural resources. Obsolete production technology must be resolutely removed from investment and production projects. Projects that use outdated technologies usually use large amounts of raw materials and generate large amounts of hazardous waste, but they are cheaper than newer clean technologies. To eliminate these factories, it is necessary to adopt strict monitoring policies and raise fines to deter and prevent pollution. There is a policy that forces polluting companies to compensate the affected people for environmental consequences. The interests of one group cannot be sacrificed for the benefit of another, and economic development policies must ensure that the interests of social groups are harmonized. Policies must be formulated to ensure the interests of groups and avoid the increase of disadvantaged groups in society. In the process of economic development, our country's disadvantaged groups are still lagging in terms of development priorities. According to UNDP, the two groups lagging behind in Vietnam are ethnic minorities and migrants from rural to urban areas."[1]. Properly addressing environmental justice and social security issues will help these groups reduce disadvantages and have the opportunity to change their careers to make greater contributions to social and economic development. Also, it is important to ensure that no group is left out in the process of socio-economic development. To do this, the state needs to actively disclose and transparently publicize

1 An Vu, "Our country's disadvantaged groups are still lagging behind in development priorities", http://www.nhandan.com.vn/xahoi/tin-tuc/item/32713402-cac-nhom-yeu-the-van-tut-hau-trong-cac-uu-tien-phat-trien.html

economic projects so that people can be understood and monitored. It is necessary to obtain the opinions of people, especially those living within the scope of the project, to reach a consensus in society to avoid social unrest.

Inspection and supervision are also very important stages to ensure the environmental justice of industrial development projects. In Vietnam, due to the difficulties of law enforcement personnel and the restrictions of current laws and regulations, the results of environmental law enforcement by the authorities have been restricted in the past few years. On the one hand, according to the government's Decree No. 117, the maximum sanctions for violations are still low and not enough to be frustrating. Therefore, many companies deliberately violate the practice of discharging pollutants directly into the environment and are willing to pay fines instead of investing in the construction of waste treatment systems. From an economic point of view, the fines imposed by these companies are much cheaper than the cost of building and operating waste treatment plants. Therefore, it is necessary to prevent enterprises from taking appropriate penalties for actions that cause environmental pollution. On the other hand, many environmental laws also make it difficult for people to monitor and enforce them. "It is very difficult to sanction environmental violations because we must catch up with environmental violations. At the same time, the supervision system of state institutions is restricted in both equipment and manpower, so the number of cases investigated and handled is not large."[1] Besides the monitoring and handling of violations of environmental laws should be coordinated among the agencies to avoid the indecision of environmentally destructive production facilities.

The monitoring of factories and industrial areas, the strict management of environmental protection and pollution indicators are positive measures to ensure environmental justice. Forcing polluting companies to deduct part of their income to establish and operate

1 Khanh Vi, "Groundwater in Vietnam is seriously polluted", http://cand.com.vn/Khoa-hoc-Quan-su/Nguon-nuoc-ngam-Viet-Nam-o-nhiem-tram-trong-228336/

systems to deal with hazardous waste that pollutes the environment and compensate for the environmental damage caused by them. The government must establish water, air, noise, and dust monitoring points in industrial areas to closely monitor the operation of factories and avoid direct emissions that cause environmental pollution. These environmental monitoring stations must operate independently under the supervision of agencies under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. Avoid building and operating surface environmental monitoring stations, and do not find indicators that exceed safety thresholds or deliberately turn a blind eye to violations of environmental laws. When the group causes a certain degree of pollution to the environment, exceeding the index allowed by the monitoring station in the hazardous waste index, the government must take measures to force them to compensate people affected by the pollution. This will also help reduce the disadvantaged position of residents in the areas of factories and production units and reduce their exposure to the consequences of environmental pollution.

It is necessary to formulate policies on environmental taxes and expenses for enterprises and use these revenues to change the environment and invest in infrastructure for localities. In recent years, many state leaders have made it clear that the government is determined not to sacrifice the environment for economic growth in Vietnam. On June 27, 2018, at the opening ceremony of the Sixth GEF (Global Environment Facility) assembly and associated meetings in Da Nang, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc delivered the following message: "The Government of Vietnam is determined not to trade the environment for economic development, affecting sustainable development"[1]. It is hoped that this determination needs to be embodied in policies to attract investment and develop a sustainable economy with people as the goal of social and economic development.

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1 Khanh Hien, "Prime Minister: Vietnam is determined not to exchange environment for economic development", dantri.com.vn/xa-hoi/thu-tuong-viet-nam-kien-quyet-hong-danh-doi-moi-truong-lay-phat-trien-kinh-te-20180627124426887.htm

2. Environmental justice issues in tourism and resort development projects

Today, the development of eco-tourism in holiday tourism projects is regarded as a smoke-free industry, which has brought considerable income to many countries. Vietnam is a country with many natural privileges, many climates, and many beautiful long coasts, which is very convenient for the development of this economic model. In the past few years, the development and construction of resorts, eco-tourism, and golf courses in coastal areas have brought economic success to many places. However, in addition to these achievements, inadequate planning of many projects has also led to environmental inequality among residents.

In recent years, in many coastal provinces, when local governments plan to allocate land to investors to build coastal tourism projects, they only focus on local economic development and commercial interests. However, they did not pay attention to the interests of fishermen and coastal residents. These are the economic benefits environmental benefits of the people living in coastal areas. "When making decisions for investors, city leaders may not take into account cultural factors and the right of indigenous people to enjoy the sea."[1] Forgetting the legitimate and actual interests of the people in such projects may result in coastal residents even not having the right to swim freely. That is environmental inequality. Mr. Huynh Duc Tho, President of Da Nang City, acknowledged the inadequacy of Da Nang coastal project planning: "It must be said that the people here are too disadvantaged, they have too few rights to access public beaches, have not benefited from the sea"[2]. This happened not only in Da Nang but also in many coastal provinces in our country. When allocating land to enterprises to

1 Nguyen Dong, "There is no sea for fishermen", https://vnexpress.net/tin-tuc/goc-nhin/ngu-dan-khong-bien-3732414.html

2 Huu Kha, "Open the way for people to go to sea", https://tuoitre.vn/mo-duong-cho-dan-ra-bien-981580.htm

develop eco-tourism projects, many local authorities do not pay enough attention to the interests of the people. People's interest in the planning and development of eco-tourism projects is underestimated, which leads to environmental inequality among residents.

Also, preferential investment permits for coastal tourism and resort development businesses put people into trouble. When the land is allocated, businesses will build fences, at this time, the coastal fishing villages will be isolated from the sea, people will not have access to the sea. Many resorts, eco-tourism resorts, and golf courses are built closely together in the coastal areas of our country to become a "separation wall" to prevent fishermen from escaping from their residences and fishing villages. Companies that are allocated land to implement projects such as golf courses and resorts will not easily agree to use public paths to separate their golf courses and resorts, so they will try to manage the beach. This leads to environmental inequality for marine residents and fishermen. In many places, they have no place to moor boats, repair fishing gear, aquaculture, swimming, and many fishermen have difficulties in their livelihoods. An old fisherman said: "I don't know where they will plan and transfer us. But for generations, we have grown up with the sea and lived by the sea. If we are isolated from the sea, how can we live and feed our family?".[1] In some places, some projects even planned that every 8km there will be a path for fishermen to go to the sea. "Through the above-mentioned way to the sea, almost coastal fishing villages will have to "hang baskets, leave the paddle"[2]. Fishermen cannot carry fishing equipment for such long-distance if they want to go fishing. Due to the inadequacies of such planning, perhaps in the future, our coastal areas will only have resorts and golf courses.

1 Tan Tai, "It takes 8km to have a way to the sea, the fishermen only know hanging baskets, leave the paddle", http://giaoduc.net.vn/Kinh-te/8km-moi-co-mot-loi-ra-bien-thi-ngu-dan-chi-biet-treo-thung-gac-cheo-post18565.gd

2 Tan Tai, "It takes 8km to have a way to the sea, the fishermen only know hanging baskets, leave the paddle", http://giaoduc.net.vn/Kinh-te/8km-moi-co-mot-loi-ra-bien-thi-ngu-dan-chi-biet-treo-thung-gac-cheo-post18565.gd

The famous fishing village on the central coast, which is as beautiful as a fairy tale, may no longer exist.

The fact that many local governments in resort tourism projects often neglect the interests of people, give priority to businesses, has led to conflicts of interests between people and businesses. There have been many demonstrations by fishermen against the government and businesses when their legitimate interests have been seriously violated. Residents of Sam Son, Thanh Hoa protested against taking back the pier, or the recent protests by the people in Nam O asking for access to the sea show that environmental justice issues have not paid enough attention to the planning and implementation of tourism and holiday projects in our country today.

Recently, on June 24, 2019, Binh Dinh's People's Committee bravely decided to spend hundreds of billions of VND to demolish three large hotels in the coastal area, An Duong Vuong Street to build parks and return to people's sea space. This is a good sign because the government in Binh Dinh has paid attention to the legitimate interests of the people in enjoying the marine environment. Regarding this incident, Mr. Ho Quoc Dung, Chairman of the People's Committee of Binh Dinh Province, confirmed: "The clearance of Quy Nhon beach hotels is to reserve the entire sea space of Quy Nhon bay for the people, not to give it to any investors so that anyone can go to the sea. In this way, people will have a place to walk, exercise, and sit on benches in the park[1]".

The issue of ensuring the ecological safety of tourism and resort projects has not been properly considered. In many places, environmental issues have been ignored when implementing tourism projects. Many areas of coastal shelter forests have been cut down to build buildings and hotels, threatening the biodiversity of the area and causing coastal

1 Hoang Trong, "The 2.5 billion Ny Nhon hotels in the first quarter were relocated", thanhnien.vn/thoi-su/khach-san-ngan-ti-ven-bien-quy-nhon-dau-tien-di-doi-1096321.html

erosion. It has become commonplace to build holiday resorts in special-use forests or national parks.

It can be said that the construction of luxury holiday villas on the Son Tra Peninsula or the ruthless destruction of the natural forests of Phu Quoc Island continues. If this situation cannot be eliminated as soon as possible, it will lead to long-term ecological disasters, such as the depletion of freshwater resources, soil erosion, the decline in biodiversity. People living in this area are those who have directly suffered environmental disasters.

It is hoped that shortly, local governments will attach importance to environmental justice and ecological safety in the development of tourism projects. Returning marine space to the people is not only a courageous task for the People's Committee of Binh Dinh Province, but has also been carried out in many other places to ensure that the people enjoy environmental justice.

3. Environmental justice issues in hydropower development projects

In our country, in recent years, the planning and development of small and medium-sized hydropower projects in many places have brought economic benefits and can meet the growing electricity demand. However, inadequate planning of many projects has led to environmental damage and serious consequences. This creates environmental inequality for people in the area. The licensing of small and medium hydropower projects in our country does not fully consider their benefits. Most projects usually focus on economic benefits, without taking into account human interests and the long-term environmental benefits and biodiversity of hydroelectric basins. Many small and medium-sized hydroelectric power plants have been built, but the environmental impact assessment report is very rough and unreliable, and the research is only carried out at the site of the construction work. At the same time, for the requirements for reporting the environmental impact of hydropower projects, the environmental

impact assessment of the upstream area of the downstream area of the hydropower plant must be studied and evaluated. The development of hydropower projects requires master planning. On this basis, it is possible to calculate how many hydroelectric power plants can be built and operated in the basin, in a way that will not cause damage, and can solve the living and environmental problems of people in the basin. "This is also when considering planning a small hydropower system, which will cause huge loss of life and property, and this is the trade of resources for the benefit of some people."[1]

In our country, most hydropower projects are built in catchment areas, which not only have important catchment protection functions, but also have a rich biodiversity environment. The implementation of these projects has greatly reduced the area of protected forests in the river basin and has adversely affected biodiversity and the environment. Because, when the protection forest in the watershed disappears, it also means that the leaves and litter layer which holds most of the forest's rainfall is no longer available. Therefore, when heavy rain occurs, a large amount of rainwater will flow directly to the soil surface and immediately drift downstream, causing mountain torrents, erosion, and landslides. In recent years, the process of developing many small and medium-sized hydropower projects in our country has been destroyed and depleting forests in the watershed. This is one of the main reasons that caused historic floods and severe landslides, buried many villages in the highlands, and submerged in lowlands and plains.

The design, construction, and operation of these factories are also insufficient. Most small and medium-sized hydropower projects have very little construction investment funds, so these dams cannot perform flood control and water transfer functions. These dams are designed and built only to hold water to generate electricity. The rivers are blocked

1 "Historical floods: large-scale construction of small hydropower facilities in Ha Giang City caused huge damage", https: //vov.vn/xa-hoi/lu-lich-su-ha-giang-xay-dung-o-at-thuy-dien- nho-gay-two-lon-779322.v

by these dams into giant water bombs threatening downstream safety. When floods happen again, these hydropower plants will immediately follow the "correct process" to discharge the floods, which will cause artificial floods to naturally overlap downstream of the hydropower plants. In addition to weather, the operation of small and medium hydropower plants also causes flooding. This situation is prevalent and threatens the lives, safety, and property of people in many localities. The hydroelectric power plant ignores the flood control function and only performs the power generation function. We certainly don't want hydropower plants to become a money-making tool for project owners.

The resettlement of people within small and medium hydropower projects also has many shortcomings, which bring disadvantages to people and waste social capital. Some resettlement areas are not suitable for people's production, living and habit conditions, and cannot ensure better living conditions or the same as the old residence. People lack land for agricultural production, transportation and commerce are inconvenient, making their lives more difficult than ever. In resettlement areas where housing prices are too high, the compensation amount is not enough to pay for the resettlement area. Administrative procedures for land price grading and legal documents for issuing red papers to people in resettlement areas are still troublesome. All inadequacies in the planning, construction, and transfer of these resettlement sites have resulted in people not staying in the housing areas of resettlement projects. The school was built spaciously and used as a place for keeping cows[1]. Although these buildings are very expensive and have a budget of hundreds of billions of VND, the houses and public works are quite spacious, but they are abandoned and in danger of being demolished[2].

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1 Binh Minh, "Billions of resettlement areas are "abandoned": classrooms become places for raising cattle", http://anninhthudo.vn/doi-song/khu-tai-dinh-cu-tien-ti-bi-bo-hoang-phong-hoc-thanh-noi-nhot-bo/507285.antd

2 Que Mai, "Kon Tum: Many abandoned resettlement areas", https://baotainguyenmoitruong.vn/ban-doc/kon-tum-nhieu-khu-tai-dinh-cu-bo-hoang-979918.html

Vocational training and job change for people in hydropower projects still have many shortcomings, formalities, not equipped workers with the skills to change jobs and can work in a new environment. Most resettlement projects do not attach importance to job change training suitable for people, so their lives are more difficult than before. In hydropower projects, many ethnic minority resettlement projects are not even interested in workers' career change training. People only carry out compensation, site clearance, and pay the people. They only carry out compensation, clearance, and pay for residents. These residents must change their familiar location and live in a new situation but are not trained to change careers. They will not know what to do but spend all the compensation they received. Many families suddenly became "rich" because they received compensation from the project. Most of them use it to build houses, buy expensive goods, and enjoy life and have no interest in investing in production or apprenticeship. Therefore, when the project funds are used up, they gradually sell their purchases to tide over the difficulties and return to a poor life, working as hired labor[1]. These are the tragedies that occurred in the resettlement villages after the construction of the hydropower plant[2].

In recent years, the implementation of our country's small and medium-sized hydropower projects has led to environmental inequality among people in the basin. Only owners or companies can benefit from these hydropower projects, and residents often face danger to their lives and property. They suffered huge losses when the flood happened. The damage that people in the Central have suffered in recent years or the recent disasters of landslides in Lai Chau and Ha Giang, has alerted us to the policy of planning, building, and operating small and medium hydropower projects. It can be said that in recent years,

1 Nguyen Thanh, "Competition to build houses with billions of money between forests", https://www.tienphong.vn/xa-hoi/dua-nhau-dung-nha-tien-ty-giua-rung-606889.tpo

2 Minh Hoang, "Tragedy in the village of billionaire hydroelectric resettlement", https://news.zing.vn/bi-kich-o-lang-ty-phu-tai-dinh-cu-thuy-dien-post638816.html

the planning, construction, and operation of our country's small and medium-sized hydropower stations have increased the flood disasters in the downstream areas of these power stations.

The loss of property and people's lives can be said to be much greater than the value obtained by the project owner. The planning and construction of hydropower projects cannot be based on the trade-off between the economic benefits of certain companies and the ecological benefits and biodiversity of forests. Also, the construction and operation of hydropower plants should put people's interests first. It is time for our country to take action to re-examine the hydropower plant system from an environmental safety perspective. Hydropower projects that do not have flood control functions must be canceled to ensure environmental justice for the people in the hydropower basin.

Therefore, to ensure the ecological safety and environmental justice of the people in this area, it is necessary to make a comprehensive plan for hydropower plants. Hydropower projects need to prove and clarify the benefits of the project in terms of flood control and maintain a stable water supply for the downstream of agricultural production and economic efficiency in power generation. Before issuing a construction permit, local authorities need to make a comprehensive calculation of the benefits and losses brought about by the construction of hydropower projects.

Conclusions

In the current process of social and economic development in Vietnam, environmental justice is a very difficult issue. In terms of economic development orientation, the state should give priority to and choose to develop green and sustainable production industries and technologies. At the same time, the government must strictly control the import of old technologies that cause environmental pollution. In the process of planning and building projects, the state must pay attention to and ensure ecological safety, the right to live in a healthy environment, and the economic interests of the people. The planning of industrial

parks and handicraft villages must be far away from residential areas and have waste collection and treatment stations. Vietnam must not sacrifice the interests of the environment and biodiversity and the legitimate interests of the people for economic development at all costs. In terms of the legal system, we need to improve a strictly synchronized legal system to control behaviors that intentionally poison the environment. In the process of planning, constructing, and operating economic projects, the various forces coordinated to closely inspect and supervise the implementation of environmental laws. The state also needs social security policies to help disadvantaged groups in society to reduce their disadvantages, and have the opportunity to integrate into modern production or formulate policies to restrict the growth of disadvantaged groups. Through training, vocational training, and preferential loan programs for residents so that they can change careers. The state also needs to promulgate mechanisms and policies to encourage all economic sectors to invest in material recycling, waste treatment, and wastewater treatment in industrial zones and craft villages.

ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY IN THE CURRENT MARKET ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Pham Van Hung[1]

A market economy is the high level of development of a commodity economy, where all elements of production take place through the market. It can be said that the market economy is the result of the economic production development that humanity has achieved based on the fundamental change of agricultural production into a modern industrial production; from the production with self-sufficiency economy to production with commodity economy; and it achieved great results under capitalism. The market economy is an inevitable development period of history that any country must go through. However, in addition to its advantages, the market economy also has unavoidable shortcomings, such as increasing the gap between rich and poor and inequality in society, pollution, and environmental degradation. In terms of the market economy, countries exploit more and more natural resources because economic and social activities increase the use of raw materials and energy. The environment is a necessary condition for human existence and development. However, at present, the environment is gradually being polluted due to the increasing demand for use, over-exploitation,

1 Ma., Institute of Philosophy, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.

leading to degradation and decrease, thus not ensuring the enjoyment of the good living environment conditions among all members of society. From that urgent need, the concept of environmental equity was born in the early 1980s in America. It can be said that environmental equity refers to equality of opportunities for environmental enjoyment as well as shared responsibility for environmental risks; on the compatibility between human rights and obligations to access and enjoy the conditions and benefits from the human living environment. Therefore, the content of environmental equity is the implementation of two contents: Human environmental rights and the obligations and responsibilities of individuals, organizations, and the state to the environment.

Along with the development of productive forces, the rapid development of science and technology has brought people great achievements in material life. Along with that, the development of production and economy creates heavy pressures on the human living environment, making the natural environment gradually lose its ability to self-recover. Consequently, environmental pollution and degradation have led to ecological crises in some areas of the world and are in danger of an outbreak in many places. Therefore, scientists, international organizations, and governments of many countries around the world have raised environmental issues, including ensuring the implementation of content related to environmental fairness becomes a new and urgent requirement for human development. In the content of environmental equity, human rights are universal contents recognized and protected, both historical and natural to ensure the core values of environmental equity. Thus, environmental equity is the guarantee of natural and objective human needs and benefits, that is the need to exist and develop in a well-guaranteed environment, without affecting human life according to the legal regulations.

The content of environmental equity is not fully conceived from the beginning but supplemented through the commentaries and arguments of researchers, international environmental organizations, and multinational governments in international environment conferences.

In 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the World Summit on Environment and Development declared that human beings have the right to live a productive and healthy life in harmony with nature and gave rules in which all states around the world need to work together to prevent the relocation or transfer to any country of an activity or chemical that causes serious environmental degradation, or harms people health. Moreover, the Conference proposed the link between human rights and environmental protection mainly in terms of procedures and affirmed that environmental issues must be best solved with the participation of all individuals involved, at the appropriate level[1]. Thus, these recommendations and regulations emphasize environmental protection based on ensuring human rights to the environment, from which it can be seen, this is in the context of respecting and ensuring environmental equity to ensure environmental benefits of stakeholders. On the other hand, the right to be informed, participate, and overcome the consequences when environmental incidents occur is one of the focus contents of the *Rio Declaration*. As one of the key prerequisites for achieving environmental equity towards sustainable development, community participation is also emphasized in *Agenda 21* adopted at this Conference. The participation of different actors in the environmental impact assessment process and decision-making on environmental issues are emphasized in this Agenda. *Agenda 21* also affirms that individuals, groups, and organizations must have the right to access information related to the environment, on the operating mechanism of the central and local government, including the information about products and activities that have or may have an impact on the environment, information about environmental protection measures. This program also calls on countries around the world to develop administrative measures to overcome the current provisions being not tight legal to limit harmful actions to the environment and to overcome recovering and compensating for environmental damage caused by such actions; encourage governments to develop mechanisms for direct exchange

1 See more at www.nature.org.vn/vn/tai-lieu/luatmt2013/1.Rio_1992_va_Vietnam.pdf.

of information between governments and citizens on environmental issues and how people can participate in effective environmental impact assessments. As such, *Agenda 21* introduces new content of social justice that the topic is studying, including New principles and concepts, requiring countries to use different methods of environmental protection regulations to achieve sustainable development goals, the national regulatory system of environmental protection needs to combine the principle of prevention, the principle of polluter pay with new environmental protection tools such as environmental impact assessment, an economic tool in environmental management aimed at protecting the environment, thereby ensuring each person's environmental interests and needs in equally and reasonably. These are also the basic contents of environmental equity.

Based on international environmental laws and regulations, in this article, we investigate the content of environmental equity in the context of the current market economy. By environmental equity, we mean the process of making a better human life, creating equal opportunities among members of society in accessing the environment as development resources and living environment. Accordingly, civil, political, socio-economic, and cultural rights and the right to self-determination are all associated with human rights to the environment. These rights have been expressed in the contents of the *1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR), and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Culture Rights 1966* (ICESCR). The right to participate in politics, to join associations, individual freedom... will allow individuals and groups who are threatened with degradation, pollution, or environmental destruction to speak out their voice. The ICESCR not only provides an ethical and legal framework to protect the environment but also provides important contents of environmental equity related to the health needs and benefits of all people managed and given the benefit from natural resources; individual and family's need for minimal living conditions for food, health care, education ... All

these needs and benefits closely related to environmental conditions. In 1998, the *Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Judicial Access on Environmental Matters* (also known as the Aarhus Convention), in the 4th Ministerial Meeting on "Environment for Europe" taking place in Aarhus city (Denmark), was signed with the participation of 39 countries and the European Community. The Convention aims to "contribute to the protection of the right of all present and future generations to live in an environment appropriate to their health and well-being"[1].

The right to live in a safe and healthy environment.

To ensure fairness among members of society in enjoying resources and living conditions, everyone needs to live in a safe and healthy environment. Accordingly, "a safe and clean environment that people have the right to enjoy is the natural environment around people, a place of work, a place of living and entertainment, landscape, atmosphere, water source. A safe, fresh environment is one in which air, water, soil, ... are not polluted, depleted, and eligible to ensure life on earth for the present and future generations; the environment is protected to limit and mitigate sudden and catastrophic outbreaks of natural disasters, the risk of sea-level rise, hurricane disasters, tsunamis, the ozone layer or unusual geological activity and earthquake"[2]. In Vietnam, this content is first affirmed by the *2013 Constitution* in Article 43: Everyone has the right to live in a clean environment and must protect the environment.

It can be said that environmental equity is directly related to the right to enjoy a healthy environment. That is, individuals and communities need to live in an environment that is not polluted, have a standard atmosphere that ensures their health, and can enjoy land and

1 Read more: https://www.thiennhien.net/2008/05/01/quyen-tiep-can-thong-tin-moi-truong-cua-cong-dong/

2 Read more: Doan Hong Nhung, *Human rights in the field of natural resources and the environment with the issue of sustainable development in Vietnam*, Judicial Publishing House, Hanoi, 2015, p.59.

water resources for their basic life needs, at the same time access to environmental services towards equality of enjoyment of environmental needs. This shows us the role of the state in the proper management, environment, and use of natural resources; at the same time, to ensure equality, the obligations of the State are reflected in the management of the exploitation and use of natural resources and the environment; at the same time, demonstrated in protecting, preserving and improving the environment effectively; there must be necessary measures to the permissible limits of available resources, development capabilities, and qualifications to implement human rights on the environment. In Vietnam today, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 60,000 people died in 2016 from heart disease, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and pneumonia-related to air pollution[1]. On the other hand, there is also the problem of solid wastes, industrial, medical, and residential wastes that are polluting the environment in different areas. A healthy environment is a fundamental requirement of human physical and mental health. Therefore, in Vietnam, it is necessary to raise awareness of the people about the right to live in a safe and healthy environment; realizing the harmful effects of pollution on human health.

Right to access information about the environment.

Environmental problems and the enjoyment of environmental conditions will be best solved with the participation of concerned people. Each person has access to pertinent environmental information maintained by the authorities, including information on materials and activities that have a hazardous environmental impact. Each country should facilitate and encourage propaganda that positively involves public participation in the environment by disseminating information. All people need to be facilitated with effective access to legal documents related to the environment. Such access requires the participation of

1 Read more: http://www.wpro.who.int/vietnam/mediacentre/releases/2018/air_pollution_vietnam/vi/.

local people towards environmental protection which is important to the community. Individuals, groups, and organizations - those affected by environmental impacts should be provided with access to information related to the environment, including information about products and activities that make products of a business or corporation that have or may have a negative impact on the environment and information about environmental protection measures introduced by the authorities to minimize the risks resulting from such impacts caused. The right to access information on the environment is considered a necessary condition to create environmental equity in the presence of people involved in environmental issues.

Environmental information includes specific information about the state of the environment, factors affecting the state of the environment, health and human conditions of life, cultural sites, the public process is affected by the impact to change the current environmental status. The right to access environmental information is shown in that: *On the one hand*, it is the right of citizens to actively access and collect information held by state agencies; *On the other hand,* it is the responsibility of state agencies to provide information to the people[1]. The right to access information in general and to information on the environment, in particular, is a fundamental right of citizens, has an important meaning in state management towards environmental equity, and facilitating the assessment of other basic economic, political, cultural, and social rights.

As such, the right to access information has the function of preventing environmental abuse as a mechanism. This mechanism not only fixes when environmental problems arise, but also prevents harmful behaviors to the environment, helping individuals, communities, and organizations to be aware of the environment they are living in that

1 Read more: Dao Thi Minh Huong, *Some basic issues of human rights to the environment and enforcement conditions in Vietnam in the period 2011-2020 for human development*, Ministry-level scientific project, Institute for Human Studies, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Hanoi, 2012, p.39

may, is, or will be threatened and requires protection or remediation when adequate environmental information is available.

In Vietnam today, every citizen has a right to information about the environment. This is the basis for them to protect their legitimate environmental rights and interests as well as exercise their right to environmental consultation, supervision, complaints, and denunciations. This right is stipulated in the *Law on Environment Protection 2014, Law on Access to Information in 2016* as well as Decree No. 19/2015/ND-CP guiding several articles of the *Law on Environmental Protection 2014*. According to the environmental law, people can only know environmental information in two ways: Provided by the state, production and business entities, however, the community can only know environmental information which is allowed to provide; be provided by a community representative to a state agency or a business or production establishment. In this case, the individual in the community does not have the right to make a request directly, but through a community representative. As such, this provision has limited the right to information of people and communities. Decree No. 19/2015/ND-CP, although it has more clearly listed the environmental information that can be provided in Article 51, however, this listing will limit the right to information of people, of communities, because according to regulations, people and communities only limit information belonging to State secrets. On the other hand, the *Law on Access to Information in 2016* still has many provisions restricting the right to information about the environment of residential communities as Article 6 stipulates the information that citizens cannot access; or Article 28 provides for cases of refusal to provide information if the requested information affects the operation of public agencies[1].

1 Read more: http://vea.gov.vn/vn/truyenthong/tapchimt/nctd42009/Pages/Thực-trạng-chính-sách,-pháp-luật-về-sự-tham-gia-của-cộng-đồng-dân-cư-trong-bảo-vệ-môi-trường-ở-Việt-Nam-hiện-nay.aspx

Right to participate in decisions of environmental issues.

The right to participate in environmental decision-making can be understood as: The right to participate in decision-making in many activities, such as strategic environmental assessments or environmental impact assessments, development projects, planning related to the environment, etc. The right of citizens to participate in environmental activities is "the right of a citizen under the law to influence decision-making, implementation and monitoring of environmental protection activities"[1]. This right defines participation in environmental decisions as to the right of all members of society and is the right (at the same time a responsibility) of individuals, households, organizations, and state agencies. Ensuring the broad and active participation of people of all strata in environmental activities is also ensuring equality of environmental interests and needs when everyone plays the most role to ensure environmental equity. People's rights to participate in decisions related to the environment are expressed in many different activities and forms, which can be mentioned: 1/ The right to know, to send requests and proposals to relevant decisions about the environment; 2/ Decisions related to the environment need to be consulted directly from the people through the form of, such as dialogue, inquiry, and interviews on policies affecting the environment. Furthermore, these decisions require consultation with the environmental expert or their participation, examination, and monitoring of the environmental policies, their implementation, and activities related to the environment. On the other hand, administrators and authorities need to support the people, which can be organized in the form of self-governance or participating in organizations operating in the environmental sector. Thus, from the disclosure of information and the public having information about the environment, it leads them to actively participate in environmental decision-making to ensure objectivity, transparency, and publicity through many different forms of participation of individuals, groups,

1 Nguyen Duc Thuy (Editor), *Access to Rights in Environmental Protection*, IUCN Vietnam, Hanoi, 2012, p.104.

and social communities. Accordingly, people need to know about local regulations, policies, administrative procedures, socio-economic development strategies, land-use plans, water resource use, and air quality control, etc. Individuals, groups of people with directly related environmental interests should be consulted and contributed to construction activities, infrastructure development, production activities that have an impact on the environment. They should be consulted about the drafts of the authorities and be involved in monitoring the activities of these agencies, participating in the implementation of resolutions, handling complaints, the use of environmental funds and activities to ensure transparency and fairness. The right of citizens to participate in the environmental sector is exercised in the framework of international and national laws to create a mechanism for such participation, making it possible for people to exercise their rights to monitor, supervise and enforce the law on the environment by concerned individuals, agencies and organizations; from there, organizing the implementation of the provisions of the law on people's participation in needs protection activities, the enjoyment of environmental conditions... Activities of functional agencies on the principle of transparency are responsible for receiving, explaining, and responding to the opinions of organizations and individuals on environmental issues. The participation of people in processes from planning, implementing projects, laws, policies, ... related to the environment is ensured comprehensively, forming a legal basis for regulations, guidelines, and instructions on processes, methods, procedures, rights, and obligations of individuals, citizens, and organizations in participating in environmental policies.

It can be said that in the content of environmental equity, in addition to the human rights mentioned above, there is also human-environmental responsibility. According to author Nguyen Thi Lan Huong, environmental responsibility is not only responsible for one's behavior towards other individuals and society, but also one's behavior in nature - human habitat. Environmental responsibility emphasizes the relationship between humans and nature, in that it does not simply

respond with nature. Rather, the human must act wisely so as not to harm the environment as the whole of human survival system and other living beings for the benefit of ourselves and those beings. We protect the environment as well as protect our interests and the interests of future generations [1]. Thus, in the content of environmental equity, in addition to the environmental rights of the people mentioned above, there are also environmental obligations and responsibilities of the state, enterprises, and individuals.

Environmental responsibility of State

Today, the more developed the market economy, the more pressure is on the environment. Environmental degradation and pollution increase as fast as the development of. In the developing market economy, the pressure on the environment is increasing due to population growth, industrial, agricultural development, and exploitation of natural resources and minerals... The above situation is caused by ineffective measures to prevent and control environmental pollution of national governments. It can be said that environmental equity will not be guaranteed in degraded and polluted environments. The contents of environmental equity are associated with human existence and development, the development of society, and human civilization. Here, we believe that the state has an important role and responsibility to ensure the enjoyment of environmental needs and benefits for the people. This is reflected in the contents, such as respecting, protecting, and enforcing the environmental rights of people through policies and measures to ensure environmental equity.

First, the State must not interfere with the enjoyment of environmental needs and benefits, the right to live in a clean environment of all members of the society, ensuring that there are no individuals or population groups be restricted, denied accessing and enjoy a healthy, good and healthy living environment...

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1 Nguyen Thi Lan Huong, "Environmental responsibility - an aspect of social responsibility", *Philosophy*, No.9, 2009, pp.32-36.

Second, the State ensures environmental equity, no one can infringe on the enjoyment of the right to live in a clean environment of all people. A fundamental function of the state is to protect all members of society, especially those who are vulnerable and unable to survive under the effects of natural disasters, such as natural disasters, environmental crises. On the other hand, the State must take measures to control the production and business activities of individuals, households, and enterprises that harm the environment and have professional treatment measures to minimize often when an environmental incident occurs. Moreover, the responsibility to protect is also reflected in policies, laws, and the conditions to enforce those policies and laws for disadvantaged groups in society because they are vulnerable, their environmental needs and interests are susceptible to harm when an environmental incident occurs.

Third, it is the responsibility of the State to manifest in its positive actions to exercise human environmental rights by, for example, enacting policies, administrative regulations and laws, and national budget measures for suitable with the country's environmental circumstances; develop strategies to address degradation, pollution, and the environment that affect human existence and development, in which, it is necessary to focus on vulnerable groups in society.

Thus, in order to ensure environmental equity, the State needs to have an overall, comprehensive and long-term vision not only on socio-economic development plans, but also on making policies on ensure human environmental rights, ensure environmental equity; apply management methods in the direction of approaching advanced methods, models, and standards, promote the application of scientific and technological advances in resource management and environmental protection; promote the application of economic laws, quickly perfect the market mechanism and administrative measures in ensuring environmental equity; sharing environmental benefits for people and expanding deployment and implementation of eco-support services, implementing livelihood support measures for people when the

environment changes; expand and strengthen forms of disseminating knowledge, providing information on the environment to the community, publicizing information and data related to the environmental situation on the communication media; creating positive mechanism for people to access information, thereby participating in the environmental impact assessment of activities related to the environment, creating conditions for them to access justice in environmental compensation settlement.

Environmental responsibility of the business

In the current development of the market economy, the enterprise's operation is the organization of production and business, so it has the most obvious and strong impact on the environment. Therefore, this is the subject with great responsibility for every change of the environment. Enterprise's environmental responsibility is first and foremost to link with the community of scientists to accelerate the development and application of clean technologies, such as renewable energy, green technology, and support people in transforming livelihood to environmentally friendly production methods. On the other hand, businesses need to share capital, technology, and environmental techniques with the community to target many beneficiaries of guaranteed environmental conditions, especially the vulnerable groups before the changes of the environment. Enterprises need to comply with the laws on the environment. Industrial parks must have a centralized waste treatment system under the state regulations; be sanctioned, prosecuted if the enterprises, industrial zones violate the law on the environment. Industrial production enterprises are responsible for applying new technologies, clean technologies, saving raw materials, and fuel in production and waste treatment to control wastewater pollution, industrial emissions.

Thus, in the content of environmental equity, enterprises must be responsible for production and business activities affecting the environment and community life, through pollution control and treatment behaviors, recycle waste, save resources; share environmental benefits and needs for the community within their fields of activity

and ability. This is the corporate social responsibility towards the environment. Moreover, if the enterprise complies with environmental laws, it will gain many benefits for itself, such as being recognized by the society, reputable products and trusted by the people, thereby leading to production and business activities are more favorable.

Environmental responsibility of the people

In the market economy, people are not only the subject of economic, social, and cultural activities, but also the beneficiaries of environmental benefits and needs, not only having rights in terms of environment, but also responsible for civil control over environmental pollution issues and promoting social supervision for environmental protection activities. Because, protecting the environment, first of all, is a condition to ensure environmental equity, that is to ensure the conditions to fulfill their environmental needs, interests. Individuals and communities can replicate models, such as communities protecting the environment, self-governing natural resources, and sharing environmental benefits with others, such as sharing experiences and practices, green and clean technology in daily life and production, especially in agricultural production.

People need to realize and have to change their activities and behaviors if they harm the environment or the interests and environmental needs of others. Awareness and behavior change of people towards activities affecting the environment has a great important meaning. Because their activities and behaviors are often unintentional, not aware of environmental harms to others. Moreover, such harms are often latent for a long time, not revealed.

In short, in the current market economy, the content of environmental equity is reflected in the relationship between human rights to the environment and the environmental responsibility of individuals, groups of people, enterprises, and the state have a close relationship. Ensuring human rights to the environment, such as the right to a safe and healthy environment, the right to access information, and participate

in environmental protection activities is the legal basis for all members of the society is capable of equally enjoying environmental conditions. However, the above contents can only be done when all members of society, from individuals, groups of people, to enterprises, the State have to fulfill their environmental responsibilities and obligations.

PART 5

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS

SOCIAL JUSTICE AMONG ETHNIC MINORITIES IN VIETNAM NOWADAYS

Bui Thi Ngoc Lan[1]

1. The concept of social justice among ethnic groups

Social justice is a fundamental value that orientates to solve the relationships between individuals and society on the principle of ensuring equal contributions equal achievement; the fairness of development opportunities and conditions; the adequacy between rights and obligations, consistent with the response of each country in a certain historical period.

Thus, social justice not only ensures economic equity (the distribution of production materials and equipment, the distribution of production outcomes) but also equality of development opportunities and conditions assured by using the social welfare system to redistribute production outcomes, control and classify society; the social security system to prevent, reduce and share social risks; and the rule of law system ensures equality before the law of all citizens.

1 Assoc. Prof. Dr., Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics.

The United Nations stated "building a just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met" to ensure says the principle of "no one is left behind". Accordingly, the overarching content of social justice is *equality of development opportunities*, in which the core is expressed in the fairness of the opportunities to access development resources for individuals, for each social group. These resources often include property ownership or access to assets in the community such as land, tools of labor, credit; labor market, right to access information; access to education, health, public services, and essential needs, etc...

In the process of implementing social justice, the State plays an important role in *creating the necessary conditions* for mechanisms and policies to ensure that all people - especially disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities, mountainous, remote and isolated areas, etc... to have conditions and opportunities to access resources for development, thereby gradually narrowing the development gap and level of development among population strata, ethnic groups, regions across the country.

In a multi-ethnic country, the relationships among ethnic groups have been formed and developed in the historical process, including exchange relationships, communication, and interactions among ethnic groups, among local groups or members of the ethnic groups, and these relationships are reflected in all fields of economy, politics, culture, society, environment, etc... In the process of exchange, communication, and interaction, the situation in which social inequality among ethnic groups increase and equality is not assured, will lead to deep gaps and national conflicts forming and that is the cause of ethnic conflicts, causing political instability, inhibiting the development of each ethnic group as well as of the whole country - nation. Therefore, ensuring solidarity, fairness, equality, respect, and mutual development among ethnic groups is the basic principle for a good settlement of ethnic relationships.

Although there are still difficulties in the process of implementing equity among ethnic groups, the goals of equality among ethnic groups that we need to strive to achieve are to reduce the gap between rich and poor, and gradually narrow the gap in development progress among ethnic groups, among regions in a multi-ethnic country, against all discrimination, ethnic discrimination, and social injustice. This is only fulfilled mainly by the role of the State's orientation and control through policy-making, regulating the distributional relationships according to the level of contribution of members of the society among ethnic groups, at the same time creating equal opportunities in terms of accessibility and level of beneficiaries of services, social welfare and social security to ensure that each person and ethnic group can integrate into the community and have developed conditions.

Thereafter, social justice among ethnic groups is a guiding value for each ethnic group to satisfy its basic material and spiritual needs in the relationship between contribution and achievement, between obligations and rights. At the same time, it creates opportunities and conditions for all nations, especially ethnic minorities, to develop rapidly and sustainably.

2. Reality of implementing social justice among ethnic minorities in Vietnam nowadays

- Achievements in implementing social justice among ethnic minorities in Vietnam nowadays

In Vietnam, ethnic minorities account for about 14.6% of the country's population, residing across a quarter of the territory and in key areas of the country (mainly in the North West, Central Highlands, South West, and Central Coast Region). To narrow the development gap, effectuate social justice and inclusive and sustainable development among ethnic minorities and ethnic minority areas In the minority, the leadership of the Party, the role of control and management of the State through the policy system to reduce poverty, invest in livelihood creation methods for sustainable development, along with the application of

a *system of a specific policy system* is essential because promoting inclusive and sustainable development in ethnic minority areas is to create a rapid and sustainable development of the whole nation.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, a consistent policy is being implemented: "Ensuring fairness and equality in the rights and obligations of citizens; closely and rationally combining economic development with social and cultural development, realize social advancement and justice in each step and policy…. associating obligations with interests, contribution to achievement, and personal interests with the common collective interests and social community"[1]. The 2030 Agenda National Action Plan for Sustainable Development and the Millennium Goals for Ethnic Minorities also affirms: "Maintaining sustainable economic growth goes hand in hand with strategies that realize social advancement and justice, protecting the ecology, manage and use natural resources all while proactively tackling climate change, assuring that all people can bring into play all their potentials, participate in and equally enjoy the achievement of development; building a peaceful, prosperous, inclusive, democratic, fair, civilized and sustainable Vietnamese society".[2]

After nearly 35 years of reforming and implementing the national policies of the Party and State, the reform of Vietnam has achieved many great achievements, according to which the material and spiritual life of the ethnic minority people has improved significantly. The implementation of social justice for ethnic minorities has been respected and achieved many achievements. Vietnam has ratified and committed to implementing international conventions and important international declarations related to national relationships, such as the Civil and Political Rights Convention, Convention on Elimination of All Forms of

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p.79.

2 Decision No. 622/QĐ-TTg, dated May 10, 2017 of the Prime Minister "On the promulgation of the National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development".

Racism, United Nations Declaration on Ethnic Minority Rights, Race, Religion, and Language, and Declaration of the United Nations on the rights of indigenous peoples… At the same time, Vietnam has enacted many laws, 38 of which are directly related to the rights and obligations of ethnic minorities. In particular, Article 5 of the 2013 Constitution demonstrates the point of view of the Communist Party of Vietnam affirming: all Vietnamese citizens are equal before the law; Vietnamese nationalities are equal, solidarity, respect and help each other develop, ensuring social justice; prohibits all acts of discrimination, ethnic unsolidarity... Some other articles of the 2013 Constitution also affirm that there must be favorable conditions, priorities for ethnic minorities to develop opportunities in the fields of poverty reduction, education, health care, socio-economic development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas, and extremely difficult socio-economic regions, as a result, socio-economic development in these regions has been markedly improved, the economic structure of localities underwent strong changes, people's livelihood methods were increasingly diversified, and their incomes have been raised. Poverty reduction has achieved the National Program of sustainable poverty reduction. The investment in the education of ethnic minority areas is more focused and has achieved many significant improvements; the cultural life of ethnic minorities has been better raised; Traditional culture of the ethnic groups is respected, preserved, and promoted; medical services for the poor in remote and isolated areas have been in more attention. The political system in ethnic minority and mountainous areas has been strengthened and consolidated. The political situation and social order are stable; security and defense have been maintained.

To gradually realize fair opportunities and create favorable conditions for sustainable development of ethnic minority areas, up to now, there have been 118 programs and policies being implemented in ethnic minorities and mountainous areas, of which 54 are direct policies for ethnic minorities, ethnic minority areas and 64 general

policies that give priority to ethnic minorities[1]. These programs and policies focus on productive development in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; educations; culture, etc... to solve difficulties and pressing problems of poor households in difficult and extremely difficult areas such as Policies to support the settlement of residential land, productive land, water, production development and stabilization of life for poor ethnic minorities, poor households in extremely difficult areas, stabilize lives for ethnic people spontaneous migrants (Decision No. 2085/ QĐ-TTg and 162/QĐ-TTg); socio-economic development for ethnic minorities with very few people (Decision 2086/QĐ-TTg); developing human resources of ethnic minorities and reputable people among ethnic minorities (Resolution 52/NQ-CP, Decision No. số 402/QĐ-TTg, Decision No. 771/QĐ-TTg, Decision No. 2561/QĐ-TTg and Decision No. 12/2018/QĐ-TTg), etc...

With the focus by the Party and State, the socio-economic situation of ethnic minorities and mountainous and remote areas has seen remarkable growth, the poverty rate among ethnic minorities has decreased rapidly by year. Basic social service delivery systems and supportive policies have contributed to the realization of social equity and the development of ethnic minorities and mountainous, remote, and isolated areas. For many other reasons the transformation of these opportunities to reduce poverty, sustainably develop, and performance of social justice among ethnic minorities is still limited.

- The limitations in the implementation of social justice among ethnic minorities in Vietnam nowadays

Besides the achievements, the implementation of social justice among ethnic minorities, many shortcomings still exist in Vietnam. Equity in ethnic minorities' access to public resources remains limited, leading to an increasing gap between the rich and poor between ethnic

1 Source: Government Report No: 426 / BC-CP, October 4, 2018: Report on 3-year assessment of implementation of policies on supporting socio-economic development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas (Phase 2016 - 2018), p.2

minorities and the majority; The material and spiritual life of ethnic minorities is still in low quality and has more disadvantages than the majority. Some specific facts can be seen: Technical infrastructure in ethnic minority and mountainous areas is still low, failing to meet the needs of socio-economic development. Currently, ethnic minority areas are still "the core poverty" of the country, the average income per capita of ethnic minorities is only equal to about 30% compared to the national average; The poverty rate accounts for 52.66% of the poor households of the country, including the rate of multidimensionally poor households within some ethnic minorities, (economic, cultural, education, health, housing, living conditions - water source / sanitary toilet) very high up to 70 - 80% such as Ơ Đu, Co, Khơ Mú, Xinh Mun, La Ha, Kháng, Mông, Xơ Đăng, La Hủ, Chứt…[1]

Ethnic minorities' access to development opportunities and conditions to implement opportunities have many barriers, which are not well assured, thus expanding public welfare (grid electricity, telecommunications, transportation, social credit ...) continue to create a gap between the groups with necessary conditions to exploit opportunities (the majority of ethnic groups have favorable geographical conditions, high economic development level, culture, society, favorable in accessing social capital sources...) and ethnic minorities have fewer conditions to access and exploit opportunities. Ethnic minorities have access to and enjoyment of basic social services at a very low rate compared to the national average.

In terms of the educational sector, although ethnic minority education is an aspect of particular concern for investment and has made many important achievements in improving the quality of human resources, however, the quality of human resources of many ethnic minority groups is still low compared to the general level of the whole country. Currently, the rate of untrained labor forces of some ethnic

1 Source: Irish Aid*, UNDP and Committee for Ethnic Minorities, An Overview of the Socio-Economic Situation of 53 Ethnic Minorities*, May 2017, p.58.

groups is still high, for example, Mông: 98.7%; Thai: 94.6%; other ethnic minorities: 95.95%; even some ethnic groups have almost no trained workers (such as Xtiêng, Brâu, Mảng, Rơ Măm, Ba Na, Phù Lá, Raglay, La Hủ và Khơ Mú). Among the trained workers, it is mainly short-term training with low simple qualifications. Currently, 21% of ethnic minorities over 15 years old cannot read and write fluently in Vietnamese[1]. The quality of human resources of ethnic minorities is an obstacle, the biggest bottleneck in access to job opportunities and income, limiting the movement of ethnic minority workers to industrial, urban areas, services - where there are good jobs and better income than agricultural workers in the village ...

In the field of health and living conditions, the proportion of ethnic minorities medical services with health insurance cards only reach 44.8%; Nearly one-third of ethnic minority households do not have access to hygienic water; More than 15.3% of ethnic minority households live in temporary houses, with 14 ethnic minorities having temporary houses nearly 50%...[2]

However, the difficulties and obstacles faced by ethnic minorities are not the same, among the 53 ethnic minorities, 16 of them face many difficulties - those are ethnic minorities with a very few populations below 10,000 people, including La Hủ, La Ha, Pà Thẻn, Lự, Ngái, Chứt, Lô Lô, Mảng, Cơ Lao, Bố Y, Cống, Si La, Pu Péo, Rơ Măm, Brâu, Ơ Đu. Therefore, the State has specific policies to create special opportunities and support for ethnic minorities to develop[3], but the

1 Dr. Phan Van Hung (Editor), *Some new issues in ethnic relations and national policies in our country nowadays*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2015, pp.83-84.

2 Committee for Ethnic Minorities, Draft "General project on investment in socio-economic development in ethnic minority areas, mountainous areas and extremely difficult socio-economic regions in the period 2021-2025, orientation to 2030" , April 2019.

3 Decision 2086/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister, dated October 31, 2016 "Approving the Scheme to support socio-economic development of ethnic minorities in the

ability of these ethnic groups to realize opportunities is very weak (due to their residence in too difficult areas, the level of awareness is very imitative).

The current limitations and difficulties in implementing social justice among ethnic groups in Vietnam require further research to adopt policies to reduce and gradually solve these problems.

- The cause of the limitations in the implementation of social justice among ethnic minorities in Vietnam nowadays

Firstly, due to the geographical difference, the natural conditions are not favorable for the development

In Vietnam, due to long-standing historical and natural conditions, there is still a big difference in development level among ethnic groups. Ethnic minorities live in communities with large geographical areas, mainly in mountainous, border, remote, and extremely difficult areas with complex divided terrain, many rocky mountains, steep slope, difficult transportation, low quality of land resources (mainly sloping land, mixed with gravel, serious lack of irrigation water ... not favorable for production), lack of land for production; frequently under impact by natural disasters, extreme climates such as storms, floods, flash floods, landslides, droughts, salinity, etc...It is the disadvantages of natural conditions, geographical differences that limit ethnic minority access to markets and information and limit the ability of ethnic minorities to migrate in the labor market[1], thereby limiting the capacity to access development opportunities, leading to disadvantages in livelihoods and differentiation of development levels between ethnic areas, between ethnic minorities and the majority. (The majority of ethnic groups often reside in the plains, with fertile land favorable for development). This is one of the objective factors hindering the implementation of social justice in ethnic minority and mountainous areas in Vietnam.

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period 2016 - 2025".

1 Migration is a contributing factor to a more successful social integration. But at present, the migration rate of ethnic minorities is only half of that of the majority.

Secondly, due to the gap in socio-economic development level and limited access to development resources.

Due to disadvantages in living conditions and historical causes, due to very different starting points, plus language barriers, leading to uneven development among ethnic groups. In Vietnam nowadays, there are ethnic groups who have developed to the level of modern production methods applying science, technology, high technology, robotization of the production; meanwhile, there are new ethnic groups in the early stages of industrialization, but there are also ethnic groups still leaning on natural exploitation with underdeveloped commodity economy, mainly self-sufficient and self-sufficient; Even some ethnic groups still live mainly by the mode of hunting and gathering, living self-contained, less moving, less integration into the labor market, so the level of livelihood diversification outside agricultural activities is low. The livelihoods of ethnic minorities today are mainly in the fields of agriculture and forestry. The proportion of ethnic minority groups having jobs in the industry, construction, and services is low, not fully exploiting the potential in the tourism and the service sectors of the region[1].

Furthermore, most ethnic minority groups today have difficulty in accessing resources - both inputs such as capital, land, market information, infrastructure ... and outputs. This is the factor that hinders the diversification of the livelihoods of ethnic minority households and is the cause of poverty, social stratification, and social inequality; The equality of ethnic minorities' development opportunities is therefore limited, possibly even a cause of ethnic conflicts.

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1 The proportion of ethnic minority households working in the tourism and service sector is low, only 0.3%. The average rate of ethnic minority households with traditional handicrafts is only 1.8% - According to the "Master Plan on investment in socio-economic development in ethnic minority areas, mountainous areas and economic regions. - Special difficult communes in the period 2021-2025, orientations 2030" of the Government, 2019, p.19.

Thirdly, due to the inadequacies in the policies and implementation of the ethnic policies of the Party and the State of Vietnam

Over the past decades, Vietnam has built up an increasingly synchronous and comprehensive system of ethnic minority policies and policies for ethnic minorities and mountainous groups, covering almost all areas of the economy, culture, society, environment, security, and national defense. Budget sources and mobilization of investment resources for the development of ethnic minority and mountainous areas are increasing.

However, up to now, the ethnic policy system of Vietnam needs to continue to be supplemented and completed to fully update the impact of the new context (extensive international integration, inclusive development strategy, industrial revolution 4.0, digital economy ...) to the work of ethnic groups and ethnic minority areas. The legal system on ethnic affairs is not uniform. Currently, Vietnam does not have a Law on Ethnic Minorities to regulate ethnic relationship, regulations on ethnic policies, handle behaviors and violations in the field of ethnic work ... This work does not take into account fully the characteristics of each region, the differences between ethnic minorities, so when implemented in many cases it is not appropriate or has not brought into play the creativity at the local level, of the people in place.

Many policy interventions are overlapping, unsynchronized, and dispersed, creating a sense of expectation, inability to mobilize internal resources of ethnic minorities. According to the Council of Ethnic Minorities, among 15 direct policies for ethnic minorities, ethnic minority areas mainly focus on social fields such as education, culture, and information. There are not many policies on the economy, labor, employment, infrastructure development, settlement of residential land, productive land, and sustainable livelihoods methods for ethnic minorities and mountainous areas, meanwhile, these are basic policies for poverty reduction and socio-economic development, step by step toward the goal of social equity and sustainable development among ethnic groups.

A reality in which programs and projects are built with very large goals, but the level of investment for implementation is not compatible (usually too little funding, or not pouring capital in time…) so it is difficult for fulfillment[1]. Or at the same time, many Ministries and branches manage and preside over and direct the implementation of many policies, programs, and investment projects for ethnic minority and mountainous areas, but policies are often separate and in little coordination. This leads to the overlap, lack of synchronization and causes difficulties in implementing, monitoring, synthesizing, creating a sluggish mentality, reducing the motivation to escape the poverty of ethnic minorities, so the impact of the policy is not high.

The policy review is often slow, lacks objectivity, thereby affecting the addition, amendment, adjustment, and formulation of policies. This is also one of the reasons why the development gap between ethnic minorities and the majority is still high and efforts towards fairness, social justice, inclusive and sustainable development for ethnic minorities, there are still many barriers.

Fourthly, due to mistakes in implementing the ethnic policies of the Party and the State of Vietnam

The process of accelerating rapid industrialization inevitably requires the change of land use purposes. However, in this process, there have been many mistakes and corruption related to land. This has left uneven and inequitable effects, creating social injustices and social tensions, and possibly even social conflicts. This fact took place in many localities, including areas of ethnic minorities. Mistakes in the implementation of national policies and corruption are also common and may continue, unless these actions are under control and overcome

1 Example: Decision 102/2009/QĐ-TTg on support for people in poverty alleviation, socio-economic development in disadvantaged areas, with a support level of 100,000 VND / person / year for poor households in region III. disadvantaged areas and 80,000 VND / person / year for commune area II, border communes and coastal areas, islands in disadvantaged areas

they not only undermine the innovation in the socialist direction, hinder the economic growth and sustainability in Vietnam, but also inhibits social progress and equity, resulting in the dissatisfaction among the people and is a great threat to the survival of socialism in Vietnam. Therefore, along with the elimination of the socio-economic basis of social injustice, at the same time, it is necessary to resolutely fight against negative phenomena, especially corruption to make the principle of social justice and a healthy lifestyle is commonly and firmly established in social life, ensuring adequate future livelihood methods for people disadvantaged by this process.

3. Proposing policies to realize social justice among ethnic minorities in Vietnam nowadays

From the situation and the reasons analyzed, to ensure social justice among ethnic minorities in Vietnam, it is necessary to pay attention to the following issues:

Firstly, researching, reviewing and supplementing, and completing policies for ethnic minorities

Overall review of ethnic minority areas to identify "core poverty" areas for a key investment plan. To avoid scattered investment and ineffective use of resources, it is necessary to have a strong and unified focal point to manage and allocate resources in a scientific, transparent to assure social justice (but not to even)researching investment in the "each focus in turn" methodology closely combined with the inspection and supervision and promoting the role of self-governance, democracy, and empowerment of communities and people at the grassroots level in the selection of works, using supported resources, ensuring to suit people's aspirations, suitable with the characteristics of each region and customs and practices, bringing high efficiency; combining economic development with solving social problems.

Provisions in the 2013 Constitution relating to ethnic issues need to be concretized, supplemented, revised, and completed. Early enacting

the Law on Ethnic Minorities as a legal basis to regulate matters related to ethnicity and ethnic relations. Forming a mechanism for ethnic groups to be equal and equal in accessing opportunities for labor, employment, resources, market, and social welfare; improving the quality of human resources of ethnic minorities, focusing on developing the capacity of the people to grasp and make good use of development opportunities and conditions.

Secondly, promoting the role of the State in settling national relations on the principles of solidarity, fairness, equality, respect, and mutual help for development among ethnic groups in Vietnam.

The State plays a very important role in holding control in areas related to people and social welfare, related to social justice, national equality and ethnic conflict resolution ... in a multi-ethnic national community. Therefore, *shifting from a governing state to a state of service, creation, and development through* the provision of basic public services and ensuring social security. Implementing social equity through the social security system is a way to improve the living and working conditions of ethnic minorities, especially for poor households with extreme difficulties; At the same time, it is a tool to balance and adjust resources for poor areas and underdeveloped ethnic minority areas, reduce regional disparities, limit inequality and social inequality between groups, ethnic minorities, and majority ethnic groups.

There must be social control mechanisms through the State to ensure an equitable distribution of the nation's resources, with ethnic minorities as vulnerable groups to be prioritized through specific policies to narrow the development gap with the majority. The policy system for ethnic minorities must adhere to the natural conditions, cultural identity, and social structure of ethnic groups to ensure compatibility with the ethnic minority culture and lifestyle. To do this, it is necessary to ensure the right to participate of people, social organizations, and reputable people from ethnic minorities in the development and implementation of policies, programs, and projects related to ethnic minorities. It is necessary to ensure the representative structure of ethnic minorities and

have a mechanism to fully and effectively promote such structures in preventing and overcoming social inequality and social injustice.

Thirdly, solving problems of land for ethnic minorities, ensuring sustainable livelihood methods

Settling residential land, productive land and living space for ethnic minorities is not only a matter of ensuring simple livelihood methods but also has an important meaning in resolving ethnic relationships in Vietnam, assuring fairness between the ethnic minorities and the majority. This is a solution that may have to be implemented in the long term, but must not be ignored. It is necessary to the law on land-related issues for ethnic minorities, especially for the poor and disadvantaged groups, to help them stabilize their production and life. To deal with land shortages and disputes over productive and residential land for ethnic minorities and mountainous people. For localities that still have land funds, it is necessary to develop support plans for people, in which first of all pay attention to poor households, especially with difficulties in training their livelihood methods, combined with guidance and mentoring so that they can rise out of poverty by themselves and develop in a stable and sustainable direction. For localities that do not have land funds to support, they will switch to support vocational training, job change, job creation ... especially for young groups to gradually create new livelihood methods for them in accordance with their regions and ethnic groups. Providing equal opportunities for ethnic minorities to access resources for the development and enjoyment of social welfare services.

Last but not least, reforming the communication methods in ethnic minority areas; innovating poverty reduction solutions; diversifying investment sources for ethnic minority areas

Investing in the construction of information infrastructure to ensure the transmission of radio, television, telecommunications, and information technology services, to meet the production and living needs of ethnic minorities. Strengthening communication in ethnic minority

languages, communication integrated with programs and projects on economic, cultural, and social development ... in ethnic minority areas to ensure ethnic minorities receive information conveniently and practically for livelihood methods and daily life.

Innovating solutions towards sustainable poverty reduction, multidimensional poverty reduction, combining the assistance of the State, governments at all levels, political organizations, unions, internal and external resources. Increasing investment from the State budget and realizing investment in the development of ethnic minority areas. Continuing to prioritize investment in budget and resources for socio-economic development in ethnic minority and mountainous, remote, and extremely difficult areas ..., first of all, focusing on development of information, building infrastructure, developing public services, improving the quality of human resources for ethnic minorities, ensuring fair access to public services, health care, and social development, etc… for ethnic minorities.

Implementing social justice among ethnic minorities is not only a humanistic goal but also an economic measure that has a strong and positive impact on accelerating more stable socio-economic development; at the same time is an important driving force to contribute to building the great national unity solidarity in Vietnam, towards building a rich, strong, democratic, equitable, civilized and sustainable country.

EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES IN VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD OF DOI MOI

Nguyen Thi Luyen[1]

1. Introduction

From the perspective of physical anthropology, the concept of "minority" is used quite popularly to refer to an ethnic group of people, who are lesser in numbers than the main groups of people (Dang CanhKhanh, 2014). According to the Law of Vietnam, ethnic minorities are ethnic groups of people, who make up a smaller proportion of the total population than the ethnic majority in the territory of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, as defined in Term 2 of Article 4 in Decree No.05/2011/NĐ-CP.

Based on the above-mentioned approach, there are 53 ethnic minorities in Vietnam at present (Annex 1), totaling 13.4 million persons (accounting for 14.6% of the country's population). Despite a proportion of less than 15% of the country's population, ethnic minorities play an important role in the process of national defense and strategies for socio-economic development. As reported by the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs, ethnic minority groups are scattered over mountain

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areas in 52 out of 63 cities/provinces (making up 82.5% of the total number of cities/provinces). They are found in 457 out of 713 districts and towns (64.1%) and 5,266 out of 11,162 communes/wards (47.2%) across the country, spreading from the North to the South and from the West to the East and covering an area of almost 250,000 km^2 (making up more than 75% of the country's territory) (Ngo Thi Phong Van, 2017).

In the *Doi moi* (Reform) period, the education right is seen as a basic right for all citizens, drawing special attention from the Party and the State. In addition to the sector of sciences and technology, the sector of education and training is considered to be one of the top priorities in the national policy. Thus, educational justice must be guaranteed as the initial and ultimate target that should be achieved. Of the general goals in educational development, the Party and the State have attached special importance to the policies aimed to ensure educational justice and promote the right to education among people of ethnic minorities over the past 30-plus years.

This paper focuses on some relevant issues, such as the legal framework aimed to ensure educational justice for ethnic minority people; the implementation of the educational justice policy; and some suggestions on how to improve the right to education among children of ethnic minorities.

2. Regulations aimed to guarantee ethnic minorities educational justice

In the first years of the period of *Doi moi,* the Politburo issued Resolution No.22/NQ-TW dated 27 November 1989 on some major guidelines for socio-economic development in mountainous areas to improve the living conditions of ethnic minority people. Afterward, the Central Government promulgated the Decision No.72/HDBT dated 13 March 1990, highlighting specific instructions on how to boost socio-economic development in mountainous areas, emphasizing particularly the necessity of promoting education for ethnic minorities in addition to other socio-economic spheres.

Together with the improvement of the legal framework, the Education Law and other legal regulations relating to education have been concretized, to ensure equality in care and education for children of ethnic minorities. This is shown clearly in a number of articles in Vietnam'sEducation Law adopted in 2005, such as: Article 61 on the establishment of boarding general education schools, semi-boarding general education schools, and university-preparatory schools for ethnic minority children; Article 82 on preferential policies towards teachers and educational administrators working at specialised schools (including: the schools for the gifted; boarding general education schools, semi-boarding general education schools, and university-preparatory schools for ethnic minority children; schools for the disabled; etc.) or in the areas meeting with extraordinary socio-economic difficulties; Article 89 on scholarships and social subsidies provided for learners being social policy beneficiaries or ethnic minority people in the areas meeting with extraordinary socioeconomic difficulties; and, Article 90 on enrolment through nomination, according to which ethnic minority children in the areas meeting with extraordinary socio-economic difficulties could enrol at colleges, universities or professional secondary schools through nomination... Vietnam's Law on Universal Primary Education was adopted in 1991 and Vietnam's Law on Child Protection, Care and Education adopted in 2004 consists of specific regulations aimed to guarantee ethnic minority people the right to education. The provision of favorable conditions was stipulated specifically in the laws to enable ethnic minority people to learn their language and script in addition to the Vietnamese language and script. Preference is given to ethnic minority pupils/students was also emphasized. Besides, many boarding general education schools, semi-boarding general education schools, and university-preparatory schools have been founded for ethnic minority children. At the same time, several documents have been issued to stipulate educational subsidies for pupils/students from mountainous areas, such as the Prime Minister's Decision No.1121/1997/QĐ-TTg dated 13 January 1997 on the scholarships and social subsidies for pupils/students at public schools the Prime Minister's Decision

No.194/2001/QD-TTg dated 21 December 2001 on the adjustment of the scholarships and social subsidies for ethnic minority pupils/students at public schools, which were previously stipulated in the Prime Minister's Decision No.1121/1997/QĐ-TTg dated 23 December 1997.

To concretize the regulations concerning ethnic minorities in the Education Law, from 2005 up to now, the government and the Prime Minister have promulgated several resolutions and decisions aimed to strengthen the implementation of educational preferential policies for ethnic minority people (with respect to learners, educational workforce, languages, and scripts) to ensure social progress and educational justice in the new context. The Central Government's Decree No.134/2006/NĐ-CPdated 14 November 2006 stipulated: "ethnic minority children, who enroll in colleges, universities or professional secondary schools in the system of public education through nomination, will get scholarships and subsidies to cover expenses on accommodation, travel, textbooks, notebooks, and study tools". The Decree No.82/2010/NĐ-TTg dated 15 July 2010 stipulated the teaching and learning of ethnic languages and scripts. Decision No.2123/2010/QĐ-TTg dated 22 November 2010 highlighted the right to education in the ethnic minorities that had a very small population (less than 10,000 persons). The Decree No.19/2013/NĐ-CP amended and supplemented some articles of the DecreeNo.61/2006/NĐ-CP dated 20 June 2006 on the preferential policies for teachers and educational administrators working at specialized schools or in the areas meeting with extraordinary socio-economic difficulties.

The great attention paid by the Party and the State to ethnic minorities can be seen in "the Ethnic Strategy to 2020" approved by the Prime Minister in 2013, which emphasized educational development to create the motivation for development in the areas of ethnic minorities.

Recently, Decree No.57/2017/NĐ-CP dated 9 May 2017 was issued by the government, stipulating enrolment preference given to people from 16 ethnic groups (including Cong, Mang, Pu Peo, Si La, Co Lao, Bo Y, La Ha, Ngai, Chut, O Du, Brau, Ro Mam, Lo Lo, Lu,

and Pa Then), of which the population is less than 10,000 persons, or also called ethnic groups with very small populations. The decree came into effect on 1 July 2017. Since the 2017 – 2018 academic year, consequently, enrolment preference has been given to people from the ethnic groups with very small populations so that they could enroll at educational units appropriately to their expectations. Specifically, little children are given preference to enroll at public preschools; primary school-aged children are given preference to enroll at semi-boarding primary schools; after finishing primary school, they can take the following higher grades at boarding or semi-boarding secondary and high schools. After graduating from high school, they can be nominated to enroll at vocational schools, university-preparatory schools, colleges, or universities. Besides, the amounts of educational subsidy provided for pupils/students from those ethnic groups were also stipulated to be the same or higher than those in the previously promulgated documents. Decree No. 57/2017/NĐ-CP is considered to be the first normative legal act on education and training for people from ethnic groups with very small populations (Ly Thanh Loan, 2017).

Also, communes and villages of ethnic minorities are classified into various groups of areas according to development levels, of which the areas meeting with extraordinary socio-economic difficulties are determined by the Prime Minister's decisions. In collaboration with relevant ministries and sectors, the Ministry of Education and Training has designed and proposed appropriate policies aimed to promote education in specific groups of areas. The Circular No.35/2006/TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV dated 23 August 2006 jointly issued by the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Home Affairs highlighted the norms of the workforce at public educational units, to arrange educational workforce effectively in all areas, especially mountainous and remote areas, where many ethnic minorities are found. The Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Finance have promulgated a large number of joint-circulars on the provision of financial support for ethnic minority students at boarding schools

and university-preparatory schools; for example, the Joint-Circular No.109/2009/TTLT/BTC-BGDĐT that instructed the implementation of the financial subsidies for ethnic minority students at boarding schools. According to the Joint-Circular, ethnic minority students are provided with accommodation and travel allowances, in addition to the exemption from paying school fees.

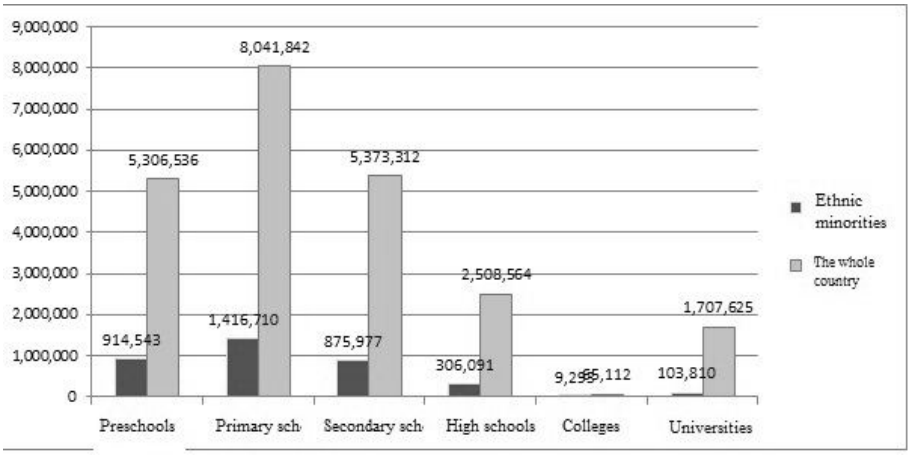
Legal and by-law documents on education for ethnic minorities have been amended and supplemented continually over the past years, being more concretized and attached more closely to socio-economic conditions and cultural characteristics of the areas of ethnic minorities. As a result, educational justice has been increasingly improved for ethnic minority people. In reality, since the policy of *Doi moi* was adopted at the Sixth National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1986, certain achievements have been gained in education for ethnic minorities, contributing to socio-economic development in the areas of ethnic minorities particularly and the whole country generally.

3. Implementation of the right to education among ethnic minority pupils/students during the period of Doi moi

According to the statistical data of the Ethnic Education Department in the Ministry of Education and Training, there are in total 5 university-preparatory schools, 314 boarding schools, 975 semi-boarding schools, 14 vocational schools for ethnic minority pupils/students across the country. Preschools are found in almost all communes, where ethnic minority people live. There is a primary school and a secondary school in every community. High schools have been built and run for several communes. Many schools, especially boarding ones, have been equipped with quite modern and high-quality facilities, providing sufficient conditions for teaching and learning activities. Furthermore, the policies aimed to attract resources for education in the areas of ethnic minorities (the salary allowance equivalent to 70% of the monthly salary together with other subsidies, according to Decree No.19/2013/NĐ-CP of the Central Government) are seen as solid grounds for

stabilizing and enhancing the quality and the quantity of the educational workforce at schools for ethnic minority people. In the 2017-2018 academic year, the total number of ethnic minority pupils/students was 2,598.778, accounting for 16.3% of all pupils/students in the country. More specifically, the numbers of ethnic minority pupils/students at preschools, primary schools, secondary schools, high schools, colleges, and universities are 914,534 (accounting for 17.2% of all children at preschools in the country), 1,416,710 (17.6%), 875,977 (16.3%), 306,091 (12.2%); 9,293 (14.2%); and 103,810 (0,06%) respectively (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Quantity of ethnic minority pupils/students (compared to the total number in the country) in the 2017-2018 academic year



Source: Statistical data of the Ministry of Education and Training (retrieved on 13 April 2019)

We can see that the proportion made up of pupils/students from ethnic minorities has increased over the past years (See Table 1).

Table 1: Proportion of ethnic minority pupils/students

	2007			2012			2017		
	Ethnic minorities	Whole country	%	Ethnic minorities	Whole country	%	Ethnic minorities	Whole country	%
Primary school	1,222,390	6,860,342	17.82	1,265,096	7,202,767	17.56	1,416,710	8,041,842	17.62
Secondary school	875,236	5,803,261	15.08	777,521	4,869,839	15.97	875,977	5,373,312	16.30
High school	298,024	3,021,641	9.86	292,626	2,674,472	10.94	306,091	2,508,564	12.20

Source: General Statistics Office of Vietnam

Based on data in Table 1, we can see that the ratio of ethnic minority pupils/students at secondary schools in 2012 (who were the very pupils/students at primary school in 2007) to ethnic minority pupils/students at primary schools in 2007 is 63.6% (i.e., 777,521/1,222,390). Meanwhile, the corresponding ratio of ethnic minority pupils/students at secondary schools in 2017 to ethnic minority pupils/students at primary schools in 2012 is higher (69.2%) (i.e. 875,977/1,265,096). It demonstrates that the proportion of ethnic minority pupils, who continued going to secondary school after finishing primary school, increased over the period from 2007 to 2017. It also means that the proportion of school dropouts among ethnic minority children decreased and the educational efficiency at primary and secondary schools was improved.

At the high school level, the quality of education at boarding schools, semi-boarding schools, and university-preparatory schools for ethnic minority students has enhanced through academic years. Of all graduates from those schools last year, more than 50% passed college/university entrance examinations; 5% enrolled at colleges/universities by nomination; 13% enrolled at preparatory faculties of colleges/universities; 20% enrolled at vocational schools; and the rest 12% took part in production activities in local areas (Thanh Thuy, 2019). Besides, textbooks of ethnic culture have been complied and taught at schools in many local areas. At present, six languages of ethnic groups,

including Mong, Cham, Khmer, Gia-rai, Ba-na, and E-de, are included in the regular teaching programs at schools for ethnic minority people. It contributes a part to the preservation and development of cultural values, kindling children's national pride, and making them excited about going to school.

According to the assessment of the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs, in the 2017-2018 academic years, activities relating to the spearhead education and the development of high-quality human resources among ethnic minorities were strengthened, in addition to the improvement of the quality of comprehensive education. In some provinces, ethnic minority students won prizes at the national and provincial contests for excellent students as well as the national science and engineering competitions. Especially, the number of ethnic minority students who graduated from high schools and took higher education has been getting increasingly higher for the past few years. In almost all provinces, the proportion of ethnic minority students who won prizes at the national contests for excellent students, the proportion of high-school graduates who are people of the ethnic minority with very small populations, and the proportion of ethnic minority students who passed the university/college entrance examinations have increased. It demonstrates that the quality of education in the areas of ethnic minorities has been improved. In 2018, 166 ethnic minority students were highly commended by the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs, consisting of 17 ones, who won prizes at the national science competition; 94 ones, who won prizes at the national excellent student contests; 2 ones, who obtained very high scores (27 points and above) at the university/college entrance examinations; 11 ones from the ethnic minorities with very small populations, who graduated from high schools and passed the university/college entrance examinations; and, 42 ones, who were recognized as excellent graduates from academies, colleges, and universities (Thanh Thuy, 2019).

Owing to the legal regulations and the implementation of the policies aimed to develop education in the areas of ethnic minorities,

the proportion of literate people, the educational standards, and the professional qualifications and skills of ethnic minority people have been significantly improved. The proportion of literate people aged from 15 to 60 has amounted to 93.44% of all ethnic minority people. Across the country, there are more than 13,000 ethnic minority people, who have graduated from universities/colleges, and more than 78,000 ones, who have graduated from vocational schools. Consequently, the proportion of ethnic minority people in the apparatus of government and political leadership has been growing higher. Typically, over the past four consecutive terms of the National Assembly, the proportion of the ethnic minority members ranged from 15.6% to 17.3%, higher than the proportion of ethnic minority people in the total population of the country (14.6%) (Phuc Noi, 2019).

The positive changes in Vietnam's education generally and education for ethnic minorities specifically have been recognized by the international community. According to Phuc Noi (2019), during the third visit to Vietnam in August 2017, Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, affirmed: "I have seen many changes in Vietnam, especially positive changes in economic development as well as the quality of education, including achievements in promoting educational justice and equality".

Quality of education for ethnic minority people has been gradually improved, contributing to the growing proportion of ethnic minority officials and meeting better the demand for human resources serving local socio-economic development in the areas of ethnic minorities.

4. Problems and recommendations

Owing to the Party's and the State's attention to the educational justice among ethnic minority pupils/students, positive changes have been gained in education for ethnic minority people over the past 30-plus years. Challenges relating to the awareness of ethnic minority people, social infrastructure, and the teaching workforce in the mountainous and remote areas have been dealt with. Herein, I would like to describe

some problems that should be solved immediately, including the school curricula, living conditions, awareness, and psychology of ethnic minority parents.

There are still many difficulties in the schooling of ethnic minority children

As remarked by experienced teachers, who have been working for years at schools for ethnic minority children, a large number of ethnic minority children at secondary schools do not find it happy to go to school; some of them do not like school at all. Several factors are resulting in such a state of mind among the children. They have been used to staying in a wide-open space with local natural conditions (forest, mountains, rivers, and sees); most of them have been self-reliant since childhood. When they go to school, they have to stay in a closed space with school facilities, which are not better than those at home. Also, they have to comply with quite "strict" regulations at school. As a result, many of them find it difficult to get used to new conditions at school. For some children, it is difficult to go to school, as it is located far from home and the roads are very inconvenient. Furthermore, the school environment (classrooms, classmates, and teachers) is not seen as "a new image" by the children. Thus, they are not interested in going to school.

Thus, it is necessary to set up an educational environment, which is more appropriate to the local socio-natural conditions in the areas of ethnic minorities, to create new and attractive features, at least in facilities and learning conditions, to encourage more ethnic minority children to go to school.

Parents pay more attention to livelihood than children's education

Due to difficult living conditions and limited awareness, parents of ethnic minority pupils/students do not pay much attention to their children's schooling. Besides, they do not realize the motives for schooling. They do not know what their children will do after finishing school and whether the children will get a better job. They find it unfamiliar to imagine what their family and children will be like in

the future. For the immediate needs to earn a living, parents prefer asking children to do housework, such as babysitting and cooking, or something in the field, to sending them to school. As a result, several ethnic minority people do not want their children to continue going to school when the children are grown enough (according to the thinking of the parents) to do the above-mentioned work.

It is, therefore, necessary for policymakers to take into account of living conditions and aspirations of ethnic minority parents when designing and implementing policies relating to education for ethnic minority children. Socio-economic conditions in the areas of ethnic minorities should be improved and local people's awareness of education should be enhanced step by step, to make ethnic minority people pay more attention to their children's schooling, creating a driving force for educational development in the areas of ethnic minorities.

School curricula are too hard for ethnic minority children

School curricula right at primary and secondary schools are quite difficult for ethnic minority children. Regarding the aspect of language alone, ethnic minority children have a big difficulty in using the Vietnamese language at school, as they use their ethnic language in all activities at home and the community. Apart from some ethnic languages, which are taught together with the Vietnamese language at school, the Vietnamese language is used as the main language of instruction at school. Also, the textbooks of the subjects on natural and social sciences are compiled generally for pupils/students all over the country. They are, therefore, too hard for ethnic minority children. In reality, it is necessary to have particular curricula, textbooks, and teaching methods, which are more appropriate to ethnic minority children. In brief, ethnic minority children face two big challenges, including the language of instruction and the curricula at school.

The Ministry of Education and Training and educators probably should set up a particular curriculum with more appropriate teaching methods for ethnic minority children to make them find it happy and

effective to go to school. Educational justice must be guaranteed with more investment and consideration from the State and educators, aimed to create a better school environment for ethnic minority children so that they find excited about going to school and learning knowledge. It is more important to help them obtain the same knowledge and keep pace with other pupils/students in the country than giving them some additional points at the entrance examinations or providing them with some preferential policies in nomination.

5. Conclusions

The Party and the State always pay special attention to the policies aimed to guarantee justice in socio-economic and educational sectors, especially in the areas of ethnic minorities. Significant achievements have been gained in education for ethnic minority pupils/students for the past 30-plus years during the period of *Doi moi*. To shorten the gap in education between ethnic minorities and the whole country, however, it is necessary to implement more effectively the existing policies. At the same time, natural and cultural characteristics must be taken into account, when dealing with specific and fundamental issues in the areas of ethnic minorities, to improve the quality of education and the right to education among ethnic minority people. This will contribute to the national defense and socio-economic development of the areas of ethnic minorities particularly and the whole country generally.

Annex 1 – Ethnic minorities in Vietnam

Ethnic name					
Tày	Ê Đê	Mnông	Giẻ-Triêng	Phù Lá	Cơ Lao
Thái	Ba Na	Thổ	Co	La Hủ	Bố Y
Mường	Sán Chay	Xtiêng	Chơ Ro	La Ha	Cống
Khmer	Chăm	Khơ mú	Xinh Mun	Pà Thẻn	Si La
Hoa	Cơ Ho	Bru - Vân Kiều	Hà Nhì	Lự	Pu Péo
Nùng	Xơ Đăng	Cơ Tu	Chu Ru	Ngái	Rơ Măm
H'Mông	Sán Dìu	Giáy	Lào	Chứt	Brâu
Dao	Hrê	Tà Ôi	La Chí	Lô Lô	Ơ Đu

Ethnic name					
Gia Rai	Ra Glai	Mạ	Kháng	Mảng	

Source:https://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danh_m%E1%BB%A5c_c%C3%A1c_d%C3%A2n_t%E1%BB%99c_Vi%E1%BB%87t_Nam on ethnic minorities, retrieved on 31 May 2019

Annex 2: Quantity of ethnic minority pupils/students (compared to the total quantity of the country) in the 2017-2018 academic year

	Preschool	Primary	Secondary	High school	College	University
Whole country	5,306,536	8,041,842	5,373,312	2,508,564	65,112	1,707,625
Ethnic minority	914,543	1,416,710	875,977	306,091	9,293	103,810
Proportion (%)	17.2	17.6	16.3	12.2	14.2	0.06

Source: Statistical data of the Ministry of Education and Training (retrieved on 13 April 2019)

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2. Chính phủ, Nghị định 82/2010/NĐ-TTg ngày 15-7-2010 quy định về dạy và học tiếng nói, chữ viết DTTS, 2010 [Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Decree No. 82/2010/NĐ-TTg dated 15 July 2010, Stipulating the Teaching and Learning of Ethnic Minority Languages and Scripts, 2010].

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SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE POOR: CONSULTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MGNREGA PROGRAM IN INDIA AND SOME PROPOSALS FOR SUSTAINABLE POVERTY REDUCTION IN VIETNAM

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INTRODUCTION

Questions like "who are the poor?" "why are there poor people?" and "what needs to be done to reduce poverty" are frequently posed as the center of ethical and legal issues in the operation of governments, organizations, and individuals when studying and solving poverty and hunger problems. Answering these questions is an important element of the political agenda to ensure social equality. India is known as a country with positive policies in poverty reduction, notably the Mahatma Gandhi

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National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), which was approved in 2005. The program ensures that even the poorest people can find a job and have income for at least 100 days of a year. In parallel with the implementation of the employment and income targets, the goals of limiting migration and building rural infrastructure are also introduced by the act to minimize the number of poor people and reduce migration to major cities in India. The experiences in the process of implementing this Act can be used as references for sustainable poverty reduction programs in rural, remote, and isolated areas in Vietnam.

KEY RESULTS AREAS

1. Poverty and social equality

The British economist, Thomas Malthus made an important point in his work, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, published in 1798, that fast population growth leading to a shortage of food supplies is the cause of poverty, so to reduce poverty, it is necessary to control population growth (Thomas Malthus, 1798, p.6-12)[1]. John Stuart Mill, after giving four causes leading to poverty which are: (1) the primitive instincts to reproduce in large numbers; (2) the inability of the poor to understand, due to lacking intelligence and low moral cultivation, what is good for them at an aggregate level; (3) a too numerous labor force creates a hard competition for each vacancy, which, in turn, press down the wages; and (4) the poor relief system in itself contained mechanisms for keeping the poor in poverty (Sharon K. Vaughan, 2009, Pg.123) [2]. Since then, he supports Mathus' view of controlling population growth to address poverty and promote women's rights. He also said that the way to reduce poverty is to universalize education, redistribute property and land. And education is the most important because it helps individuals

1 Thomas Malthus, An Essay on the Principle of Population, 1798, p.6-12 http://www.esp.org/books/malthus/population/malthus.pdf

2 See at Sharon K. Vaughan, *Poverty, Justice, and Western Political Thought*, Lexington Books, 2009, p.123.

clearly perceive problems and consciously change problems for the better (Sharon K. Vaughan, 2009, P.129 - 132)[1].

In Tocqueville's studies, he argued that poverty was caused by both subjective and objective reasons. Subjective reasons were poor people's lack of planning and laziness, and objective reasons were unstable labor, the rapid industrialization process leaving agricultural workers without land to cultivate, and the rapid increase in consumer demand in a civilized society. Therefore, he posed two issues to prepare necessary conditions for the transition of labor and economy; as well as to help the working class accumulate their savings as a secure financial network against unemployment - like the creation of state-run savings banks. He argued that workers needed shares to avoid falling into poverty (Sharon K. Vaughan, 2009, p.123)[2].

As for Karl Marx, poverty was an indispensable by-product of a market economy, and thus it is not acceptable to maintain a completely natural economy. Marx argued that the history of society's development reflected the development of the mode of production, so which class held the means of production, that class dominated the society and played an important role in the economy; this was the foundation for class differences in society; the proletarians were the creators of most of the material wealth, but they were still the poor people in society because the amount of money that capitalists pay for labor was less than and so on (Sharon K. Vaughan, 2009, p.150 - 156)[3].

John Rawls was more concerned with the relationship between poverty and justice in the state. He opposed the compulsory tax to help the poor because it was a violation of personal freedom. He argued that it was morally wrong for governments to force individuals to pay for welfare programs to help the poor. Rawl emphasized that self-esteem

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1 See at Sharon K. Vaughan, *Poverty, Justice, and Western Political Thought*, Lexington Books, 2009, p.129-132.

2 See at Sharon K. Vaughan, p.111- 115.

3 Sharon K. Vaughan, pg. 150-156.

among citizens helped to enhance cooperation in society, and one's self-esteem was partly dependent on the respect of others. The foundations of self-esteem were based on the uniform distribution of fundamental freedoms that promote respect among citizens. The role of the state was to ensure the equality of liberty for all citizens to promote respect among citizens. Rawls argued that humans needed the acceptance of others to gain self-esteem. Poor people might be ashamed of their poverty in some ways, so in order not to feel pity they had to work hard to escape poverty so that on the one hand this could be a positive incentive to people to work hard to become better (Sharon K. Vaughan, 2009, p.165-177)[1].

Another reason that makes an increase in the number of poor people is that capitalists invest more in modern machinery to increase labor productivity, making workers unemployed and without income. Also, the large gap in living standards and income between the rich and the poor makes it difficult for the poor to escape from poverty. Natural causes such as natural disasters, floods, climate change, health risks, accidents, and backgrounds also contribute to an increase in the number of poor people in society.

From the reasons explaining why there are poor people, poverty experts have given different definitions and scales to identify who are poor people.

According to the traditional poverty approach, poor people are those whose income cannot afford the basic needs of food, accommodation, and clothing to maintain quality of life. Specifically, the World Bank's measure of extremely poor people is those living on less than the US $1.90 and moderately poor people are those living on less than $ 3.20 a day (World Bank, 2020)[2]. Based on this measure, it is possible to measure the standard of living of each person, each

1 Sharon K. Vaughan, pg. 165 – 177.

2 World Bank, *Poverty Data*, 2020, http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/home/, Access on 10/5/2020

family, however, this measure does not show the aspect of quality of life and social integration. So since the 1980s, based on the idea of human development as a process to expand capacity, freedom, and choices, access to the aspect of the human capacity to define poverty has been more concerned. According to the United Nations: "Fundamentally, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means a lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and cloth[e] a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness, and exclusion of individuals, households, and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation." (UN, 1998)[1].

This approach is intended to reflect the true nature of poverty, emphasizing the need to view poverty as a lack of a person's basic capabilities. Capability is not just the capacity to achieve something but also the scope or function that a person is capable of, or that they value. This concept has resulted in an expansion in the number of poor people, including those who do not have enough food, clothing, education, health care, basic rights, and are excluded from social activities[2]. Poverty itself is, more deeply, a human rights issue, of ensuring the basic needs and social protection regimes, which are accepted by society. Furthermore, from this concept, governments have focused on pluralism policies, which increase the possibilities or opportunities for individual development. Since then, the expansion of the concept of poverty from traditional poverty to multidimensional poverty has contributed to making society more equitable.

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1 UN Statement, "June 1998 – signed by the heads of all UN agencies", See https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/ydiDavidGordon_poverty.pdf, p.4, access on 1/10/ 2020.

2 Thomas Wells, *Sen's capability Approach*, https://www.iep.utm.edu/sen-cap/, Access on 13/5/2020.

2. Sustainable poverty reduction through the implementation of MGNREGA in India

India is one of the most populous countries in the world after China. According to the latest data, India's current population is 1,378,759,215, accounting for 17.71% of the world's population (UN, 2020)[1]. India is also known as one of the 7 largest economies in the world but is a country with a high poverty rate accounting for 10.7% of the total population (ADB, 2016)[2]. The poor in India mainly live in rural, mountainous areas, most of them are agricultural workers with incomes below $ 1.9 a day (Chakraborty, Pinaki, 2007)[3]. With the above poverty rate, this country is ranked as one of 44 countries with severe poverty rates. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, more than 30% of the young population in this South Asian country belongs to the group of "three no": no job, no education, and no training[4]. Therefore, the highest development goal of the Indian government is poverty alleviation by implementing many poverty reduction programs and policies, most notably the promulgation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). MGNREGA is the largest ever public employment program visualized in human history. This is the flagship program of the Government that directly touches the lives of the poor and promotes inclusive growth. It comes at a time when there is severe rural livelihood distress. The Act aims at enhancing the livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment

1 UN, *India Population (2020)*, https://danso.org/an-do/ Access on 02/6/2020.

2 ADB, *Poverty Data: India*, https://www.adb.org/countries/india/poverty, 2016. Access on 10/5/2020.

3 Chakraborty, Pinaki, *Implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India: Spatial Dimensions and Fiscal Implications*, W.P. No.505, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi, 2007.

4 Thanh Tâm - Translator, "Adversity on Economic growth and Poverty in India", 2018. http://www.nhandan.com.vn/baothoinay/baothoinay-hosotulieu/item/35247802-nghich-canh-tang-truong-kinh-te-doi-ngheo-o-an-do.html, Access on 10/5/2020.

in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work at a statutory minimum wage rate. The Act is a legally enforceable right that facilitates rural households to get employment in public works within 15 days of applying for work.

The Act is supposed to fulfill the short-term need for casual employment while creating sustainable livelihoods in the long-term. Along with augmenting wage employment, the Act would strengthen natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty, recurrent drought and so encourage sustainable development. The Act is also a significant vehicle for strengthening decentralization and deepening processes of democracy by giving a pivotal role to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in planning, monitoring, and implementation. Unique features of the Act include time-bound employment guarantee, incentive-disincentive structure to the State Governments for employing 90 percent of the cost for employment provided is borne by the Centre or payment of unemployment allowance at their own cost and emphasis on labor-intensive works prohibiting the use of contractors and machinery (Deaton and Dreze, 2002)[1]. MGNREGA. The Act also mandates 33 percent participation for women. The program gains great connotation given the concerns of rising disparity in incomes and economic opportunities between rural and urban India in the last decade. The key processes in the implementation of MGNREGA are the following:

- Adult members of rural households submit their name, age, and address with a photo to the Gram Panchayat.
- The Gram panchayat registers households after making inquiries and issues a job card that contains the details of an adult member enrolled and his /her photo.
- A registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to Panchayat or to Programme Officer.

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1 Deaton, Angus and Jean Dreze, "Poverty and Inequality in India", *Economic & Political Weekly*, September 7, 2002, pp-3729-48.

- The Panchayat/Programme Officer will accept the valid application and issue a dated receipt of the application, letter providing work will be sent to the applicant and also displayed at the Panchayat office.
- The employment will be provided within a radius of 5 kilometers and if it is above 5 kilometers extra wage will be paid.
- If employment under the scheme is not provided within fifteen days of receipt of the application daily unemployment allowance will be paid to the applicant.

The cost-sharing is done on the following basis: Central Government 3/4th, State Government 1/4th.

Performance of MGNREGA

The program is unique on many fronts. First, by enacting the MGNREGA with extraordinary guidelines (MoRD, 2005)[1], the government has to fulfill its obligation to provide a minimum of 100 days of employment to every registered rural household each year at any cost. Resource constraint cannot be shown as an excuse for not executing the Act. Second, contractors have been completely banned which has reduced the extent of corruption and thus has increased the wage employment since the use of machines has been brought down to the minimum level. Third, durable assets for rural connectivity, water conservation, drought and floodproofing, etc have been created on the other side providing the platforms for rural transformation in India. Fourthly, it has increased the curiosity and awareness among the rural people about the ongoing public programs enhancing the people's participation in these programs. The Act has facilitated to include the local people at all stages – planning, implementation, and social audit. Fifth, the central emphasis on payment of statutory minimum

1 MoRD, 'The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (NREGA) – Operational Guidelines (1st edition)", Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi, 2005a..

wages, provision of legal entitlements to labor on working hours, rest, drinking water, medical aid, and crèche facilities, and the provision for unemployment allowance upon the inability to provide the guaranteed days of work have made this Act unique and unparallel in the history of independent India.

Since its inception in September 2005, MGNREGA has been implemented in a phased manner. In phase I, it was introduced, on a pilot basis, in February 2006 in 200 economically most disadvantaged districts of the country. 130 districts were further included under the Act in phase II with effect from 1st April 2007. The remaining 274 districts of India were covered under the Act from 1st April 2008. The act is now effective in the entire rural areas of the country covering 691 districts (MGNREGA, 2019)[1]. The Act has been renamed 'The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act' in December 2009.

The MGNREGA had upset several vested interests such as officials, non-officials, contractors who were benefited at the cost of intended beneficiaries. The percentage system of making cuts in each work acted as a lubricant which kept the vested interest happy and satisfied (NIRD, 2008)[2]. In the case of numerous employment generation programs run by the Government of India, human labor was largely replaced by machines that have been banned in the case of NREGS. Banning of use of machines has considerably improved the manpower employment generated under MGNREGA. Furthermore, the right to get 100 days of employment with a demand-driven approach has made MGNREGA an unparallel program in the history of employment generation program that has been able to meet the expectations of rural mass.

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1 MGNREGA, 2019. https://www.nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx retrieved on 31/05/2019

2 NIRD, "Evaluation of Implementation of NREGS in Orissa: Social Audit Report", Centre for Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation, National Institute of Rural Development, 2008. Nichenametla, Prasad, "Under Job Plan, Families Await Unemployment Allowance", *Hindustan Times*, March 03, 2011, http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/668775.aspx

The program has contributed to reducing migration and enhancing rural livelihoods. The studies of Kareemulla et al (2010) and Sharma (2009) in Rajasthan have shown that for families with about 80 working days or more, their income level increases than before, so they no longer want to migrate[1].

Another success of MGNREGA is that the program has greatly contributed to women's empowerment by providing them with job opportunities, Khera and Nayak (2009) conducted a case study in Araria. and Kaimur (Bihar); Chhattisgarh; Palamau and Koderma (Jharkhand); Badwani and Sidhi (Madhya Pradesh); Dungarpur and Sirohi (Rajasthan); Sitapur (Uttar Pradesh). The study found women's overall participation rate was 32% while the same in Rajasthan was as high as 71%. The women's participation rates in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh were 44%, 25%, 18%, 13%, and 5% respectively compared with the statutory women's participation rates of 33 %. Of the total sample, more than two-thirds (69%) of the sample workers reported that MGNREGA helped them avoid hunger, while 57% said avoiding migration and 81% of households having worked at least 60 days, of which each month is 12 days (Khera, Reetika and N. Nayak (2009)[2]. A majority (79%) of women workers were found to collect and keep their wages. Looking at the total participation rate of India in the first two years of the program, Drèze and Oldiges

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1 Kareemulla, K, S. Kumar, K.S. Reddy, C.A. Rama Rao, ans B. Venketeswarlu, "Impact of NREGS on Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Capital Formation", *Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, Vol.65, No.3, 2010. pp-524-539.
Sharma, Alakh Narain, "Institutional and Governance Challenges in Social Protection: Designing Implementation Models for the Right to Work Programme in India", Paper presented at National Workshop on National Rural Employment Guarantee in India-Lessons from implementation, September 8-9 2009, Bangalore, Organized by Institute for Human Development (IHD) and Institute of Social studies Trust (ISST), New Delhi under the Social Protection in Asia (SPA) Programme, 2009.

2 Khera, Reetika and N. Nayak, "Women Workers and Perceptions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLVI, No. 43, 2009, pp- 49-57.

(2009) find that women's participation increased from 40% in 2006-2007 to 44% in 2007-2008 (Drèze, Jean and Christian Oldiges, 2009) [1].

So far as the mode of payment of MGNREGA wages is concerned, as per the operational guidelines of MGNREGA (MoRD, 2008), all the MGNREGA wages were paid through banks and/or post offices. According to research by Adhikari and Bhatia, workers have a fairly positive attitude towards bank payments and are interested in learning how to use the banking system. This payment method, at the same time, reduces the risk of manipulation, corruption, and exploitation due to the social structure among people with inherently hostile attitudes (Adhikari, Anindita, and Kartika Bhatia, 2010) [2].

Another success of the program is the monitoring of MGNREGA activities of the people, village councils, and civil society organizations. Research by Khera found that farmer's organization was very effective in making MGNREGA work better. For example, Jagrut Adivasi Dalit Sangathan, a farmer organization with 3,500 family members in Madhya Pradesh, shows that MGNREGA employment levels in the Sangathan region are as high as 85 working days per household per year, and close to half of the working households already have 100 working days. They also receive the minimum wage (Khera, Reetika, 2008)[3]

During the period of 2016 to 2019, the program has a huge impact on job creation for rural workers: 691 districts with 6,921 communes have benefited from the program with 258.2 million workers; 131.5 million work cards were issued to employees, of which 74.7 million were active, equivalent to 74.7 million rural workers working for the program (MGNREGA, 2019)[4].

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1 Drèze, Jean and Christian Oldiges, "Work in Progress", *Frontline*, Vol 26, No 4, 14-22 February, 2009.

2 Adhikari, Anindita and Kartika Bhatia, "NREGA Wage Payments: Can we Bank on the Banks?", *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. XLV, No.1, January 2, 2010.

3 Khera, Reetika, '*Empowerment Guarantee Act'*, Economic and Political Weekly, August 30, pp- 8-10, 2008.

4 MGNREGA, 2019, https://www.nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx retrieved on 31/05/2019.

Table: 1 Performance of MGNREGA 2016-2019

Total No. of Districts	691				
Total No. of Blocks	6,921				
Total No. of GPs	2,62,640				
Job Card					
Total No. of Job Cards issued [In Million]	131.5				
Total No. of Workers [In Million]	258.2				
Total No. of Active Job Cards [In Million]	74.7				
Total No. of Active Workers [In Million]	115.6				
(i)SC worker against active workers [%]	19.48				
(ii)ST worker against active workers [%]	16.31				
Progress	**FY 2019-2020**	**FY 2018-2019**	**FY 2017-2018**	**FY 2016-2017**	**FY 2015-2016**
Approved Labour Budget [In Million]	2582.1	2565.6	2313.1	2209.3	2391.1
Persondays Generated so far [In Million]	480.9	2679.2	2337.4	2356.5	2351.5
% of Total LB	18.6	104.4	101.1	106.7	98.3
% as per Proportionate LB	52.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SC persondays % as of total persondays	18.7	20.7	21.6	21.3	22.3
ST persondays % as of total persondays	18.3	17.4	17.5	17.6	17.8

Women Persondays out of Total (%)	57.2	54.6	53.5	56.2	55.3
Average days of employment provided per Household	21.2	50.9	45.7	46.0	48.9
Average Wage rate per day per person (Rs.)	175.3	179.1	169.4	161.7	154.1
Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment	18,951	52,04,534	29,55,152	39,91,202	48,47,975
Total Households Worked [In Million]	22.7	52.7	51.2	51.2	48.1
Total Individuals Worked [In Million]	31.2	77.8	75.9	76.7	72.3
Differently abled persons worked	2,17,094	4,60,392	4,72,218	4,71,819	4,59,597
Works					
Number of GPs with NIL exp	54,120	10,467	11,789	19,451	39,469
Total No. of Works Taken up (New+Spill Over) [In Million]	11.5	20.2	18.6	16.3	12.3
Number of Ongoing Works [In Million]	10.5	11.4	12.3	9.7	8.7
Number of Completed Works [In Million]	1.0	8.9	6.3	6.5	3.6
% of NRM Exp. (Public + Individual)	68.3	58.8	55.0	60.1	59.7
% of Category B Works	63.8	66.1	55.6	51.4	33.8
% of Expenditure on Agriculture & Agriculture Allied Works	73.7	63.4	66.1	66.0	62.9

Financial Progress (INR)					
Total center release (In Million)	2,12,966.1	6,21,671.3	5,56,599.3	4,74,117.2	3,59,746.4
Total Availability (In Million)	2,17,467.0	6,92,706.5	6,49,858.9	5,73,866.7	4,33,807.2
Total Exp [In Million]	1,11,084.8	6,95,938.8	6,36,494.8	5,80,629.2	4,40,025.9
Percentage Utilization	51.1	100.5	97.9	101.2	101.4
Wages [In Million]	93,345.0	4,71,487.7	4,31,284.9	4,07,507.2	3,08,909.6
Material and skilled Wages [In Million]	13,594.3	1,94,657.6	1,81,006.8	1,44,282.4	1,07,482.8
Material (%)	12.7	29.2	29.6	26.2	25.8
Total Administrative Expenditure [In Million]	4,145.5	29,793.5	24,203.1	28,839.7	23,633.6
Admin Expense (%)	3.7	4.3	3.8	5.0	5.4
Average Cost Per Day Per Person	219.3	269.9	223.7	221.2	202.5
% Total Exp through eFMS	99.9	99.0	95.9	92.3	91.2
% payments generated within 15 days	98.4	90.3	84.5	43.4	36.9

(Source: MGNREGA (2019), https://www.nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx retrieved on 31/05/2019)

Although MGNREGA has significantly improved the lives of rural Indians, the program still has the following limitations during its operation:

The lack of trained professionals for time-bound implementation, understaffing and delay in administration, lack of people's planning, poor quality of works and assets created, inappropriate schedules of

rates, unnecessary bureaucratic interventions, and the mockery of social audits are hindering the implementation process (Ambasta et al, 2008)[1].

The payment of MGNREGA wages has been delayed in many places due to staff shortage, delay in processing, and other kinds of irregularities (Vanaik, Anish, and Siddhartha, 2008)[2]. Besides there, poor record-keeping, an inability to cope with mass payment of MGNREGA wages, large distance to the nearest bank or post office also cause much hardship to the MGNREGA workers, the risk of manipulation and exploitative social structure is subject to the constraint (Adhikari, Anindita and Kartika Bhatia, 2010)[3].

Besides, there are still bureaucratic interventions from the local government side; inefficiency of the people, village councils in social control due to lack of knowledge and qualifications (Ambasta, Pramathesh, P S Vijay Shankar, Mihir Shah, 2008) [4]. As noted by Sharma, due to the introduction of the MGNREGA program in Rajasthan there was a reduction in migration, families got approximately 80 days or more, rural wages got increased but on the other hand, discrimination was observed (Sharma, Alakh Narain, 2009) [5]. Scheduled Caste families were sent to far off sites and upper-caste families were engaged

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1 Ambasta, Pramathesh, P S Vijay Shankar, Mihir Shah, "Two Years of NREGA: The Road Ahead", *Economic & Political Weekly*, February 23, 2008.

2 Vanaik, Anish and Siddhartha, "Bank Payments: End of Corruption in NREGA?", *Economic & Political Weekly*, April 26, 2008.

3 Adhikari, Anindita and Kartika Bhatia, "NREGA Wage Payments: Can we Bank on the Banks?", *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. XLV, No.1, January 2, 2010.

4 Ambasta, Pramathesh, P S Vijay Shankar, Mihir Shah, "Two Years of NREGA: The Road Ahead", *Economic & Political Weekly*, February 23, 2008.

5 Sharma, Alakh Narain, "Institutional and Governance Challenges in Social Protection: Designing Implementation Models for the Right to Work Programme in India", Paper presented at National Workshop on National Rural Employment Guarantee in India-Lessons from implementation, September 8-9 2009, Bangalore, Organized by Institute for Human Development (IHD) and Institute of Social studies Trust (ISST), New Delhi under the Social Protection in Asia (SPA) Programme, 2009.

at nearby work sites. Major barriers to women's participation were tenacious social norms, the illegal presence of contractors, lack of childcare facilities, and delayed payment of wages (Khera, Reetika, and N. Nayak, 2009)[1].

3. Lessons for Vietnam

Based on the above analysis, in general, we can see similarities in the poverty reduction programs of Vietnam and India.

The Government of Vietnam has now unified all hunger eradication and poverty reduction programs into one program called "National Target Program for Sustainable Poverty Reduction 2016-2020" (According to Decision 1722-QD/TTg, dated September 2, 2016, of the Prime Minister), with one focal point for management is the Ministry of Labor - Invalids and Social Affairs to ensure the efficiency, synchronization, and smoothness of the program. This program includes 5 component projects: Program 30a (rapid and sustainable poverty reduction for poor districts); Program 135 (socio-economic development program for extremely difficult communes in ethnic minority and mountainous areas); Support for production development, livelihood diversification, and poverty reduction models replication in external communes; Communication and information on poverty reduction; Capacity building and monitoring and evaluation of program implementation (TTCP, 2016)[2]. About the overall effectiveness of the hunger eradication and poverty reduction programs so far and especially the socio-economic development programs, the number of poor people in Vietnam has de-

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1 Khera, Reetika and N. Nayak (2009), '*Women Workers and Perceptions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act'*, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XLVI, No. 43, pp- 49-57.

2 The Government of Vietnam, *Decision on The National Targeted Programme for Sustainable Poverty Reduction 2016-2020*, 2016, https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Van-hoa-Xa-hoi/Quyet-dinh-1722-QD-TTg-Chuong-trinh-muc-tieu-quoc-gia-Giam-ngheo-ben-vung-giai-doan-2016-2020-321229.aspx Accesson 13/5/2020.

clined rapidly from 70% in the mid-1980s to 20.8% in 2010 and 9.8% in 2016 (WB, 2018)[1]; this number decreased by nearly 4 percentage in two years from 2014 to 2016. Recently, according to Asia Pacific Bank, in 2016, approximately 5.8% of the population (more than 97 million people) of Vietnam lived below the national multidimensional poverty line[2] and 1.2% of the population was extremely poor with an income of less than US $ 1.90/day (ADB, 2018)[3].

Despite the achievements in rapid poverty reduction, there is still a high disparity in income levels between the rich and the poor. According to the Oxfam report, the increase in inequality is threatening decades of development in Vietnam where the richest's a-day earn is higher than the poorest's 10-year earn. In 2014, 210 super-rich people

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1 WB, *Climbing the Ladder: Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity in Vietnam*, 2018 (http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/826021522843528151/pdf/124916-WP-PUBLIC-VITENAMESE-P161323-VietnamPovertyUpdateReportVIE.pdf), p6. Access on 17/5/2020.

2 The Government of Vietnam, Decision to publish poverty lines for the 2016–2020 period using the multidimensional poverty approach (Decision No.59/2015/QD-TTg) In September 2015. "In the 2016-2020 period, the Multidimensional Poverty measurement Indicators applied including: Income indicators and the extent of lack of access to basic social services. The Income-based criteria, the poverty line in rural areas is 700,000 VND / person / month; 900,000 VND / person / month in urban areas. The near the poverty line in rural areas is 1,000,000 VND / person / month; in the urban areas is 1,300,000 VND / person / month. Regarding the criteria of the lack of access to basic social services, the Decision states that basic social services include: health care, education, housing, clean water and sanitation, Information. Indicators for measuring the lack of basic social services include 10 indicators: access to health services; Health Insurance; Adult education level; The child's school attendance; Housing quality; Housing area per capita; Domestic water source; Hygienic toilet / toilet; Using telecommunications services; Assets for access to information", https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/van-hoa-xa-hoi/Quyet-dinh-59-2015-QD-TTg-chuan-ngheo-tiep-can-da-chieu-ap-dung-2016-2020-296044.aspx, Access on 13/5/2020.

3 ADB, *Poverty Data: Vietnam*, 2016, https://www.adb.org/countries/viet-nam/poverty, Access on 13/5/2020.

(over 30 million USD) in Vietnam had total assets of about 20 billion USD, equivalent to 12% of the country's GDP, or half of the GDP of Ho Chi Minh City. Researchers estimate the number of super-rich people will increase significantly in Vietnam, reaching 403 by 2025 (Oxfam, 2017[1]. Meanwhile, the poorest (accounting for 40% of the population) only accounted for 14.6% of income (this number was 16.1% in 2002) (Nguyễn Thanh Hằng, 2018)[2]. These data show that the number of relative poverty lines[3] is getting more and more, especially there are more poor people in ethnic minorities, who have the smallest ability to escape poverty. If in 1998, ethnic minority people accounted for 29% of the total number of poor people, then by 2010 people in ethnic minorities accounted for 47% of the total poor in Vietnam (Nguyễn Minh Phong, 2015)[4]. Ethnic minority people are increasingly left behind and the poorest groups such as 15 million small-scale farmers, 15 million internal migrants, and poor young people are not benefiting like other groups from the growth of the economy (Oxfam, 2018)[5]. This

1 Oxfam, *Even it Up: How to tackle inequality in Vietnam*, 2017, https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/bp-vietnam-inequality-120117-vn.pdf, Access on 17/5/2020.

2 Nguyễn Thanh Hằng, "The Situation on Vietnam's Income Inequality Between 2002 and 2018", 2018, http://consosukien.vn/thuc-trang-bat-binh-dang-thu-nhap-o-viet-nam-giai-doan-2002-2018.htm, Access on 16/5/2020.

3 UNDP, *Relative poverty lines are defined in relation to the overall distribution of income in a country – they are set as a share (usually between 40 and 60 percent) of the country's mean income*, 2015 https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2015/10/16/How-are-all-countries-rich-and-poor-to-define-poverty-.html#:~:text=Relative%20poverty%20lines%20are%20defined,of%20the%20country%27s%20mean%20income.&text=Relative%20poverty%20lines%20implicitly%20assume,with%20the%20income%20of%20society.

4 Nguyễn Minh Phong, "The dual nature on Vietnam's income inequality", 2015, http://www.nhandan.com.vn/kinhte/item/28141802-tinh-hai-mat-cua-bat-binh-dang-ve-thu-nhap-o-viet-nam.html, Access on 17/5/2020.

5 Oxfarm, *Inequality Matters*, Issue 2, 2018. https://cng-cdn.oxfam.org/viet-nam.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/Chuy%E1%BB%87n%20B%E1%BA%A5t%20b%C3%ACnh%20%C4%91%E1%BA%B3ng%20

phenomenon shows that the poverty reduction process in Vietnam is not sustainable.

Assessments of the implementation of poverty reduction programs have also pointed out some reasons why Vietnam's poverty reduction programs are not effective. Those reasons are: (i) some poverty reduction programs have not placed poor people directly in the central position; (ii) production development support projects are still medium, small, not bring high efficiency; (iii) social organizations and people is not good at social control, the effectiveness of works has not been achieved (WB. 2012)[1]; (iv) the free vocational training programs for ethnic youth are ineffective due to wasteful use of the budget, and ineffective teaching programs (Oxfam, 2018)[2].

Therefore, to overcome the above limitations, some suggestions from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act program in India may be useful for sustainable poverty reduction in Vietnam:

First, India's MGNREGA program affirms the irreplaceable role of the state in poverty reduction, especially in addressing poverty in rural, mountainous, remote areas where private investment is limited because it does not bring high returns. Therefore, to maximize social equality for the poor, governments need to continue developing programs for job creation, health care, and social security to create opportunities for rural workers and poor people to sustainably improve their livelihoods.

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s%E1%BB%91%202_0.pdf, Access on 17/5/2020.

1 World Bank, *Vietnam poverty assessment: Well begun, not yet done - Vietnam's remarkable progress on poverty reduction and the emerging challenges*, 2012. http://documents.banquemondiale.org/curated/fr/318311468127160128/pdf/749100REVISED00nal000VN000160802013.pdf, Access on 16/5/2020.

2 Oxfarm, *Inequality Matters*, Issue 2, 2018. https://cng-cdn.oxfam.org/vietnam.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/Chuy%E1%BB%87n%20B%E1%BA%A5t%20b%C3%ACnh%20%C4%91%E1%BA%B3ng%20s%E1%BB%91%202_0.pdf, Access on 17/5/2020.

Second, the MGNREGA program provides the most direct approach to the poor, which is job creation and remuneration for the poor. This is an effective measure to raise awareness and freedom of the poor to meet their basic needs. Only when the poor are aware of their needs and responsibilities will the effectiveness of the poverty reduction process be truly valuable. Moreover, creating job opportunities for the poor means improving working skills, awareness of the role of workers in life, and above all, confirming the position and role of each person in the process of development. This will create an impetus to escape poverty for the poor after poverty reduction programs are completed.

Third, it is necessary to promote investment in target groups, specific areas such as poor communes, poor districts, poor women, poor people with disabilities, and poor children. In particular, these regulations must be guaranteed by law and have strict inspection and supervision agencies.

Fourth, there is a need to increase the participation of all local social actors in poverty reduction, in particular, the role of government from the central to local levels, social organizations, village councils, and ordinary people in planning and implementing, and controlling programs for hunger eradication and poverty alleviation by legal regulations clearly defining positions, roles and tasks of each actor. Because only then can we grasp the needs, aspirations, abilities, strengths, and limitations of poor people in each place, each region, as well as promote their responsibility in laboring, dialoguing, preserving community values, and limiting corruption, and increasing program efficiency.

Fifth, strengthen experts' role in assisting, consulting knowledge, techniques, supporting the supervision of the construction of local works and projects, and allocation of projects to specific objects.

Sixth, there are forms of converting investment in public construction items or local civil programs from contractors to local people or households to increase the possibility of employment for the poor.

Finally, Vietnam has expanded its banking and internet network to all remote and isolated areas, so it is possible to learn how to deploy support activities through accounts to ensure people's proactivity in receiving support. This will increase the transparency in financial control of projects; limit pressure from invisible power and feeling of grace between the poor and the payer. Also, the application of high-tech programs to reduce poverty in rural areas increases the poor's proactivity in accessing information technology, helping them to develop new job-seeking skills through the internet, and learn how to protect their rights when they are violated.

CONCLUSION

In general, studies on poverty reduction programs in India and Vietnam have demonstrated that *from an economic perspective*, to effectively eradicate hunger and reduce poverty, one of the important measures is to create jobs for workers, to allocate social resources, labor supply to meet the employment demand of the economy. *From a social perspective*, it is to ensure equality in providing maximum living opportunities for the poor. *On the ethical aspect*, this is a matter of justice, because the rich are the ones who contribute to the creation of the principles and regulations to pay for the poor, and the poor are unable to change those principles and regulations and they almost have no choice but to do everything to have food, clothing. Finally, *from a policy and legal perspective*, poverty alleviation also comes through the need to have global justice to ensure that everyone has access to what they need to avoid poverty, especially citizens' freedom with the distribution of social interests, with citizens having access to basic goods such as food, housing, education, and health care. strong. These needs in each country should be defined as a policy obligation, justice rather than a moral obligation or a humanitarian goal because poverty seriously threatens the formation of one's personality, and serves as an obstacle to building a just state. As the problems in society are interrelated, no society will develop strongly when there are many poor

and hungry people, so countries, social organizations, people need to strengthen social responsibility, improve themselves, learn from each other, strive to create a more just world for the poor with the goal of "leave no one behind".

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PART 6

STATE'S ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL JUSTICE

THE ROLE OF STATE ENSURING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKET ECONOMY: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Nguyen Duy Loi[1]

The state plays an extremely important role in ensuring social equity and progress - progressive humanity's eternal aspiration. The Leninist- Marxism, Ho Chi Minh's thought, considers ensuring social justice and social progress as both the goal and the driving force for development. The Socialist Party and the state of Vietnam set a vision to build Vietnam to become a prosperous, strong, democratic, justice, and civilized country; bring peace, freedom, prosperity, and happiness to the people; comprehensively develop human qualities and capabilities, all for people; harmonize economic development with the implementation of social policies, overcome disadvantages of the market economy, and enhance the humanity of the socialist regime.

In a competitive market economy, the state plays a subject role with the function of regulating, creating a level playing field for all businesses and individuals, and facilitating the provision of services and essential public infrastructure and facilities, overcoming market failure.

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The state and market complement each other, promoting Vietnam's socio-economic development.

International experience shows that there is not a successful general model that can be applied to all countries. However, international experience also shows that the state needs to improve its capacity to better respond to the requirements of social life and market economic institutions and facilitate the development of production factor market and social justice. Due to limited resources, the State needs to have an effective mechanism to ensure that scarce resources are allocated to the highest priority and most effective fields.

Since the reform in 1986, Vietnam has made many efforts to strengthen the role of the state in ensuring social progress and justice in the market economy, overcoming failures and shortcomings of the market; bring into full play the role of the state and the market, ensuring the harmony of interests among groups of people, and creating a driving force for development. However, the state's role in ensuring social justice still has some limitations, potentially social risk and instability, and hindering development.

The state of Vietnam plays a very important role in increasing social welfare, contributing to the realization of a "prosperous, strong, democratic, justice, and civilized country"; plan and organize the implementation of progressive economic and social policies to ensure social justice and increasing welfare.

Social justice is a driving force that drives sustainable economic and social development. One of the goals of the socialist state of Vietnam is to build social justice. In the economic field, social justice is manifested in the relationship between the labor contribution and the enjoyment and dedication in the socialist-oriented market economy.

The Leninist-Marxism theory points out two basic functions of the state, namely the class function and social function. The State performs the social function through activities that ensure the common interests of the community and the majority of the population, especially

the role of ensuring fair distribution. In a socialist-oriented market economy, Vietnam has demonstrated a mechanism of harmonious and reasonable coordination between the State and the market in regulation and distribution to ensure social justice and economic efficiency in the distribution relations. As the macro-management subject in all socio-economic aspects, the State plays a particularly important role in ensuring fair distribution and redistribution. Besides the achievements in socio-economic development since the reform in 1986, Vietnam is facing many development challenges such as low per capita GDP, slow productivity growth, and complex social problems, and polluted environments, inequality, and weak public and private economic institutions and governance.

International experience shows that the organizational and governance capacity of the state has a direct effect on economic growth and income, public service delivery, and poverty reduction. Effective states can formulate and enforce consistent policies and institutions, to reduce investment risks and provide equal economic access. Effective states often use public resources more efficiently to deliver essential public services and infrastructure to their citizens.

However, no state role model is successfully applied to all countries in the market economy. International experience points to areas of the state that play an important role and areas where state intervention can have the opposite effect. State intervention in the market is because of market failures and the ensuring of fairness; however, this does not guarantee that state intervention will bring benefit to society[1].

Many international experience studies have shown the important role of the state in reducing income inequality through taxes and social service payments, creating flexibility in production factor markets through which promote structural adjustment; especially removing bottlenecks on land, labor, and capital markets to ensure fair access to scarce resources. These are areas where state intervention is needed to

1 World Bank, *The State's Role in Vietnam's Economic Development*, Hanoi, 2018.

facilitate the emergence of more competitive, transparent, and flexible production factor markets.

Based on international experience, the World Bank (2007) emphasizes the need for state intervention in the market to ensure social justice and to deal with market problems and failures with an institution to guarantee state and markets complement each other to achieve the goals of human development, rapid and sustainable economic development, ensuring social justice and protecting the environment[1], etc.

International experience shows that the role and form of state intervention may not be the same, depending on case by case, when there are market failures. The state intervenes when the market economy fails or is unable to efficiently allocate scarce resources for many reasons and with varying degrees of failure.

The state also intervenes when there are negative externalities (exogenous effects). Negative externalities arise when the actions of an individual or a business harm other parties at no cost to the individual or business. For example, environmental pollution is a negative external effect that causes unpaid costs to society. The state's role can limit negative externalities as well as promote positive externalities through institutions, tax, and subsidy policies. The state also plays an important role in regulating natural monopolies through the enactment of regulations of private monopolies or the self-provision of public goods or services that are considered natural monopolies such as telecommunications and electricity.

The state intervenes to ensure social justice in competitive markets when income is distributed in ways that create social inequality; protecting disadvantaged people who do not have the resources to achieve a minimum standard of living; ensure equity in income redistribution policies.

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1 World Bank, *The State's Role in Vietnam's Economic Development*, Hanoi, 2018.

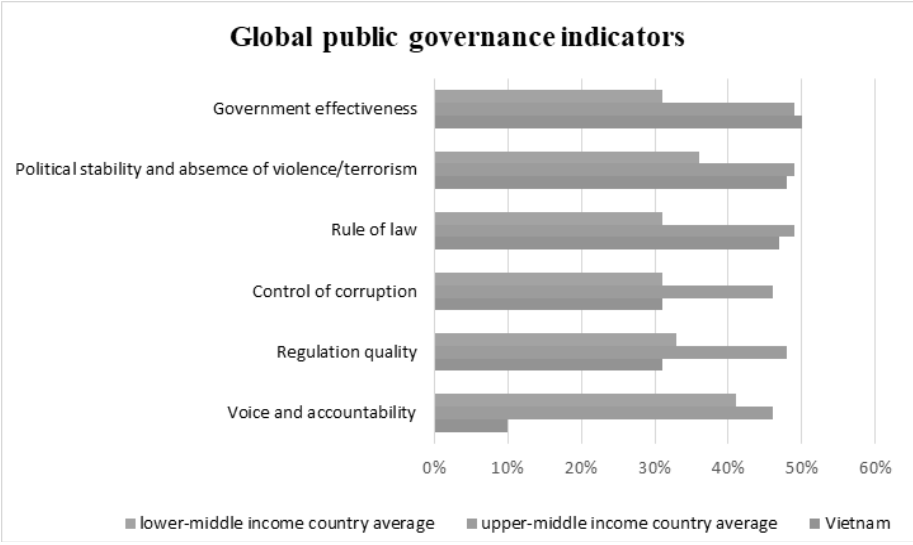
The state intervenes to ensure justice when the market is incomplete, or information is not perfect or asymmetric. The market is incomplete when the seller cannot provide the goods or services even if the price is higher than what the buyer is willing to pay. Incomplete information or asymmetric leads consumers to systematically underestimate some services, like primary education or preventive medicine. Asymmetric information when the provider knows more than the consumer, and vice versa, can lead to oversupply or supplier-dominated demand, for example in the provision of medical services.

The State intervenes when there are adverse choice problems and ethical risks that can lead to failure in the insurance market. Adverse choice occurs when service buyers tend to impose costs higher than average on service providers, or when the service provider tends to exclude high-cost customers. Health insurance providers are an example: people who are more likely to need care are more likely to buy health insurance and more likely to be rejected by insurers. Moral hazard arises when the insured person has an incentive to induce or allow the insured event to occur. One example is the tendency for customers to enroll in health insurance services that require more as well as service providers to provide more treatment than is needed by the insurance company to cover most costs. Governments have also sought to address the above problems by increasing insurance coverage and reducing costs. They do this by introducing personal insurance, financial financing, or mandate assignments[1].

The state plays a role in state management to promote and develop an inclusive economy. OECD (2016) emphasizes the important role of public governance in promoting inclusive growth. Public governance can be seen as a system of strategic tools and processes as well as the institutions, regulations, and interactions for effective policy development. Public governance can increase or decrease the impact of economic policies towards inclusive growth by influencing the quality

1 World Bank, *The State's Role in Vietnam's Economic Development*, Hanoi, 2018.

of public spending, public investment, and efficiency in public service delivery. Weak public governance can negatively affect the labor market, and limit access to education or formal social security networks such as unemployment and health insurance, leading to social inequality.



Source: World Bank, Global public governance indicators www.govindicators.org

The global public governance indicators in the above figure show that the three indices are fairly good compared to countries with low middle-income conditions; the corruption control index is about the same level as in low middle-income countries. However, Vietnam's two indicators of institutional quality, voice, and accountability are much lower than the average in low middle income and high middle-income countries.

Vietnam aims to build an efficient, accountable state with modern rule of law institutions, a healthy, safe, creative, and just society for people's material life and social welfare. The Government of Vietnam has also committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite achieving progress over the past three decades, Vietnam needs to continue to enhance the role of the state in ensuring

social justice. Some solutions for enhancing the role of the state are as follows:

i) Perform better justice in access opportunities to job and business.

ii) Orientation of development through macroeconomic management, development of market economy institutions and production factor markets, ensuring efficiency in the provision of public services and infrastructure, and budget allocation.

iii) Let's private enterprises conduct commercial business activities to ensure efficiency, the state focuses on important and essential areas.

iv) Create an equal and favorable environment for private businesses to become engines of economic growth and job creation, contributing to sustainable poverty reduction and improving people's living standards.

v) Build a competitive market institutional framework, leading the direction of effective resource allocation, and promoting the development of competitive production factor markets.

vi) Build inclusive and effective institutions to promote equitable and sustainable economic development; remove barriers to fair access to economic opportunities, creating a competitive playing field for all individuals and businesses.

vii) Further strengthen accountability in the equitable delivery of public services and infrastructure, with community participation.

viii) Develop institutions and policies to distribute social resources scientifically and equitably; ensure justice in the relationship between dedication and enjoyment, between obligations and benefits; Ensuring social justice based on contributions and dedication will encourage people to be active in social work, contributing to creating a driving force for social development.

ix) Promulgating and implementing social security policies to reduce social stratification and differentiation between rich and poor; minimize the rich and poor differentiation between urban and rural

areas, between regions, sectors, within each region, and among social groups.

x) Having good policies to well address the issues such as labor, employment, and income, ensuring the quality of life of the population as the Resolution of the 12th National Party Congress of the Party clearly states: "Create opportunities for people to get jobs and improve income. Ensure fair wages and income, living conditions, and reproducing labor power"[1].

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THE STATE'S ROLE IN ENSURING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKET ECONOMY

Tran Van Phong[1]
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It can be said that social justice is the human aspiration, the goal that social regimes are always aiming for. In particular, in the market economy, the gap between rich and poor is increasing between population groups and between regions, and areas ... ensuring social equity becomes more necessary than ever. Many factors influence, affect and dominate the assurance of social justice, including the state. In a socialist-oriented market economy (socialist) like in Vietnam, the State is an indispensable tool to realize social justice. This stems from the nature of the State of Vietnam and is consistent with the objective requirements of social development and progress, meeting the goal of a rich people, a strong country, a democracy, justice, and civilization. It can be said that to ensure social equity in a market economy, the State plays the most decisive role because this is both a function and the responsibility of the state. This role is demonstrated in the following key aspects:

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1. The State develops policies to create fair opportunities for actors in the market economy

Opportunity equity is one of the fundamental issues to ensure social justice. Speaking of which, the World Bank World Development Report 2006 affirms: "When it comes to equity, we would like to say that individuals need equal opportunities to pursue life as they have chosen and must avoid miserable outcomes. Institutions and policies promote a level playing field, in which all members of society have an equal opportunity to be socially active, politically influential actors and highly economically productive, will contribute to the growth and sustainable development"[1]. Equality of opportunity is understood as everyone's right to equal access to any given opportunity (here is equality of opportunity).

In a market economy, ensuring social justice of the State must firstly focus on creating conditions for everyone to have equal opportunities to participate in all activities of social life. It is not just an opportunity to access resources for development, but also to access to favorable socio-economic and legal conditions and environments; is an opportunity to get access to all social services in general, from infrastructure to superstructure; to have conditions to capture and take advantage of opportunities, turn opportunities into reality for development... In other words, it is the opportunity that the subjects can access the necessary conditions for their development and their activities so that they can promote their inherent abilities to contribute to society and receive results commensurate with those contributions. To do so, it is necessary to build the right and appropriate mechanisms and policies to create fairness of opportunities for actors in the market economy. Therefore, only the State is the sole entity that can guarantee this role.

Document of the XII Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam affirmed: "The State plays a role in guiding, building and perfecting

1 World Bank, *World Development report 2006. Equality and development*, Culture and Information Publishing House, Hanoi, 2005, p.2.

economic institutions, creating a fair, transparent and healthy competitive environment; to use the State's tools, policies, and resources to direct and regulate the economy, promote production and business, and protect the environment; implement social progress and equity in each step and development policy"[1]. The State guides the economy through the formulation of socio-economic development strategies, master plans, and plans in the short, medium, and long terms as well. State policies aim to create an equally favorable environment and equal initial starting conditions for economic actors in localities and regions to maximize their strengths in socio-economic development.

First, the State develops and completes socio-economic development policies, ensures fairness of opportunities to enjoy a favorable socio-economic environment for fair and healthy competition, and transparency.

Through its system of economic policies, the state creates conditions for everyone to have equal development opportunities, ensuring equal rights for everyone participating in the market mechanism and fair competition. Therefore, the State needs to build an asynchronous market; have a mechanism for all economic sectors to compete fairly; stabilization macroeconomic indicators; to control inflation; have anti-monopoly, anti-counterfeit, and anti-smuggling policies; have policies on employment, unemployment reduction, social differentiation, social evils ... For localities, regions, economic entities, vulnerable businessmen and production people who are in difficult circumstances, conditions and unfavorable context and positions, and lose more when joining the common playing field in the market economy, the State will have investment support policies and measures to help them integrate with the community to develop together.

Also, through the system of socio-cultural policies, the State will create all conditions for the subjects to have equal opportunities

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2016, p. 103.

to develop equally in socio-cultural aspects in the market economy. For example, the policy of attracting, creating jobs, and reducing the unemployment rate ensures that all people who can work, have working needs and conditions have the opportunity to have a job for income along with according to their abilities and capacities, to help them participate in the social production process. Or, the policy of developing education and training, vocational training creates opportunities for intellectual development, improving qualifications and skills equally for all subjects, all regions of the country, etc.

Second, the State develops and completes policies and legal bases, ensures fairness of opportunities to enjoy a stable and favorable legal environment for development.

Through legal instruments, the State has developed favorable policies and legal environment to ensure fair development opportunities and fair, transparent, and healthy competition for all economic sectors. economy, subjects, regions, regions, and localities in the production and business process. That is the guarantee of political stability and real democracy promotion of the people; has a legal framework, a comprehensive legal system, consistent with international practice and law; perfecting the system of institutions and guiding documents that are accurate, specific and suitable to the market economy; completing the legal system related to the protection of intellectual property rights, property ownership rights, bankruptcy law, protection of legitimate rights and interests of entities; so that they can minimize risks and disputes in the production and business process. A completed and stable legal environment creates a level playing field and fair playing rules for all members of society to try their best, bring into play their full abilities and abilities, ensure that all subjects are free to develop.

Third, the State develops policies to ensure fairness of opportunities to access resources for development.

Equality of opportunities to access resources for development requires the State to have a policy to ensure that all actors have equal

opportunities to access resources for development, in terms of natural resources (geographical location, natural resources, traffic ...), as well as socio-economic resources (human resources, capital, markets, policies, science-technology ...). In the market economy, there is no discrimination against all holders of rights and the opportunities to access resources for development. Only when social equity of the opportunity to access resources for development can be realized will there be equity in conditions in the process of ensuring social equity in the economy. Therefore, the State can facilitate and intervene for all subjects to have access to resources such as production materials; credit sources; science and technology resources; basic infrastructure works... for them to have opportunities to develop production and business. The implementation of these things will be the necessary premise for all subjects to have access to opportunities for equal and fair contribution and enjoyment.

2. The Socialist State formulates policies to distribute labor results under the market mechanism and ensure social security and social welfare for subjects in the market economy.

Talking about social justice is not only talking about opportunity fairness but also fairness in the distribution of labor results. Only the State has the legal status, the power strength, the apparatus, and human resources to build a distribution mechanism to ensure equality and fairness between dedication and enjoyment, equality between obligations and benefits in different forms: distribution according to the results, the efficiency of production and business; according to the contribution of capital and resources according to the market mechanism, social security and social welfare.

In the socialist-oriented market economy in our country, in addition to the inevitable development of the society, the downside of this market mechanism will arise, such as the differentiation between rich and poor, inequality between contributions and enjoyment, the excessive income gap between sections, population class ... affecting

the goal of implementing social justice. This problem can only be solved thanks to the socialist state's intervention and regulation to limit such differentiation.

The State builds and issues fair income distribution mechanisms and policies, which means ensuring that each subject is properly evaluated and enjoys legitimate benefits, worthy of his/her effort and capacity. Avoid the situation of leveling, balance in distribution that hinders and stagnates the production, eliminates the motivation, enthusiasm for work, and creative labor of the subjects. This is the basis to encourage and attract all qualified economic entities who have legal resources to participate in the "playing field" of the market, to get rich legally to increase income. This is also the driving force to stimulate production and business development, improve social labor productivity.

The State's distribution of national income aims to harmonize and rationally regulate income among population strata, sectors, localities, and regions fairly. In a market economy, State policies related to the distribution of development achievements, the distribution of development opportunities, etc. will serve as the legal corridors governing distribution relations. Therefore, to ensure the harmonization of interests among economic entities, as well as to ensure a fair distribution in the market mechanism, the State's distribution policy must be comprehensive, unified, and coherent. consistent with socio-economic development orientation.

Our Party and State consistently advocate the principle of distribution based on labor results and economic efficiency, in which the salary regime must ensure the reproduction of labor and overcome the average tendency. In reality, our Party and State have been making efforts in the wage regime reform roadmap to satisfy those requirements. Through a system of policies such as income tax policies, policies on subsidies, and incentives ..., the State regulates income to narrow the gap between the rich and poor among social classes, and gradually improve the living standards for all walks of life. The State uses tax tools and policies to regulate the income of people with too high income

(through personal income tax, corporate income tax ...). Implementing high taxes on some special items such as luxury goods also contributes to the regulation and redistribution of income to a part of society.

At the same time, the State implements policies to provide benefits and incentives for people with too low incomes, people with meritorious services to the revolution, the elderly, helpless orphans, disabled people, and people at risk, natural disasters, ethnic minorities, people living in the borders and islands ... to create opportunities to help them have an average standard of living in society, to get rid of lag in the development process; reduce the natural injustices they endure; narrowing the income gap between the population classes; ensure income for employees when they are incapable of working or lose their jobs, ensure health care access when having an accident or illness... This is the implementation of the social welfare and social security distribution regime. It can be said that the State plays a decisive role in implementing public social welfare and ensuring sustainable hunger eradication and poverty reduction for people. Issues such as job creation, people's health, health insurance, social insurance, pension, benefits for people in difficulties, unemployment benefits ... cannot rely on self-regulation of the market mechanism, but that needs the attention and intervention of the State. The system of State social policies will reduce injustices and ensure social justice for the people. Therefore, the Party and State have affirmed: "Continue to improve the social security policy following the socio-economic development process. Expand the target audience and improve the efficiency of the social security system for all people; to facilitate effective assistance to the underprivileged, vulnerable, or at-risk people. Develop and well implement social insurance policies"[1].

The system of social policies of the State includes policies on hunger eradication and poverty reduction; policies to support and care

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2016, p. 137.

for "vulnerable" objects, families with meritorious services, disabled people, elderly, weak, helpless children; subsidy policies for those who have little opportunity to access and enjoy the achievements of socio-economic development in remote, border and island areas; relief policies for people who are less fortunate, at-risk and have natural disasters; policies on social insurance, health insurance, labor protections, and unemployment insurance policies; policies on housing, environmental protection, cultural development ... These policies aim to help members have the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the development of the society and enjoy results commensurate with their dedications, improving the material and spiritual life for all people. These things cannot be done by the market economy on their own.

3. The State mobilizes and allocates resources for the realization of social justice in the market economy

To realize social equity requires material resources. The State mobilizes material resources, legal resources, etc., and allocates these resources according to the law of the market economy, taking into account the factors of social security, social welfare to implement social balance. This role has been emphasized by the Party and State: "Entities from all economic sectors are equal, cooperate and compete under the law; The market plays a key role in mobilizing and effectively distributing development resources, being the main driving force for releasing production power; State resources are allocated according to strategies, master plans and plans in line with the market mechanism[1]."

The State uses resources, tools, mechanisms, and policies to perform the function of directing and regulating the economy, promoting production and business, and socio-economic development for the whole economy, and for each region, each locality. Thereby, implementing social progress and equity in each step, each development

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2016, p. 103.

policy. Through strategies, master plans, and plans, the State actively invests, mobilizes, and distributes State resources based on the specific socio-economic conditions and situation of each locality, each region to exploit and promote economic efficiency in advantageous regions and at the same time overcome difficulties in geography and travel ... in remote, border and island areas ... In resource distribution, it should be noted that the spread in development investment can cause loss and waste of resources. The State should have policies that prioritize and focus on investment and development of key sectors, localities, and economic regions to act as "locomotives" to develop our economy and stimulate the development of the neighboring localities. At the same time, the State also has policies to invest, allocate resources, and support the development of economic entities, small and medium-sized enterprises, regions, areas, and localities with fewer advantages and less opportunity to be invested ... to step by step shorten the disparities between regions and localities, to achieve the goal of balanced development of the economy while ensuring social equity. The rational mobilization, regulation, and allocation of resources will help create conditions for all subjects, all sectors, regions, areas, and localities to develop more evenly based on promoting comparative advantages of each region, each locality. From there, gradually forming an economic structure suitable for each region and economic linkages among regions.

However, in our country, the current allocation of resources is still mainly the "ask - give" mechanism. It must be emphasized that, in the market economy, the allocation of resources is also governed by the market mechanism, so, it is a must to comply with the rules of the market, respect the principles of the market, based upon the basis of the movement laws of the market mechanism to have appropriate and effective influence. Therefore, the State needs to rebuild resource allocation mechanisms and policies whose focus is on reforming the market mechanism and factors of production, such as the capital market, the labor market, and the land and property, science and technology, ... In particular, it is necessary to focus more on the markets of land and

natural resources in the allocation and use of resources, because this market is becoming exhausted and scared. Therefore, attention should be paid to the harmonious settlement of the relationship between the State and the market in the market economy, considering that these two forces are always accompanying and supporting each other, to allocate resources reasonably and harmoniously for the country's socio-economic development.

The State's current policy of allocating resources needs to resolve several contradictions and shortcomings that still exist, such as policy orientation to prioritize resource distribution to SOEs and large enterprises. ignoring small and medium enterprises, that has created inequality between types of enterprises in access to resources; The system of legal documents on management and use of land resources as well as other resources is not coherent; lack of transparency in the investment environment; policies on science - technology have not created a motivation for scientists to be passionate about research; Inadequate policies on human resources also exist in terms of recruitment, use, and treatment of talents, salary regime, education - training ... These are the causes of country resource (property) loss, negatively affecting the socio-economic development.

4. The State plays a role in inspecting and supervising the implementation of social justice in the market economy

The State, according to its functions, must organize and exercise the role of inspecting and supervising the implementation of social justice. On that basis, to adjust policies, mechanisms, and human resources for the implementation of social justice. If not performing the role of inspecting and supervising the implementation of social justice in the market economy, it is difficult to achieve ensuring social justice in practice.

The inspection and supervision of the implementation of social justice in the market economy are not just to inspect and supervise the deployment and implementation of policies to ensure social justice in

terms of opportunity, distribution, and allocation of resources ..., but also to check the correctness, suitability, and effectiveness of each policy in practice. Through legal instruments, the State exercises supervision, and management, and ensures fair and healthy competition in the market economy. The State controls economic activities by the law, resists against all forms of monopoly, prevents nefarious people, illegal enrichment such as fraud in production and business, corruption, smuggling, cheating, ... causing injustice in society. At the same time, the State uses tools such as strategies, plans, policies, and laws to serve as a basis for the inspection, monitoring, and evaluation of the implementation of social justice by entities that enforce State power, as well as entities of the production and business in the socialist-oriented market economy.

In recent years, in our country, due to the lack of strict and timely inspection and supervision, many State regulations on distribution have not been strictly implemented. Tax evasion is still performed by many large enterprises; The State has no control over the income of citizens, making the personal income tax policy not implemented thoroughly for many years; Many enterprises fail to comply with the State's regulations on the salary regime, evade and delay payment of social insurance contributions that greatly affect the legitimate interests of workers and fairness insurance in the distribution of income. Some activities of the public apparatus do not operate by the law but are distorted by "lubricants" of interest groups, causing injustice, frustrating, and hindering the business activities of the economic entities. Many "loopholes" in the management and distribution policies have not been promptly discovered, leading to illicit income, creating an environment for illegal personal profits. The State has not yet controlled the non-salary income derived from "hand-lined envelopes", "lubrication", "kickback ...", especially for a part of civil servants who have powers and in positions to have decisive roles in large investment projects, or from the use of the state budget, import and export, etc.

Due to the lack of strict inspection, control, and supervision mechanisms, the redistribution policies in Vietnam are still inadequate and ineffective in practice, affecting the assurance of social equity through the implementation of welfare and social security. Many support activities, incentives, and subsidies are still formalistic and unsustainable. The situation of profiting from social security policies, "taking a rake-off" allowances, falsifying records ... committed by a part of officials still exist, causing frustration among the people, adversely affecting the social effects of the State distribution policies.

Also, the limitations in policymaking and implementation of policies to ensure fairness of resource allocation in Vietnam over the past years are caused by the weakness of the State's inspection and supervision mechanism. Many policies do not reflect the practice leading to ineffectiveness, causing waste of money and property of the State; State budget expenditures still show signs of being non-conformable with the financial disciplines; the allocation of investment capital to the project, for several ministries, branches and localities still have many mistakes; the allocation of funds is still stretched thin, not in the right focus, target, project implementation time is lengthened, causing increased investment, capital loss and waste; ...

With the above limitations, if there is no strict inspection and supervision mechanism, no matter how correct the State's social justice policies are, it will be difficult to achieve effectiveness in practice because of causes such as benefits are dominant; or immediate correction and revision of the gaps in policy. Therefore, in the current market economy in our country, the State not only performs the role of inspecting, controlling, and monitoring the implementation of social justice in terms of development opportunities, income distribution, and allocate resources in practice but also checks the effectiveness of these policies. Through the inspection, review, and completion of legal documents to control the exercise of State power; supervise the allocation of investment capital, land, natural resources, finance, banking, tax...; eliminating negativity arising from the "ask-give"

mechanism; prevent negative from "group interests", making profits in management and usage of the budget, embezzlement, corruption, and waste in the management and use of public assets; ensure publicity and transparency in management and administration...

In the mobilization and allocation of resources, the role of the State inspection and supervision is demonstrated through the state audit tools. It can be said, "State audit activities serve the inspection and supervision of the State in the management and use of the state budget, money and property; contribute to thrifty practice, fight against corruption, loss, waste, detect and prevent law violations, improve the efficiency of the use of state budget, money and property"[1]. Therefore, audit activity is the "checking, evaluating and confirming the correctness and truthfulness of financial statements"[2], through which to strictly control the use of the capital, assets and state budget; "Checking, evaluating and confirming the compliance with laws, rules and regulations"[3] that the audited economic entities have to complete (such as the compliance with obligations to pay the state budget of enterprises and economic entities according to the provisions of the law…), in order to improve the efficiency of the use of capital, public assets and the state budget, to fight against waste and loss; "checking and evaluating the economy, effectiveness and efficiency in the management and use of the budget, state money and assets"[4], to evaluate and recommend an adjustment of the allocation of resources in a more realistic, rational and effective way for economic entities, branches, and localities ...

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1 National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, *The Law on State Audit,* number 37/2005/QH11, dated 14 June 2005, Article 3.

2 National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, *The Law on State Audit,* number 37/2005/QH11, dated 14 June 2005, Article 4.

3 National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, *The Law on State Audit,* number 37/2005/QH11, dated 14 June 2005, Article 4.

4 National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, *The Law on State Audit,* number 37/2005/QH11, dated 14 June 2005, Article 4.

Thus, with an important role in ensuring stable economic growth and development, the State also plays a role in ensuring the harmonization of interests of each individual, subject, and economic groups with the society, ensuring social justice for the sake of national development. The roles of the State in ensuring equity of opportunities, income distribution, resource allocation ... are inter-related, influencing, affecting, and supporting each other, complementing each other. The State's role is only promoted when simultaneously performing well each of those functions and roles.

THE STATE'S ROLE IN ENSURING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKET ECONOMY IN VIETNAM TODAY

Do Minh Hop[1]

To clarify the role of the state in ensuring social justice, first, we need to introduce the general concept of "market economy" and "social justice". The "market economy" is a concept used to denote a kind of economic relationship that has been formed in history, in which the decisive factor is the act of exchanging goods through value (measured money) between producers and consumers as independent economic entities. For many people, the basic principles and mechanisms of the market economy are still unfamiliar or misunderstood. The reason for this is that the market economy is not an ideology, but a system of customs and institutions that enable individuals and societies to live and prosper economically. The nature of a market economy does not centralize in a single entity or element. A metaphor of the market economy is the "invisible hand". The market economy may be practical, but it is also based on the basic principles of personal freedom such as the client's freedom to choose competitive goods and services; the manufacturer's freedom to initiate or expand the business, to divide risks and profits; the workers' rights to choose a job or profession, to join a labor union

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or change employers. This is an affirmation of freedom, of risks and opportunities, which altogether constitute the modern market economy and political democracy. The market economy is not free of serious injustices and abuses, but the fact is that modern private enterprise and aspiration to do business to get wealthy along with political democracy can bring conditions to preserve and open up prospects for economic development and prosperity for everyone.

When dealing with the issue of justice, we inevitably encounter the issue of freedom and equality, individual rights, and obligations. Here the thought of individual freedom holds a key place. It plays a fundamental role both in law and in morality. The affirmation of the civic entity is closely related to the reinforcement of the idea of individual freedom. At the same time, personal freedom only makes sense in relation to others and it can only be considered as a value in the relationship between people. From this perspective, freedom constitutes the individual's most important essential characteristic. Being a rational - ethical entity, the individual lives and acts not only by the pursuit of his own selfish goals and interests but also by a sense of supranational laws and rules because the individual cannot live without community and community relations. The individual himself cannot become the "measure of all things". With such a feature, an individual can only be a rational and moral entity, obeying the basic ethical norms and orientations, constituting an invisible pillar that ensures the unity of the social nature. Just as A. Camus said, "absolute freedom is a mockery of justice. Absolute justice is the negation of freedom. The vitality of both concepts depends on their mutual self-restraint. No one considers his destiny to be free, if he is both an unjust and fair person or if he is not free"[1].

The bourgeois revolution appeared with the slogan "freedom, equality, charity". Thus, freedom and equality are the fundamental values and ideals of Western people. Several centuries have passed

1 A. Camus, *The Rebel*, Moscow, 1990, p. 345.

since the victories of the bourgeois revolution but "freedom" and "equality" are still only ideals. In our opinion, to achieve them requires another fundamental value - the ideal of the Western human race from ancient times up to now - that is "justice" because only justice gives real meaning to freedom and equality.

Justice is the ethical judgment for people's community activities mainly from the perspective of their desires, interests, and obligations; it involves relationships between people in all their social forms. The specific object of justice is the good and the evil of community activities within the framework of a unified legal space.

All Western philosophical views of justice are rooted in Aristotle's. He made a distinction between public justice and private justice. He understood public justice as compliance with the law, the reasonableness of the polis' activities. It is defined as the common ethical criterion of all organized community relations between people. Justice brings legitimacy to collective behaviors and forms of living. It coincides with ethics in the public field, clarifying the meaning and purpose of collective existence organized into the state. Two philosophical traditions have formed in the study of Aristotle's concept, thereby contributing to the formation of different public life practices.

The first tradition stems from the idea of cooperation. Internally divided and organized into the state, the community is of more important significance than the condition for the well-being of individuals; it is a moral way of life, a specific form that allows the individual to realize and perfect himself. The path from the natural individual to the virtuous individual is well-organized public activities. Thanks to the division of labor, collective activities, on the one hand, facilitate the emergence and development of science and the arts (including technology), thereby creating objects for individuals to perceive themselves as ethical individuals (fairness, justice); on the other hand, it allows the separation of intellectual labor from manual labor, helping individuals to freely express their internal forces. The state in its proper forms (Polis for Aristotle, Monarchy for Hegel, etc.) is regarded as real wisdom (Reason),

representing human intellect. Correspondingly, the welfare of the state is placed higher than the welfare of the individual. The justification for the existence of a just state is tied to the concept of individual morality and individual justice is the factor that ensures public justice. A distinctive feature of individual justice is unconditional compliance. Individuals submit to the belief that "everyone has their place", thereby not only limiting themselves but also acknowledging the superiority of others due to their dignity.

The second tradition sees the state as only a means of limiting, curbing conflicts, as the external environment for personal well-being. It is most fully expressed in the view of the social contract. This view stems from the axiom of originality, in which the individual possesses infinite freedom, so when in conflict with each other, they are put in a situation of total dangers. The right to everything leads to the absence of all rights. The state is the logical exit from such a situation. The state's mission is to ensure personal well-being along a path that balances their rights. The state's justice in this situation is determined by personal well-being. "The greatest benefit of the most people" (Bentham) is as a morally approved social purpose. The moral justification of the state is also restricting it, reducing it to the minimum of external limitations necessary for all. According to this tradition, justice is primarily understood to be the principle of objectivity, the totality of requests made through punishment and reward. As a whole of institutionalized requirements, justice requires and shapes the individual subjective competencies (first of all the ability to comply with standards), but ideally, it is must be in effect irrespective of the individual's goodwill.

The first model of public justice can be called the model of cooperation and mutual development (Plato, Aristotle, Hegel, Marx). Its main limitation is not defining who is the subject of justice and who approves it. The second model can be called the model of individual-conflict (Hobbes, Locke, Kant, etc.); Its basic limitation is that it sees the rational free individual as the product and the premise of historical development is the premise of historical development.

Private justice is the morally ratified harmonization of the division of welfare in an integrated social space (organized into the state), which is the perfection of the mode of coordination and balancing conflicting interests in the state. In this sense, justice coincides with the law. It is the object of study of the social sciences (while public justice is the object of moral philosophy).

Building the theory of justice requires considering individuals as being equal and living in community life. Aristotle's argument "justice towards others is equality" is the moral basis for this justice. In terms of morality, justice shows equality of the right to be happy and possess the necessary benefits. So, every social practice of justice always requires a specific and diverse combination of benefits that each individual has the right to use from the very beginning. Solidarity in the "golden rule of ethics" shown here is a measure and justification of justice. In terms of legal aspects, justice is shown as the equality of form and measure (requirements, laws, rules, standards) to identify individuals as equal subjects before the law. Both moral and legal justice means equality, but fundamentally different. Moral justice is infinite equality, in which people are equal because each has unique, irreplaceable, infinite expectations, and aspirations; they are equal in their absolute heterogeneity. Justice in law is the equality of units, in terms of quantity, which can only be considered equal in a certain sense. People are equal to the creators of social spaces. However, the act of creation itself manifests itself as validating inequality in employment and status as factors that form the structure of the created social space. The issue is the combination of equality and inequality. The great obstacle in dealing with this constitutes the fundamental source of social riots occurring under the slogan of fighting for justice.

Thus, there are two forms of justice: public justice and private justice, which form the basis of all theories of justice such as distributive justice and equitable justice. They constitute the means of distributing deprived welfare. This welfare should be called private welfare to differentiate it from collective welfare which, by their very nature, cannot be divided

between individuals. Thus, justice is the way a person's relation with others mediated by the relationship to the welfare that both are expected to possess. A just society and its people can find ethical criteria in the distribution of welfare; Ethical criteria here are understood as criteria to make everyone satisfied and get the approval of those who have to bear the most unhappiness.

Distributive justice is related to the distribution of welfare and corresponds to the distribution of obligations in a manner that takes into account the individual's contribution to the common work. Historically, there have been three basic principles of distributive justice such as "equitable enjoyment", "contribution-based enjoyment" and "demand-based enjoyment". The first principle is ancient which was the main principle (the principle of equality) of the primitive gentile relationship. The third principle is future-oriented and was often put forth in utopian theories. The second principle is that of modern societies (for example, wages depend on the quantity and quality of labor). As minor principles, other principles are now also valid and irreplaceable in some areas such as the division of fundamental values (human rights) which are implemented according to the principle of "Equitable enjoyment", while social support or tax incentives depending on the number of children according to the principle of "demand-based enjoyment".

Equitable justice is the distribution of welfare without taking into account individual contributions. Distributive justice predetermines the basis for ethical regulation of social relations mainly on the personal subjective aspect, while equitable justice is on the objective aspect. Certain societies may favor a form of justice, but both are valid. The optimal combination of them in person-to-person relationships is crucial to determining the degree of social justice.

Therefore, social justice is associated with the issue of distribution of interests and obligations in a manner consistent with the individual's efforts in the common work. Such a concept focuses on the state's function in implementing social justice, especially in market economic

conditions due to the impact of the market economy on most areas of social activity. This argument can be justified as follows:

First, the market, on the one hand, tells us the quantity and quality of products in proportion to the demand and supply of society; on the other hand, it creates problems such as public policy, inflation, unemployment, pollution, poverty, etc., which cannot be solved on its own.

Second, the market economy, on the one hand, is a mechanism to ensure that the core issue of economic activity is efficiency but on the other hand, it is not a universal mechanism that does not create failures, thus demanding a "non-market" mechanism is required to overcome the weaknesses of the market mechanism, especially when it is related to ownership and responsibility on contract. Through the property law, the state is a "non-market" institution that ensures social justice by eliminating bankruptcy of companies that compete unfairly with each other. This has important implications for stabilizing economic development and social security and solidarity.

Third, the market economy is, on the one hand, the factor that allows the material production to be improved in terms of quantity and quality but on the other hand, it cannot have an effective effect (even have a negative impact) on areas outside the economy, in particular the area of social relations, that is, social justice and personal well-being. For example, it is the problem of environmental pollution and the exogenous cost. The natural environment is not owned by individuals or a private organization. Private company pollutes the environment, but the environment is not privately owned, so the private company continues to pollute the environment if this brings them profits. A social injustice arises for the exploitation of the environment. And social justice needs to be established in the way of making and implementing the State's policies on environmental protection.

Fourth, the state as a social institution has the role of ensuring justice in the market economy, so to prevent and eliminate the spontaneity of

market forces, the state needs to be included in a certain legal space. This is a function of the state, to create and maintain an environment of economic competition and cooperation based on civilized norms to encourage the creative activities of social members. This function of the state is carried out through the system of socio-economic policies and the civilized market law.

Fifth, the market economy is based on individual freedom and natural inequality, so society will inevitably be stratified. This fact will create feelings of injustice among disadvantaged groups who need social assistance. This contradiction between economic development and social stability cannot be eliminated. However, it requires moderation to create the minimum stable social environment necessary for the existence of society itself. The socio-economic policies, especially the tax policies of the state, are responsible for "regulating" this conflict. The economic rationality here needs to be restrained favorably in favor of emotionality. All modern states have policies to support the unemployed, health care for the poor, and retirement benefits for the retirees. This is the "social security network" that the state needs to actively implement in the market economy.

The issue of ensuring social justice became especially urgent at the early stage of the transition to a market economy - the barbaric form of the market. At this stage, market activities mainly took place in speculation, the majority of profits were received from brokerage activities, associated with redistribution relations, not in the manufacturing sector. This fact led to a deep social division, illegal enrichment, which abolished the stimulus, healthy motives of economic development, that was, creating serious social injustice. This fact required the intervention of the state by legal policies to ensure social justice, social stability, and move to the civilized market.

The civilized market derived from another source of profit which was the potential of individuals to be realized based on the assurance and promotion of their freedoms and their private interests. Under such conditions, social justice is ensured through the tools of the state - a legal

space that guarantees equal rights and freedoms for each individual and all, at the same time, that is, is social justice in terms of form.

Currently, we are trying to build a civilized market to promote the positive aspects of the market economy for economic growth as well as to limit its negative aspects to ensure social justice and welfare. As for the first issue, the market economy development experience shows that the key here is to maximize individual freedom and their capabilities, while also ensuring social justice. This is the notion of the famous "rational selfishness" made in the philosophy of French Enlightenment. This "rationality" is reflected in the social orientation of the market economy, that is, economic growth is associated with personal and social interests. The state is the factor that ensures this rationality as the basic content of social justice.

To operate the market economy, we need to derive from the above argument, that is, from the idea that the individual participating in the market always sets for himself the goal of getting maximum profits in the current legal framework. It is such a starting point that requires the state to plan a reasonable legal culture. However, this legal culture needs to be effective in a larger cultural space than the traditional culture of the nation expressed through the spirit and customs of each individual and society in general.

In the West, the market economy is based on liberalism. Liberalism has the philosophical premise of individualism. According to M. Weber, the market economy, typically a capitalist economy whose spirit is the characteristics of individuals formed in the heart of Protestant culture. Specifically, it is individual freedom and responsibility, rational choice and action, the rule of law, and unified legal space. Thereby, social justice is understood as the realization of an individual's civic qualities on a common legal basis.

Not denying or underestimating the role of the individual, it can be said that individualism is not specific to Vietnamese cultural traditions. "Village culture" (community culture) is an essential feature

of Vietnamese culture. Thus, the development of the market economy and the absorption of the Western business culture will inevitably lead to "conflict" between the two types of culture. We should note here that it should not be absolutized that the business culture based entirely on individualism is the only premise of the market economy. The experience of economic development of some countries, especially Japan, shows that community culture can be completely consistent with the "spirit of capitalism". It can even be said that the community culture also allows to very effectively limit the downside of the market economy. Community culture does not focus on individual freedom but does not reject it and realizes it in the collective form (family, village, etc.).

Thus, social justice is understood to guarantee individual values, first of all, individual freedom. In Vietnamese culture, individual freedom is always associated with individual responsibility, that is the choice and fulfillment of individual duties in the community. At that time, justice is perceived as the recognition and respect for the rights of each individual, each community, and each nation in recognizing, choosing, and fulfilling their duties. This perspective adds values such as tolerance, openness, unity, values that are particularly pressing in the global world, and cross-cultural globalization. Although the concept of human rights is closely linked to Western cultural traditions, it does not mean that human rights do not exist in Vietnamese culture. The problem here is the approach to human nature because it is the most important premise for building the concept of "human rights". From this perspective, the concept of individual freedom in different cultures, including Vietnamese culture, does not conflict (antinomian) with each other but needs to be complementary.

Existentialist philosophy puts individual freedom first, thereby reflecting one of the most important entities of modern Western culture. The Vietnamese human philosophy puts personal responsibility at first, so freedom here is understood as awareness and fulfillment of personal duties and responsibilities to the community as the most appropriate

way to express personality, authentic individual freedom. Furthermore, community nature must become the starting point for arguments about freedom and human rights. In my opinion, this point of view is very important and urgent in ensuring justice both in a particular society and in the human community. The mission of the state and international institutions needs to emanate from that to conduct legislative and judicial activities to ensure a human race that is both human and just.

For the states beginning to build their form of the rule of law, it is of primary importance to find a path from the subsidy (supremacy) to democracy and the rule of law. This issue is what we are working on. Reality shows that the idea of decentralizing the state (political reform at first) as a prerequisite for innovation, social democratization, and transition to a market economy has collapsed, not leading to real democracy, becoming one of the factors hindering the transition to the civilized market because there is no guarantee of social justice as the basis of political stability and socio-economic development.

The civilized market is a social institution that allows for maximum economic efficiency fairly, by promoting the inherent potential of the individual, first of all, creative freedom. From this perspective, it can be said that individualism is not the only one that is the premise for the civilized market. With its unique "village culture" (community culture), Vietnamese culture shows an individual's immense ability in its responsibility to the community - family, village, company, collective, state, etc. This cultural identity is the foundation for social justice, creating a spirit of social unity and solidarity.

In such a condition, when the market economy emerges with its individualist extremes, the State must function to reconcile extreme manifestations of individualism and communitarianism through its legal system and regulated activities by law. Vietnamese traditional culture here has the advantage of educating the sense of responsibility for individuals by pointing out the common origin of the nation. This is the means to prevent negative aspects of the market economy such as material cult, extreme egoism, neutral attitudes, and ethical indifference.

Therefore, one of the urgent tasks of the state is to nurture the people, aiming for a fair and equal relationship between people.

Another advantage of Vietnamese traditional culture that allows the creation of civilized market culture is the emphasis on "common welfare" (of families, villages, hometowns, homeland, and ethnic groups). This core value orientation makes "customary law" ("village custom") become a link connecting people, a measure of the justice and fairness of social relations. The conscience of each individual is a very important factor to prevent illicit enrichment tricks. In addition to the written law, the state has the task of organizing education, propaganda, and maximizing the humanistic spiritual values crystallized in that "unwritten law" for each citizen. This is a specific characteristic of the Vietnamese concept of social justice and thereby showing the specific role of the state in ensuring social justice in the market economy.

Taking into account the above-mentioned characteristics of Vietnamese people, we can conclude that we cannot quickly form a civilized market and the clarification of the fundamental values of the Vietnamese cultural tradition allows us to realize the great possibilities of the innovation strategy. Specifically, the orientation to individualism is a factor that undermines Vietnamese communal spiritual traditions and even destroys social justice. The experience of using the communal-family tradition in Japan's civilized market organization reveals its deep spiritual foundations. Therefore, the idea of collective and community ownership should not be considered as an obstacle in the path of forming a civilized market. The building of the rule of law to ensure a unified legal space as the basis of social justice for the civilized market in Vietnam cannot be carried out in a way that undermines the central government. However, we need to promote the great spiritual potentials of traditional Vietnamese culture to build a civilized market economy for the freedom, social justice, and happiness of all Vietnamese people.

THE STATE IN ENSURING SOCIAL EQUALITY IN VIETNAM TODAY

Le Huu Ai[1]
Le Van Thao[2]

1. Introduction

Social equity is both a goal and an important driving force to utilize all resources for the harmonious and sustainable development of every nation and people Therefore, building a fair society is an inevitable trend of progressive democracies in the world as well as in Vietnam. Recognizing its importance, since the very early days of its existence, the Communist Party of Vietnam has stated that 'economic growth must be associated with social progress and social equity in every step and throughout the development process'. In which, the Party emphasized, 'Social equity must be demonstrated in both the rational distribution of production materials and in the distribution of production results, in creating conditions for everyone to have an opportunity for development. and to make good use of their abilities ' "[3]. Based on the Party's point of view, along with the synergy of the entire political system, we have initially achieved certain results in the realization of

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3 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 8th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996, page 113.

social equity, demonstrating the superiority of the new social regime. However, under the impact of many different factors, especially the flip side of the increasingly internationalized market economy, social inequality has become increasingly serious and complex. This requires the state to better do its role in the realization of the goal of social justice in Vietnam today.

2. Social equity – the driving force for the development of society

2.1. The term fairness appeared very early, but due to different purposes and approaches, there are differences in the view of social equity, among which are some of the following:

Firstly, social justice is treating people of the same social status equally and treating people of different social status differently. According to the philosopher Platon (427 - 347 BC), fairness is that every person, regardless of their social status, must fulfill his/her responsibilities, and live according to his/her class, and to know his/her identity. And according to Aristotle (384 - 322 BC), equity is equality between people of the same social status. Inequality between people of different status is also equality [1].

Secondly, egalitarian social justice, which means treating different people equally. Utopianists like H.d. Saint Simon (1760 - 1828), F.M. Charles Fourier (1772 - 1837), F.P. Robert Owen (1771 - 1858) believe that an equal society is a society where everyone must work and enjoy equally, without special privileges. Social equity is a condition of equality for each member [2].

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1 Nguyễn Minh Hoàn, *Công bằng xã hội trong tiến bộ xã hội (Social equity in social progress)*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2010, page 12-14.

2 Võ Thị Hoa, V*ai trò của Nhà nước đối với việc thực hiện công bằng xã hội trong điều kiện kinh tế thị trường ở nước ta hiện nay (The role of the State in the realization of social equity in the current market economic conditions in our country),* National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2012, page 11-12.

Thirdly, social justice in an objective sense is the right values, general norms, standards, or appropriate way of action, recognized by the community [1] . In a subjective sense, fairness depends on the perceptions, evaluations, and judgments of each individual [2] . Each person has his or her judgment about what is fair or unfair. In a general sense, equity is the ideal state of human society, in which property, benefits, and opportunities are divided appropriately and impartially among members of the society [3] .

Fourthly, social equity is the equality of contribution and enjoyment, between crime and punishment, etc. It is the correlation between aspects in the relationship between the contribution of individuals and groups to other individuals, to other groups and society and what they get back individually, in groups, or as an entire society; or punishment for bad and harmful actions to the society that they have caused[4].

Fifthly, social equity is a state in which all rights and duties of social members are available and performed following social values to maximize the ability to contribute and minimize the potential harm of each individual and society in the long term[5].

Sixthly, social equity is an individual virtue that governs individuals to work together for the common good. "Social equity" is "fairness" when it comes to helping individuals in society to be happy "giving others what others deserve," and it is "social" in a double sense. First

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1 Rüthers/Fischer/Birk, Rechtstheorie mit juristischer Methodenlehre, 6. Aufl., 2011, Rn. 348.

2 Rüthers/Fischer/Birk, Sđd, Rn. 349.

3 Oswald Schwemmer, Gerechtigkeit, in: Jürgen Mittelstraß (Hrsg.): Enzyklopädie Philosophie und Wissenschaftstheorie. Band 1. Metzler, Stuttgart 1995, S. 746.

4 Nguyễn Tấn Hùng, Lê Hữu Ái, "Thực hiện công bằng xã hội ở Việt Nam hiện nay - Mâu thuẫn và phương pháp giải quyết (Implementation of social equity in Vietnam today - Conflicts and solutions)", *Triết học*, số 4 (203), 2008 (*Philosophy,* no.4 (203), 2008), page 25.

5 Bùi Đại Dũng, Phạm Thu Phương, "Tăng trưởng kinh tế và công bằng xã hội", Tạp chí *Kinh tế và Kinh doanh,* số 25, 2009, tr.83.

of all, social equity is aimed at the common good rather than the good of a particular individual, it is not something for someone to ask about because they feel unfair. It is not the payment of someone's debt. Second, social equity involves engaging with others to achieve a common goal that individuals cannot achieve alone[1] .

Although there are differences in views on social equity, they all have a common point in that social equity is a reflection of the harmonious state of interests between individuals, between individuals and collectives, between individuals, collectives, and the society. This state is governed by factors such as people's perceptions of equity, cultural characteristics, religion, economic development, etc. therefore, social equity is always historical, specifically. To evaluate the level of harmony, many measures have been built up, for example, Distribution of income per capita or groups of the population; Lorentz curve; Gini coefficient; Poverty Index; The level of satisfaction of basic human needs; Human Development Index (HDI); Quality of life index...

However, the harmony here is not just about ensuring fairness in dedication and enjoyment, between crime and punishment, but its scope is much wider. Those are also the conditions for each and collective to develop and perfect their abilities. In practice, we often focus solely on the matter of judging between dedication and enjoyment, but a more important issue is that in terms of individuals, having different conditions in capacity development can lead to different contributions. For example, a child in a remote, mountainous area, living in great economic difficulties, without access to quality education, healthcare, etc. cannot be equal to a child in a city with good education, healthcare, and cultural conditions; therefore, opportunities for capacity development in each child will be different, and the ability to contribute will also be different. Along with the conditions for capacity building, is the assessment and use of the capacity of each individual. Unfairness in capacity assessment, as well as the misuse of an individual's capacity,

1 https://trithucvn.net/the-gioi/hieu-the-nao-moi-dung-ve-cong-bang-xa-hoi.html

of the ability to access resources in society, will also lead to different contributions of individuals, creating inequality in enjoyment, etc.

Besides, if the emphasis on fairness is only the commensurate between contribution and enjoyment, between crime and punishment, etc. this would also be synonymous with the principle of contribution, that is, the more dedication, the more you enjoy, not contributing, giving, means not enjoying (except in cases of inability to contribute to the society, such as a person unable to work), which can lead to a deepening social division. Therefore, the community spirit and the spirit for others will be the key to creating a sustainable and harmonious society, which is only possible when study, work, and dedication become a living need and living value for each person.

2.2. Social equity with the meaning of equality in terms of the conditions for developing and perfecting the qualities and abilities of each individual, and the assessment, as well as the ability to access resources for utilizing the qualities, abilities, the proportion between dedication and enjoyment, between crime and punishment, etc., will be a favorable social environment for each individual and group to improve themselves, increasing resources for the society, promoting the capabilities of each person, contributing to promoting the sustainable development of society.

In the contents of social equity, the harmonious settlement of economic interests plays a core role, being the foundation for ensuring social equity in other fields. Because all social unrest essentially originates from the economy, inequality in economic interests leads to injustice in other areas. For example, paying wages that are not commensurate with the worker's contribution, will result in the person and his dependents not being equally entitled to medical, educational, mental, and spiritual needs, etc. compared to other individuals with the same level of contribution. On the contrary, the harmonious settlements of economic interests will facilitate the harmonious settlement of other interests. Also, it will contribute to motivating subjects in an active and

creative economy to seek their legitimate interests and thus, promote the economic development of each organization or country.

3. Factors affecting the state's role in ensuring social equity

For a long time, human society never had a state, the role of regulating interests among the subjects in society was assigned to the leaders of the clans and tribes. Leaders rely on personal reputation and quality to ensure fairness for members in their community.

When the productive force develops to a certain level, it inevitably leads to the private appearance of the means of production, dividing society into *forces with opposing interests*. The conflict between groups of people inevitably leads to the creation of a state (there are also states formed by the need to solve the common affairs of the community). The birth of the state is essentially creating tools for the people holding the main means of production of the society to ensure the status and interests of their class. Besides, every state must ensure the common interests of the community to the extent that is consistent with the interests of the ruling class. However, throughout the history of the formation of the private property up to now, the state has been a tool for the ruling class, only its manifestation level is different. Consequently, the realization of economic justice in these social regimes is substantially only fair within the ruling class minority. For example, under slavery, although slavery is the main labor force that generates wealth, their level of enjoyment of the fruit of labor is very low. Or as under an authoritarian monarchy, a king, despite being incompetent, even harming society, also enjoys privileges in terms of economic interests, and even in a capitalist society, where the society is considered to be much more superior to the previous social regime, the state still cannot escape its role as a tool for the bourgeoisie to exercise their interests, in many cases. , it is willing to carry out the brutal suppressions of the struggling movements of those who have been unfairly treated, deprived of their economic interests. Hence, the inevitable objective requirement of replacing the old society with a new and better one has led to socialist revolutions.

The result of these revolutions is the emergence of socialist states, with nature as a tool of the working class and working people to renovate the old society and to build a new society. Its foremost importance is to care for the interests of the majority of the working population. The new State was built based on public ownership of means of production, so this is very much the state of the people, by the people, for the people. Therefore, only the socialist state can harmonize the interests of the subjects in society.

The implementation of the role of regulating and ensuring social equity of the state is done through the institutionalization into the law of the relationships between entities in the society; implement strictly and fairly between these entities, and closely monitor the implementation of these standards in social life. Also, the state mobilizes maximum domestic and foreign resources to harmonize conflicts of interests between subjects in society. Accordingly, the factors affecting the implementation of the role of the state in ensuring social equity are also factors affecting the institutionalization, implementation, and monitoring of the process of the implementation of legal standards such as the quality of the contingent of cadres and civil servants; Organizing committee; Operation mechanism; Resources for the realization of social equity, etc.

In Vietnam, the implementation of the state's role in ensuring social equity is increasingly effective in terms of Institutionalization, implementation, inspection, supervision, etc. However, in reality, there are still many limitations and shortcomings in the implementation of the State's role, leading to quite serious inequality: The gap between the rich and the poor is getting bigger and bigger, the injustice in the policy of salary, bonus, remuneration, granting, subsidizing, paying taxes, handling violations of economic activities ... this has objective reasons: The state model we are building is new, therefore, there is a lack of experience in organization and management. Economic and political instabilities in the world in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century challenges created by international integration; The fierce

resistance of hostile forces at home and abroad to weaken our country's political system, is causing significant difficulties to the management of the State, etc. However, the root cause is still the weak management capacity, professional qualifications, self-development, the political and ethical transformation of some cadres and civil servants. In particular, the mindset of governance, orders, and imposition are still deeply rooted in the perception of a part of cadres and civil servants. The situation of factions, interest groups, running for position, power, etc. is still complicated; The determination of goals, steps, and roadmap for the implementation of social equity is still subjective, hasty, and willful; Not yet built a truly democratic environment; The Party has not done well the leading role for the State in ensuring social equity; Propaganda and education about the Party's policy and guidelines, the State's policies and laws are ineffective, limited access to information, etc.

This fact requires timely and feasible solutions to enhance the role of the state in the realization of social equity in our country today.

4. Several solutions to promote the role of the state in ensuring social justice in Vietnam today

4.1. Promote democracy in implementing social equity

Democracy is the evolutionary product of the history of human society, is the result of the people's enduring struggle against oppression, injustice, and exploitation. Socialist democracy is a political form of a socialist state and at the same time a regime, a powerful institution for the working class and the working people to build a new society. Therefore, expanding and promoting democracy in our country is now considered both an objective and a driving force, a premise, and a condition for the enhancement of the State's role in ensuring social equity.

The promotion of democracy should be done fully and comprehensively, from building the Party's policies and guidelines, State policies, and laws, in organizing the implementation to monitoring

the implementation of the contents. related to social equity. To realize this important task, the State must build a solid legal basis for the people's freedoms and democracy, ensuring the necessary conditions for the people to realize those rights in reality.

Along with improving the efficiency and quality of the implementation of the representative democracy, the State should expand and fully implement the direct democracy regime, creating a favorable environment for people to participate in the government's activities.; To have the opportunity to discuss, contribute opinions, and make recommendations on the contents of the Party's undertakings and State policies and laws.

Democracy must be done from the central to grassroots levels, especially democracy in villages, neighborhoods, and towns. Democracy does not just stop at generic slogans. It must go along with actions. Therefore, it is necessary to continue to supplement and complete the Grassroots Democracy Regulation under the motto "people know, people discuss, people do, people check". Accordingly, people must be informed of the Party's guidelines and policies and State policies and laws and must be open and transparent about the government's activities from the central to grassroots levels. At the same time, to respect the right to political activities and political opinions of individuals if they are consistent with the Constitution and the law and do not infringe on the interests of the people. To ensure necessary conditions for the people to directly or indirectly inspect and supervise the activities of the State. The State must always attach great importance to listening to the people's opinions, pay attention to the consideration and settlement of the people's complaints and denunciations, and strictly prohibit all acts of repressing complainants and denunciations.

To have a real democracy, it is required that the people themselves also can control, that is, understanding of democratic rights, methods, means, etc. to implement democracy. Therefore, the State must constantly increase propaganda and education to raise people's awareness of democracy.

Along with the expansion and promotion of democracy, the State must also be resolute in preventing acts of abusing authority, violating the people's freedom and democracy, and strictly handling all manifestations of extremes democracy, causing disruption, political instability, and harm to the interests of the nation and the political rights of the people.

4.2. Streamlining and improving the quality of human resources of the state apparatus

As of July 1, 2017, the number of civil servants, cadres, and wage recipients of administrative and career units in Vietnam was about 3.8 million [1]. As of quality, as Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc once remarked, "In our system, there are up to 30% of civil servants that are unnecessary, because they only go to work in the morning and go back at night, which does not bring any kind of work efficiency." [2]. Therefore, streamlining the apparatus and improving the quality of human resources are the keys to improving the operational efficiency of the state apparatus, reducing the burden on the budget as well as the risks created by this situation. out. To solve this problem, it is necessary to develop specific and scientific criteria about the job position, evaluate and screen out individuals who no longer fit the requirements of the job, and at the same time need to publicize and be transparent in the selection of civil servants and public employees, create conditions for young people with sufficient qualities and capabilities to participate in the state apparatus. Besides, it is necessary to have a plan to foster professional capacity building, periodically evaluate and review to control the quality of human resources of the state apparatus. Having a salary and remuneration policy worthy of the contributions of cadres and civil servants.

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1 https://dantri.com.vn/kinh-doanh/cu-7-lao-dong-phai-nuoi-1-cong-chuc-vien-chuc-va-nguoi-huong-luong-20180919105209 25.htm

2 https://vnexpress.net/goc-nhin/viet-nam-dong-cong-chuc-vien-chuc-nhat-dong-nam-a-3669338.html

4.3. Completing institutions and policies on social justice

First, it is necessary to quickly review the entire system of policies and laws to ensure social equity. Boldly remove the inappropriate policies and legal regulations, at the same time, amend, supplement, and quickly build new policies and laws that reflect the requirements of reality. In particular, it is necessary to focus on urgent issues such as: Perfecting the institution of the socialist-oriented market economy, on the ownership regime, on investment cooperation, on the activities of economic sectors, income distribution, employment, social security, etc. New legal documents must stick to the content of the Party's point of view, undertakings, and policies on social equity, and having feasibility, stability, consistency, and compliance with international law and practice.

Second, supplement and complete the process of building policies and laws, ensuring consistency, rigidness, speed, and efficiency from Programming, drafting, verification, appraisal, and consultation to contribute and then have the policies and legislation ratified and announced. In particular, it is necessary to do well in drafting policies and laws to avoid wasting time when giving comments and discussions. This requires the clarification of the factors of economy, politics, culture, ideology, psychosocial, etc. taking that as a practical basis for policy and law formulation. Besides, there should also be studies to forecast the economic, cultural, and social impacts of policies and laws to be issued. At the same time, it is necessary to estimate the necessary conditions for the implementation of such policies and laws in practice.

Third, delineate the powers and responsibilities of State agencies in the formulation and promulgation of policies and laws, avoid arbitrary and authority violation when formulating and promulgating policies and laws. the law. The clearer the delineation, the easier it is to handle mistakes in policy and law promulgation.

Fourth, to ensure the quality and capacity requirements of the specialized officials in policy and law formulation. This is one of

the decisive factors for improving the efficiency and quality of the institutionalization of the Party's views. Therefore, it is necessary to recruit people with high ethical qualities and professional capabilities, with scientific working methods and passion for the job.

Fifth, expanding democracy in policy and law formulation to ensure social equity. Doing this task well requires perfecting the democratic mechanism to ensure citizens, socio-political organizations, especially the team of scientists have the conditions to discuss and comment on draft policies and laws of the State. This will help exploit the intellectual power of the people in the formulation of policies and laws, minimizing the local situation of interests of ministries, branches, and groups. What's more, it creates consensus, consensus, and self-compliance when policies and laws are enacted.

An increase in exchanging and learning experiences of developed countries, and at the same time use effectively a contingent of foreign experts in policy and law formulation.

Sixthly, strictly regulating the responsibilities of agencies and leaders in law propagation, dissemination, and education, as well as funding sources for such activities.

4.4. Improve the efficiency of state power control, prevent and root out corruption

State power control is understood as all activities of reviewing, monitoring, evaluating, and applying measures to prevent and eliminate risks and misconduct of the agency and\] staff in the organization and exercise of state power, to ensure that state power is organized and implemented for the right purposes and achieved high efficiency [1]. The control of state power is performed by many entities, through forms and means with different control contents and procedures at different times. In particular, it is necessary to effectively control power

1 Lê Văn Thao, Lê Hữu Ái (2019), *Lý luận về nhà nước pháp quyền* (*Theory of the state's law)*, Danang Publishing House, Đà Nẵng, page 69.

between the legislature, executive, and judiciary, between the central and local levels; improve control efficiency of the people, civil society organizations, of the media.

Reality has shown that, if state power is not strictly controlled, the possibility of "power corruption" will be very high, leading to dictatorships, authoritarianism, and corruption.

In Vietnam, in recent years, despite many efforts, power corruption is still serious, the act of abusing one's authority to conduct appropriation of property and money of the State, organizations, and citizens are causing frustrations among the people, reducing the people's trust in the Party's leadership and State management. The severity of corruption in Vietnam was ranked 107 out of 180 countries surveyed by Transparency International (TI) (2017) [1], higher than Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Brunei, and Malaysia. China, Thailand, Indonesia, etc. To overcome this problem, we need:

- Fulfill our job in propaganda and education about the importance of the fight against corruption, creating consensus, the synergy of both the political system and the entire population to root out corruption. In particular, it is necessary to uphold the pioneering and exemplary spirit of cadres and party members from the central to local levels and educate about public ethical standards for cadres and civil servants. Along with strictly handling corrupt acts, we must also commend and reward examples of integrity and merit in the fight against corruption.

- Continue to develop, supplement, and perfect the system of policies and laws on anti-corruption and waste. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the feasibility of the law, ensuring the conditions for effective law enforcement in practice, especially the Law on Prevention of Corruption and Waste, as well as the Law on Thrift Practice. , Inspection Law, Auditing Law, Grassroots Democracy Regulation, etc.

1 https://towardstransparency.vn/vi/chi-so-cam-nhan-tham-nhung

- Improve the quality and efficiency of operations, as well as empower more specialized anti-corruption and waste agencies in departments such as inspection, audit, police, Procuracy, so these agencies can do a good job of providing special support to the central agency in charge of fighting corruption and waste. Enhance the role and responsibility of the Party committees, Party organizations, authorities, heads of agencies, organizations, and units in the prevention of corruption and waste.

- Improve the institution of controlling power in the apparatus of the Party and State, ensuring that power must be controlled by power. This requires building clear, coherent, and transparent regulations on the functions and powers of state agencies.

- Accelerate the completion and strict implementation of the regulations on the property declaration of officials and civil servants. Ensure transparency and publicity on income and personal property (including relatives) of officials and civil servants, especially at the leadership levels.

- Improve the quality of inspection, examination, supervision, and strictly handle corruption and waste cases and first of all, emerging corruption and waste cases. Along with the inspection, examination, and supervision from the state apparatus, it is necessary to promote the role of external supervision of the people, of the mass organizations. This requires improving the capacity, sense of responsibility, and self-awareness of the people in combating manifestations and behaviors of corruption and wasting public resources, and improving the mechanism of protecting and honoring the contributions of the people in this struggle.

- Improving the management of cadres and civil servants. Ensuring the rigidity, democracy, and transparency from recruitment, planning, appointment, mobilization to staff rotation. It is necessary to promptly capture and verify information from social public opinion on leading personnel and managers at all levels as a basis for the appointment or

dismissal of key positions in the state apparatus. Completing the policy of salary, bonus, and material and spiritual remuneration, ensuring that cadres and civil servants enjoy commensurate with their contributions to public service activities.

Also, the media plays a very important role in providing accurate and timely information on the State's activities to the people, contributing to the implementation of social criticism to promote the positive elements of civil society in power control, prevention of corruption and waste. Therefore, it is necessary to create a favorable legal corridor for the press and the media to do their role well.

5. Conclusion

The market economy associated with international integration is providing a favorable opportunity for capacity building, improving the quality of material and spiritual life for the people, but also poses many challenges in settling interests harmoniously between individuals, social classes, and ensure social equity. To be able to take advantage of opportunities and successfully realize the goal of building a new society with rich people, a strong, democratic, fair, and civilized country, requires the whole political system, especially the state, and the people's power apparatus, to better perform its functions and duties, control the power of the State, only after that will that power be directed to the people, for the sake of the people in a substantive way.

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THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE OF VIETNAM IN RESOLVING THE ISSUES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE TODAY

Le Thi Thanh Ha[1]

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam state is a public state based on the main means of production (which is an objective condition for economic equality), on the other hand, the ruling class. Politics is the working class. It is the working class, whose interests are fundamentally consistent with the interests of the masses of the people.Therefore, the Vietnamese state has an objective basis to solve problems of fairness in society. .

However, in the period before doi reform, for various reasons, Vietnam had to suffer a deviation in the implementation of the state's functions, especially the social function to deal with problems of social justice. At that time, Vietnam attributed the diverse functions of the state to the class function, overemphasizing the class, the politics of the State and little interest in researching the social and social functions gorvernment's. Bring the State model in the period of war and impose it in the peaceful period. Applying the management form in the Soviet

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Union to Vietnam in a mechanical stereotype, simple conception of the function of the State, especially the social function of the State. For that, the deeper the intervention the State can, the more specific the better, the more the state "the more, the better". In other words, the Stateization of all areas of social life, from there, leads to the state apparatus organization is cumbersome, heavy, inefficient, ineffective in its functions and duties mine. While there are issues that the State needs to intervene, direct and resolve such as social justice, they have not been given due attention, thus, they cannot stimulate the dynamism and creativity of the people. In many places, inequality and social inequality are also encountered.

In fact, the State in this period is a system of bureaucracy and administrative orders. The State manages the economy and society by planning mechanism, focusing on subsidies leading to bureaucracy, lack of democracy and operates mainly by directives, orders, and administration. Nominally, the distribution at that time was by labor, but in essence it was an average subsidy, equal to the State's level for all members of society. That management mechanism of the State is only suitable for the wartime economy, not suitable for the peaceful period. With such management, it does not make the socio-economic development but in fact inhibits economic development and the society falls into a state of injustice, people lack revolutionary enthusiasm as well as motivation striving for, even at risk of socio-political instability. This shows that, when the State does not perform well its social functions such as solving problems of social justice, it is difficult for society to realize progress goals, even instability and instability to survive and grow.

In any age, social justice is the goal and the driving force for all people and government to work towards. However, this is a standard value and concept, depending on different conceptions of each class, country, and people. Each different era will have different standards of equity and it is only suitable for certain socio-economic development conditions of the era and of that nation. fairness of rights and obligations

of citizens in society in terms of distribution of production, distribution of income, survival opportunities, development and conditions for the realization of desires and concepts. Implementation of social justice is associated with equality, creating opportunities for each citizen to maximize their capabilities in the existence and development of society as well as the right to enjoy their products. Accordingly, social justice is the factor that directly stimulates material benefits, encourages all citizens to work hard to participate in building the prosperity of society in the most voluntary way. In that sense, social equity becomes the driving force of socio-economic development in particular and social progress in general. Unjust to a certain extent inevitably causes a negative reaction from the victims, the injured and the sustainable development of the society. Inequality also generates negative effects on the part of those who benefit too much under the law of diminishing efficiency, which ultimately limits the country's sustainable development.

Entering the renovation period, the VI Congress of the Party had for the first time a change in the perception of social justice. So, social justice is officially included in the political report. At the VII Congress, the Party affirmed: "Harmonious combination between economic development and cultural and social development; between economic growth and social progress and equity; between the material and spiritual life of the people. Considering economic development as the basis and premise for the implementation of social policies, good implementation of social policies is the driving force for economic development"[1]. Thus, right from the early years of renovation, our Party has determined to bring social justice on a par with economic development. At the same time, always maintain the relationship between economic development and social progress and equity. Economic growth is the basis for the realization of the task of social justice and social justice is the driving force for development. economic development. Therefore, at the midterm National Conference of the VII term (1-1994), our Party clearly

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 7th National Congress*, The Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1991, p.73.

defined: "Economic growth must be associated with social progress and justice in every step of development"[1]. At the VIII Congress, the Communist Party of Vietnam affirmed more specifically: "Harmonious combination between economic growth and fair implementation, social progress, creating a strong change in solving problems social pressing, repelling negative, injustice and social evils"[2]. The X Congress of the Party has shown more deeply the relationship between economic growth and social justice, considering this as one of the basic contents of the socialist orientation: "Making progress and public by society right in every step and development policy; Economic growth goes hand in hand with the development of culture, health, education ..., well solving social problems for the sake of human development. The distribution regime is mainly based on labor results, economic efficiency, and at the same time by capital contribution and other resources and through social welfare"[3]. The country building platform in the period of transition to socialism (Supplementary and development in 2011) at the XI Congress, our Party once again emphasized: "closely and rationally combine economic development. with social and cultural development, realizing social progress and equity right in each step and policy; harmoniously develop material and spiritual life"[4].

Thus, throughout the views of the Party, all directly or indirectly the economic development goals associated with social justice. The ultimate purpose of economic growth is to serve social justice and comprehensive human development. And the goal of the socialist revolution is, after all, to unleash the most positive cultural values in

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 7th Mid – term National Congress*, The Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1994, p.73.

2 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 8th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 1996, p.205.

3 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 10th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2007, p.77.

4 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2011, p.79.

human society, social justice and social progress. The Party's notions on: "Economic growth is associated with social progress and justice in every step of development" and "Realizing social progress and equity in each step and policy. development "shows that economic development (reflected first in GDP growth) to the extent to which social progress and social justice must be made, cannot be separated from these two processes. Specifically, it is impossible to wait until the economy reaches a high level of development to realize social justice, even more cannot sacrifice social justice to pursue economic growth simply to satisfy. The selfish need of the privileged and privileged minority in society, but forgetting the practical benefits of the majority of working population - who make up economic development. In other words, economic growth in Vietnam is the foundation and premise for the realization of social justice. In contrast, the implementation of social equity is an important factor and condition to promote and ensure high and sustainable economic growth.

Along with the renewal of views on social justice, from the VI Congress of the Party, we have affirmed: "implementing a major reform of the organizational apparatus of State agencies"[1], because there must be reforms on new functions, the State apparatus can well solve the problem of social justice. For socialist countries like Vietnam, the combination of economic growth with social justice in each step of the country's development becomes more and more necessary. Because it is an objective requirement, not only for economic growth, but also to ensure the chosen political orientation.

However, after 5 years of implementation, the State has not made significant changes, some aspects have not gone beyond the old mechanism, so social equity has not had positive changes. From that fact, until the VII National Congress, our Party was aware that: to overcome the shortcomings of the State apparatus, for state agencies to effectively

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 6th National Congress*, The Truth Publishing House, Hanoi, 1986, p.118.

perform social functions, it does not stop. in reform of the apparatus, it is a fundamental renewal of both the organizational institutions and the working mechanism of the State. Therefore, since the VII Congress, Vietnam has become even more determined in reforming the State, especially in reforming the mode of operation of the State. In which the policy of building a socialist rule-of-law state of the people, by the people, for the people is a breakthrough in the Party's political renewal and marks an important milestone in the reform of office. the State's activities in the direction of better serving the social justice mission.

Due to a high determination in State renewal from the VII Congress up to now, the position, role and social functions of the state have changed markedly. The XII Congress has stated: "The role of the State is adjusted to be more suitable with the market mechanism, increasingly promoting democracy in the socio-economic life"[1]. With the system of legal instruments, the State creates a stable legal environment, in order to protect equality between regions and regions of the country, between economic sectors, and actors in production and business. At the same time, a complete and stable legal environment has created an equal "playing field" and "rules of the game" for all members of society to try their best, their talents, ensuring all subjects to develop freely. Besides, through legal instruments, the State has supervised and managed to ensure a healthy competition. Controlling economic activities according to the law, combating all forms of monopoly, preventing nefarious businesses, illegal enrichment, such as fraud in production and business, corruption, smuggling, fraud, ... causing great injustice in society; The State has intervened and regulated the income distribution of all classes and population classes through the system of income tax policies and distribution policies in order to narrow the gap between rich and poor in society and improve living standards for all walks of life. It can be said that the State has gradually shifted from the role of a general "patron" for the whole society to "the driver", the person who initiates the

1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2016, p.98.

organization of social activities and is the subject to plan and implement the social policy, including the implementation of social justice.

However, the current implementation of the State's social justice in Vietnam still has a number of shortcomings: the legal policies still have many inconsistent points; resource allocation to the society is not reasonable; income distribution policy, low quality social policy; Implementation of policies on social justice is still embarrassing. There is also confusion between performing an economic function and a social function. For example, a typical feature of social policy in Vietnam after 30 years of doi moi is the activities subsidized and implemented by the State. The state still assumes two functions: both as policy issuer and policy implementer through its apparatus. In many localities, there is a lack of separation between state management and service delivery (government officials both examine the beneficiaries of social assistance and pay benefits). The social policy system is still fragmented, there is no cohesion, the consistency is not high and the coverage is low. The financial source for the implementation of social equity is mainly from the state budget, people are still not aware of their responsibility in implementing social justice, leading to corruption and corruption. corruption, running, running, running crime, running score ... These have become and are becoming obstacles in the implementation of social justice. Therefore, the XII Congress commented: "The effectiveness and efficiency of state management are not high, discipline and discipline are not strict; The State also has a direct, too great loss in the economy. There are still subsidies for asking - for"[1]. In many cases, the State has interfered with the functions of other subjects, while many of its tasks have not been resolved in a timely and effective manner.

On the basis of the Party's point of view on the implementation of social justice, at the same time with its functions, the State of Vietnam now needs to perform well the following tasks:

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1 The Communist Party of Vietnam, *Documents of the 12th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2016, p.100.

Firstly: The state plays the role of orientation, building and perfecting economic institutions; creating a fair, transparent and healthy competition environment; to use the State's tools, policies and resources to direct and regulate the economy, promote production and business, and protect natural resources and the environment; development of cultural and social fields. Accordingly, the State "must change strongly from the state that governs the economy to a state of creation". The State needs to promote its strength of creating an institutional framework and all other necessary conditions so that each citizen can easily do business and seek happiness to create an environment for people to do business more and more easily such as: freedom of business, freedom of property, ownership, use rights ... Transparency must be enhanced, Contracts must be respected and protected, disputes must be resolved quickly and effectively. In addition, an indispensable condition in the role of the state here is to ensure macroeconomic stability.

Secondly: The State uses its management functions and regulatory tools as well as mechanisms and policies to operate the economy, adjust social equity goals in each economic project, progress, step by step, development policy. Vietnam is developing a socialist-oriented market economy, but not synchronous and modern, so recently it has revealed many flaws and shortcomings. Accordingly, in addition to the inevitable development of the current society, there is an income disparity between urban and rural areas, the rich and poor divide is increasing, many vulnerable objects appear. Therefore, the state should have measures to redistribute social wealth to limit this differentiation, maintain stability, avoid conflicts and conflicts in society. In addition, the State needs to calculate to have policies to implement the national income distribution in the most appropriate way in the possible conditions, to realize economic growth in association with improving the cultural and spiritual life of people.

In income, the State uses the following measures: regulating the increase in income through subsidies and incentives for people with meritorious services to the country; policies towards the vulnerable

and vulnerable in the society such as the elderly, helpless orphans and disabled people; regulating income reduction through tax tools for high-income earners: such as personal income tax; Corporate income tax. The tax adjustment will contribute to redistribution of a part of social income.

In addressing social security, the State has a decisive role in improving public welfare, eradicating hunger, reducing poverty, solving problems of employment, health, health insurance, wages. retirement, difficult benefits.

Thirdly: Combine harmoniously between "stateization" and "socialization", combine the State and people working together in solving problems of social justice and in essential areas such as economics, culture, education and training, environmental protection ... Under the current situation, the implementation of the State's social justice must be perceived and implemented according to new thinking, new mechanisms and modes and how to refresh. On the basis of clearly delineating subsidies and social investment, the State cannot invest or subsidize pervasively, unilaterally, monopolize itself as the sole supplier, with sole responsibility in the implementation of social functions, but needing appropriate mechanisms and policies to exploit all potentials, mobilize all resources from the people and all economic sectors, to implement the policy of socialization, combining the state and the people work together to solve problems of social justice.

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Trình bày bìa: NGUYỄN NGỌC ANH
Đối tác liên kết: VIỆN TRIẾT HỌC

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE CONTEXT OF MARKET ECONOMY: INTERNATIONAL AND VIETNAMESE EXPERIENCES

Mã số: 2L - 255 ĐH2020
In 300 bản, khổ 16x24 cm tại Công ty CP In và TM Ngọc Hưng
Địa chỉ: Số 296 đường Phúc Diễn, tổ dân phố số 1, Xuân Phương, Nam Từ Liêm, Hà Nội
Số xác nhận ĐKXB: 4963 - 2020/CXB,IPH/04 - 361/ĐHQGHN, ngày 24/11/2020
Quyết định xuất bản số: 1617 LK-XH/QĐ-NXB ĐHQGHN ngày 22/12/2020
In xong và nộp lưu chiểu năm 2021

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG
SOUTHEAST ASIA
HANOI OFFICE

ISBN: 978-604-315-440-5

SÁCH KHÔNG BÁN