

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHNIC POLICY IN ASSOCIATION WITH
NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN
PROVINCE, VIETNAM TODAY**

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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INTRODUCTION

1. The necessity of the Dissertation

In Vietnam, the issue of ethnicity has been identified by the Communist Party as a strategic issue of fundamental importance to the revolutionary cause. The Document of the 7th Plenum of the 9th Party Central Committee affirms, “The issue of ethnicity and national solidarity is a fundamental, long-term strategic issue, and at the same time, an urgent matter in the current Vietnamese revolution.” This view stems from the fact that most ethnic minorities live in mountainous, remote, border, and island regions-areas of vital significance in terms of economy, politics, national defense, security, and international cooperation.

The implementation of ethnic policies in Vietnam currently spans a wide range of areas, including economy, politics, culture-society, national defense-security, and the environment. Among these, implementing ethnic policies in association with ensuring national defense and security holds particular importance due to the spatial characteristics and vast geographical scope of ethnic minority and mountainous regions in Vietnam. National defense and security are domains inherently laden with complex, unstable, and unpredictable factors-especially those related to border security, non-traditional security, and cybersecurity.

In recent years, Nghe An province has made encouraging progress in implementing ethnic minority policies in tandem with ensuring national defense and security. The economy has seen positive developments; the material and spiritual life of the people-particularly in remote, isolated, and border areas-has improved; infrastructure has been gradually enhanced; socio-cultural life is preserved; and national defense and security have been strengthened, creating a solid strategic posture, particularly in border regions.

However, in reality, the implementation of ethnic minority policies in association with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province-especially in western localities bordering Laos-still faces many limitations and challenges. The population continues to experience considerable hardship; educational attainment remains low; cultural institutions built through investment have not been effectively utilized and have not attracted adequate attention from ethnic minority communities; and national defense and security still harbor instability and unpredictability. This reality has negatively affected efforts to ensure national defense and security,

particularly in ethnic minority and mountainous areas. For these urgent and practical reasons, the doctoral candidate has selected the topic ***“Implementation of Ethnic Policy in Association with National Defense and Security Assurance in Nghe An Province, Vietnam Today”*** as the subject of the doctoral dissertation in Scientific Socialism.

2. Purpose and research tasks of the Dissertation

2.1. Research purposes

Based on clarifying theoretical and practical issues related to the implementation of ethnic minority policies in association with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province, the dissertation proposes specific requirements and solutions to enhance the effectiveness of this implementation in the current context.

2.2. Research mission

Provide an overview of relevant research on the dissertation topic, thereby identifying specific areas that need clarification.

Develop a theoretical framework on the implementation of ethnic minority policies in association with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province today.

Evaluate the current state of implementation and analyze key emerging issues that must be addressed.

Propose a set of directive requirements and fundamental solutions for effectively implementing ethnic minority policies in association with national defense and security in Nghe An province today.

3. Subject and scope of research of the Dissertation

3.1. Subject

The implementation of ethnic minority policies in association with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province, Vietnam today.

3.2. Research scope

Content Scope: The dissertation addresses theoretical discussions and practical evaluations of the implementation of ethnic minority policies associated with national defense and security in Nghe An province, including the implementation of ethnic policies linked to defense-security capabilities, defense-security forces, defense-security posture in Nghe An, and the struggle to defeat hostile forces that exploit ethnic issues to undermine the Party, the State, and the socialist regime in Vietnam.

Geographical Scope: The research is limited to Nghe An province in Vietnam, with a focus on districts and communes with large ethnic minority populations and distinct characteristics in implementing ethnic policies in conjunction with ensuring national defense and security, such as Que Phong, Quy Chau, Quy Hop, Ky Son, Con Cuong, and Thanh Chuong districts.

Time Scope: The dissertation uses materials from 2015 to the present, aligning with the 18th and 19th Party Congress terms of the provincial Party Committee (2015-2020 and 2020-2025). This timeframe provides a basis for a comprehensive evaluation and for proposing solutions to enhance future implementation.

4. Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Dissertation

* *Theoretical Foundations:* The dissertation is based on the theoretical system of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's Thought, and the guidelines, viewpoints, and policies of the Communist Party of Vietnam on ethnicity, ethnic issues in relation to national defense and security, and the protection of the Fatherland.

* *Research Methods:*

The dissertation is conducted within the methodological framework of dialectical materialism and historical materialism of Marxism-Leninism and employs the following basic research methods:

Logical-historical method

Analytical and synthetic methods

Statistical and comparative methods

Information gathering methods

In addition, the author applies other specific research methods to address the dissertation's tasks.

5. New Scientific Contributions of the Dissertation

First, based on the research issue, the author establishes a theoretical framework for implementing ethnic minority policies in association with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province today.

Second, the dissertation clarifies the current situation of implementing these policies in Nghe An and, on that basis, generalizes and analyzes key issues that must be resolved to improve effectiveness in the future.

Third, the requirements and solution groups proposed in the dissertation are innovative and feasible for Nghe An province and may serve as references for other localities.

6. Significance of the Dissertation

Scientific Significance: The research findings make a meaningful contribution to Vietnam's social sciences and humanities, especially to the scientific theory concerning the relationship between addressing ethnic issues and ensuring national defense and security, maintaining political and social stability, and protecting the socialist Vietnamese Fatherland.

Practical Significance: The findings can serve as a useful reference for party committees, governments, and mass organizations at various levels in Nghe An province to effectively implement ethnic policies in association with national defense and security, while also contributing to nationwide political stability.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters, eight sections, a list of references, a list of the author's published works, and appendices.

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH ON THE DISSERTATION TOPIC

1.1. NOTABLE RESEARCH WORKS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC

1.1.1. Theoretical Studies on Ethnic Policy and Its Implementation in Association with National Defense and Security

Phan Van Hung (2015): *"New Issues in Ethnic Relations and Ethnic Policies in Vietnam Today"*; Giang Seo Phu (2016), in the book *"Theoretical and Practical Issues in State Management of Ethnic Affairs Over 30 Years of Renovation"*; Le Ngoc Thang (2011): Monograph, *"Building and Perfecting the Ethnic Policy System in Vietnam"*; Nguyen An Ninh (2019): *"State Management of Ethnic Affairs-International Experiences"*; Nguyen Lam Thanh (2021): *"Several Issues on Ethnic Policy in Vietnam: Theory and Practice"*; Nguyen Anh Tuan (2020): *"Research on Special Policies for Socio-Economic Development in Association with National Defense and Security in Ethnic Minority Border Areas of Vietnam"* (National-level research project); Seliverstova Anna Olegovna (2017): *"Effective Technologies for Managing Territorial Ethnic Conflicts in the Post-Soviet Space (Case Study of the Armed Conflict in the Karabakh Region)"*; Eryso Phantivong (2018): Doctoral Dissertation *"Implementation of Ethnic Policies in Northern Provinces of the Lao People's Democratic Republic Today"*.

1.1.2. Empirical Studies on the Implementation of Ethnic Policy in Association with National Defense and Security

Hoang Minh Do - Le Van Loi (chief editors) (2014), in the book: *"Ten Years of Implementing the 7th Plenum Resolution of the 9th Central Committee on Ethnic and Religious Affairs-Theoretical and Practical Issues"*; Le Van Loi (2018): *"Addressing Ethnic and Religious Issues in Vietnam in the Current Period"*; Tran Nhat Nam (2018): Doctoral Dissertation: *"The Awareness of Border Protection Among Ethnic Peoples in the Northern Border Region of Vietnam Today"*; Vu Truong Giang (2018): *"Cross-border Migration of Ethnic Minorities in the Northwest Region of Vietnam"*; Nguyen Quoc Doan (2023): *"Preserving and Promoting Ethnic Cultural Identity to Contribute to Socio-Economic Development, Strengthening and Consolidating National Defense and Security in Lang Son Province"*; Phan Thanh Doai (2023): Article *"Experiences in Mobilizing Ethnic Minorities in Nghe An Province to Participate in Socio-Economic Development and Ensure National Defense and Security"*; ...

1.1.3. Studies on Perspectives and Solutions for the Implementation of Ethnic Policy in Association with National Defense and Security in Vietnam Today

Giang Seo Phu (2016): *"Theoretical and Practical Issues in State Management of Ethnic Affairs Over 30 Years of Renovation"*; Nguyen Ngoc Dung (2018): Doctoral Dissertation *"The Role of Border Guard Officers Assigned to Border Communes in Building the Grassroots Political System Today"*; Tran Cao Nguyen (2017): Doctoral Dissertation: *"Leadership by the Nghe An Provincial Party Committee in Building the Cadre Contingent of Ethnic Minorities in the Political System of Mountainous Districts from 1996 to 2015"*; Central Economic Commission – Central Theoretical Council - Nghe An Provincial Party Committee (2020): Scientific Workshop Proceedings: *"Socio-Economic Development, Ensuring National Defense and Security in Nghe An Province to 2030, Vision to 2045"*; ...

1.2. SUMMARY OF THE VALUE OF REVIEWED STUDIES FOR THE DISSERTATION AND ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

1.2.1. Summary of the Value of Reviewed Studies for the Dissertation

First, theoretical reference value from studies on ethnicity and ethnic policy implementation

Theoretical issues in research works in general are approached quite richly and diversely when delving into the connotation of basic concepts of ethnicity in the

sense of nation - ethnicity, associated with the subject of ethnic minorities in our country. In those concepts, the authors have had different approaches, from many different perspectives on the position and role of ethnic minorities. The concepts are also studied and applied from the theory of Marxism - Leninism, Ho Chi Minh thought and the viewpoint of the Communist Party of Vietnam on ethnicity.

Second, reference value from studies on national defense and security

These studies outline Party viewpoints, guidelines, and state policies regarding the position, role, and strategic significance of defense and security in national development-particularly under complex and unpredictable global circumstances in recent years.

Third, reference value from studies on the implementation of ethnic policies in association with national defense and security in Vietnam

The overarching goal of implementing ethnic policies is to comprehensively develop the lives of people in ethnic minority and mountainous areas, especially ethnic minorities in border areas who are still facing many difficulties. In particular, the process of implementing ethnic policies associated with ensuring national defense and security is one of the objective practical requirements. Ensuring the strengthening of potential and strength of national defense and security is a decisive condition for effectively implementing ethnic policies in the cause of national renewal.

Fourth, reference value from studies on the current state of ethnic policy implementation in Vietnam and in Nghe An province

Existing studies affirm that, with the Party and State's attention and policy priorities for ethnic minority and mountainous areas, the implementation of ethnic policies linked to national defense and security has achieved significant results. Focusing on Nghe An province, these studies provide a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of Party guidelines and State policies, offering practical and strategic recommendations to enhance policy effectiveness in the province's western districts.

Fifth, reference value from studies on influencing factors on ethnic policy implementation in association with defense and security

From the perspective of factors influencing the implementation of ethnic policies in relation to national defense and security potential, existing research highlights the contextual and situational characteristics shaping policy outcomes. These include natural conditions, socio-economic development levels of ethnic minority and

mountainous regions, and broader contextual dynamics such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, digital transformation, global political-security trends, and external acts of sabotage. These insights provide a foundational basis for the thesis to examine influencing factors in the case of Nghe An province.

Sixth, reference value from studies on perspectives and solutions for ethnic policy implementation in association with defense and security

These studies offer practical and theoretical recommendations to strengthen defense capacity and strategic posture through ethnic policy. Some also suggest region-specific strategies applicable to the Northwest, North Central Coast, and Central Highlands.

1.2.2. Issues the Dissertation Needs to Address

First, Clarify concepts related to ethnic policy, the implementation of ethnic policy, national defense and security, and ensuring defense and security in Vietnam.

Second, Examine the content, actors, and methods of implementing ethnic policy in conjunction with ensuring defense and security in Vietnam in general and in Nghe An in particular.

Third, Identify factors influencing the implementation of ethnic policy in conjunction with defense and security in Nghe An today.

Fourth, Investigate and assess the current state of ethnic policy implementation in association with national defense and security in Nghe An, and analyze the underlying causes.

Fifth, Identify key challenges in implementing ethnic policy in association with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An today.

Sixth, Propose fundamental requirements and solutions to improve the effectiveness of implementing ethnic policy in conjunction with national defense and security in Nghe An today.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL ISSUES ON IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN PROVINCE, VIETNAM TODAY

2.1. CONCEPTS, CONTENT, STAKEHOLDERS, AND METHODS OF IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN PROVINCE TODAY

2.1.1. Fundamental Concepts

2.1.1.1. Concept of Ethnic Policy and Its Implementation

**** On Ethnic Policy:***

Currently, ethnicity is used in two basic senses: Nation and Ethnicity. Based on the purpose and research tasks of the topic, the thesis approaches "ethnicity" mainly in the sense of ethnicity, because the ethnic policy system in Vietnam is built mainly towards the beneficiaries being ethnic minorities, and people living in ethnic minority and mountainous areas.

It can be conceived that: Ethnic policy is the realization of the system of viewpoints and policies of the Party through the policies and laws of the State expressed through legal documents, in accordance with the goals and tasks of national development in each revolutionary period, aiming at synchronous and comprehensive development in all aspects for ethnic minorities, ethnic minority and mountainous areas on the principles of equality, solidarity, respect, and mutual assistance for development among regions and ethnic groups nationwide.

**** On the Implementation of Ethnic Policy:***

Vietnam's system of ethnic viewpoints and policies - particularly during the Renovation period-demonstrates coherence and comprehensiveness, grounded in the creative application of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought to national realities. These principles are institutionalized through Party resolutions and State legal frameworks, implemented responsively to meet the needs of each historical stage. From this theoretical basis, ethnic policy implementation is understood as the translation of the Party's guidelines and State laws into practice - via resolutions, programs, and action plans, supported by communication, clear delegation of responsibilities, and the mobilization of financial and human resources to ensure feasibility and effectiveness.

2.1.1.2. Concept of National Defense-Security and Its Assurance in Vietnam

**** On National Defense and Security:***

According to Article 2, Clause 1 of the 2018 Law on National Defense of Vietnam:

“National defense is the cause of safeguarding the country using the comprehensive strength of the entire nation, in which military strength is essential, and the People's Armed Forces are the core.” Meanwhile, Clause 1, Article 3 of the 2004 Law on National Security defines: “National security is the stability and sustainable development of the socialist regime and the Socialist Republic of

Vietnam and the inviolability of the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of the Fatherland.”

Thus, national defense and security are interrelated, dialectically connected, and inseparable fields. They reflect a country’s strength and its ability to respond to internal and external threats, thereby safeguarding its political regime and the safety of its people-contributing to the building of a peaceful, stable, and prosperous world.

** On Ensuring National Defense and Security:*

Ensuring national defense and security requires a close, indivisible integration between defense and security efforts to build potential forces and strategic postures aimed at safeguarding the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of the nation. It also entails protecting the Party, the State, the People, and the socialist regime; maintaining political stability and social order; countering hostile threats; and promoting a peaceful, stable, and prosperous environment both domestically and internationally. Central to this mission is the strength of the people as a whole, with the People’s Armed Forces at the core, under the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the State’s unified management.

2.1.1.3. Concept of Implementing Ethnic Policy in Association with National Defense and Security Assurance in Nghe An Province Today

It can be conceived that: Implementing ethnic policies associated with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province is the process of implementing the Party's viewpoints and policies, the State's legal policies on ethnicity for ethnic minorities in close connection, inseparable from ensuring and strengthening the potential, posture, and national defense and security forces in the province.

2.1.2. Content of Implementing Ethnic Policies in Association with National Defense and Security Assurance in Nghe An Province Today

2.1.2.1. Implementing Comprehensive Ethnic Policies across Various Fields to Build Potential for National Defense and Security Assurance in Nghe An Province

According to the Ministry of National Defense of Vietnam, defense potential refers to the capacity in terms of human resources, material resources, finances, and spirit-both domestically and internationally-that can be mobilized for defense missions.

- Implementing ethnic policy in political and ideological fields to build defense-security potential in Nghe An:

In Nghe An, the political and ideological potential is reflected in the historical and cultural traditions, in the political awareness and mettle, the love for the homeland and country, the national spirit, the will to be self-reliant and self-reliant of the people of all ethnic groups in the province, in which in ethnic minority and mountainous areas, ethnic minorities play the most important and direct role.

- Implementing ethnic policy in economic development to build material potential for defense-security in Nghe An:

Thoroughly grasping his viewpoint, ensuring economic potential in ethnic minority areas in implementing ethnic policies must be placed in relation to ensuring potential, position, and national defense and security forces. That is the process of awakening and promoting local potential and advantages, creating increasingly strong economic potential, constantly improving the material life of people in ethnic minority and mountainous areas. This is the most decisive material basis and premise for implementing ethnic policies associated with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province today.

- Implementing ethnic policy in cultural and social fields to enhance defense-security potential in Nghe An:

Thoroughly grasping the Party's viewpoints and implementing ethnic policies on culture and society in association with ensuring national defense and security in ethnic minority and mountainous areas in Nghe An province is to preserve and promote the values imbued with the identity of localities and ethnic minorities, to arouse the soft power of culture, so that culture is truly an endogenous resource, a strong driving force to promote economic, cultural and social development in association with ensuring national defense and security.

- Implementing an ethnic policy on ecological environmental protection to support defense-security in Nghe An:

Thoroughly grasping the Party's viewpoint, the good implementation of this content in the process of implementing ethnic policies will contribute significantly to the realization of sustainable development goals, and thereby create social consensus among the people as well as in the ethnic minority communities in the province.

- Implementing ethnic policy in the military and security fields to strengthen the defense-security potential in Nghe An:

Ensuring the security potential of ethnic minority and mountainous areas involves fostering internal strength within these regions, thereby unlocking and enhancing

their socio-economic development potential—both locally and province-wide. It contributes to improving living standards, narrowing development gaps with lowland and urban areas, and strengthening the role, position, and leadership capacity of Party committees, especially at the grassroots level. This process also helps to cultivate patriotism and national defense awareness among ethnic minorities, while promoting public engagement in safeguarding the national defense and security potential of the province and the country as a whole.

2.1.2.2. Implementing Ethnic Policies in Association with the Construction of National Defense and Security Forces in Nghe An Province

Ensuring the development of the all-people national defense forces in ethnic minority and mountainous areas of the province. Ensuring the building of the Vietnam People's Army and the militia and self-defense forces in ethnic minority and mountainous regions. Ensuring the development of the people's public security forces in these areas.

2.1.2.3. Implementing Ethnic Policies in Association with the Construction of a Firm People's National Defense and Security Posture in Nghe An Province

Ensuring the establishment of a solid “people's heart and mind” posture in ethnic minority and mountainous areas in the province. Implementing ethnic policies for socio-economic development is closely linked with national defense and security assurance in Nghe An Province. Ensuring the construction of a strong provincial defensive zone in ethnic minority and mountainous regions. Ensuring the integration of the all-people defense posture with the people's security posture in these areas.

2.1.2.4. Implementing Ethnic Policies to Contribute to the Struggle against Hostile Forces Exploiting Ethnic Issues in Nghe An Province

Ethnic minorities in Nghe An primarily reside in the complex mountainous terrain, which holds strategic importance not only for the province's socio-economic and defense-security development but also for the entire country. In particular, ethnic minorities and mountainous regions in Western Nghe An border the Lao People's Democratic Republic, which further increases their significance in national security.

2.1.3. Stakeholders and Methods for Implementing Ethnic Policies in Association with National Defense and Security in Nghe An Province Today

2.1.3.1. Subjects implementing ethnic policies associated with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province today

- The political system at all levels, including:

Party Committees at the provincial, district, and commune levels, through their leadership roles;

State administrative authorities through the management role of People's Committees at all levels;

The Vietnam Fatherland Front and *mass political and social organizations* across the province.

- The people.

- The armed forces, specifically:

The Vietnam People's Army stationed in the area, consisting of

i) the combat force; ii) the political working force; iii) the labor and production force;

The People's Public Security force in Nghe An, which plays a core role in the people's armed forces in safeguarding security and public order. This force is of particular importance in ensuring security in ethnic minority and mountainous areas and in combating crime and legal violations both locally and throughout the province.

2.1.3.2. Methods of Implementation

First, ensure coordination among member organizations within the political system to simultaneously promote socio-economic development and maintain national defense and security, particularly in ethnic minority, mountainous, and border areas.

Second, fostering cooperation between the political system and the stationed armed forces, along with the active participation of the people, in building and consolidating the all-people national defense posture, the people's security posture, and the "people's heart and mind" posture.

Third, combining the formal governance mechanisms of the political system with informal and community-based methods to effectively implement ethnic policies in association with national defense and security assurance.

Fourth, integrating public communication and training programs with the content of ethnic policy implementation and national defense-security education.

Fifth, developing and replicating exemplary models of socio-economic development that are closely associated with ensuring national defense and security.

2.2. CHARACTERISTICS AND INFLUENCING FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY IN NGHE AN PROVINCE TODAY

2.2.1. Characteristics of implementing ethnic policies associated with national defense and security in Nghe An province today

First, implementation takes place in areas with diverse and complex natural terrain, holding strategic importance for national defense and security.

Second, the province features a diverse ethnic composition, varying levels of development, and scattered population distribution.

Third, Nghe An has a rich historical and cultural tradition and is known as the cradle of revolutionary struggles in Vietnam.

Fourth, implementation is significantly influenced by traditional social structures, ethnic-religious relations, and complex inter-ethnic and cross-border relationships.

2.2.2. Factors affecting the implementation of ethnic policies associated with ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An province today

2.2.2.1. Guidelines and Policies of the Party and State, and of Nghe An Province

In Vietnam, the party's viewpoints and guidelines on ethnic affairs and ethnic policy implementation constitute a crucial part of the state's policy system. These must ensure effectiveness, efficiency, and appropriateness. Therefore, in practice, well-formulated and contextually appropriate Party guidelines and State policies are the most decisive factors in the successful implementation of ethnic policies.

2.2.2.2. Quality, Effectiveness, and Efficiency of Political System Operations at All Levels in Nghe An

In recent years, the quality and role of the political system-particularly the grassroots political system in ethnic minority and mountainous areas of Nghe An -

have witnessed significant innovation and progress. This system increasingly affirms its substantial role in all aspects of economic, political, cultural, social, defense, and security life.

2.2.2.3. Globalization, International Integration, and the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The strong impacts of globalization, international integration, and the Fourth Industrial Revolution offer both opportunities and challenges. On the positive side, if agencies, organizations, and citizens effectively harness new scientific and technological achievements in production and development, they can create favorable conditions for enhancing the potential, forces, and posture of national defense and security.

2.2.2.4. Hostile Forces' Sabotage Activities

In the western mountainous region of Nghe An, hostile elements continuously seek to exploit ethnic and religious issues to undermine the Party's guidelines and the State's policies. Their actions aim to divide national unity and destabilize the political and social environment. These forces often exaggerate or distort incidents in densely populated areas to incite unrest and sow instability.

Chapter 3

THE CURRENT SITUATION OF IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN PROVINCE: CAUSES AND ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

3.1. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF IMPLEMENTING ETHNIC POLICIES IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN PROVINCE, VIETNAM

3.1.1. Implementation of ethnic policies in areas that contribute to building national defense and security potential in Nghe An Province

3.1.1.1. Implementation of ethnic policies in the political and ideological spheres to create political and ideological potential for national defense and security assurance in the province

Ensuring political and ideological potential, first and foremost, involves building and strengthening the trust and consensus of all social strata in the leadership of party committees and authorities at all levels in the revolutionary cause.

3.1.1.2. Implementation of ethnic policies in the economic sector to create material potential for national defense and security assurance in the province

A notable highlight in socio-economic development in western Nghe An is the formation of several models involving industrial crop cultivation and large-scale livestock farming associated with the development of the processing industry. Many localities have effectively utilized the potential of hydropower reservoirs, mineral resources, and land to enhance economic efficiency; trade and services have been expanded.

3.1.1.3. Implementation of ethnic policies in the socio-cultural sector to create potential for national defense and security assurance in the province

Although notable results have been achieved, certain limitations persist in practice. In the mountainous districts of Nghe An, the restructuring and planning of residential areas have not only reshaped the rural landscape but also disrupted the traditional spatial-cultural structure of ethnic communities, altering or severing long-standing cultural spaces.

3.1.1.4. Implementation of ethnic policies in the field of ecological environment protection to create potential for national defense and security assurance in the province

In recent years, the implementation of Party and State guidelines and policies on environmental protection within the framework of socio-economic development to ensure national defense and security in Nghe An has produced significant results. Natural resources, ecological environment, and biodiversity-especially in ethnic minority and mountainous areas-have been increasingly protected and used more effectively.

3.1.1.5. Implementation of ethnic policies in the military sector to create potential for national defense and security assurance in the province

In the province-particularly in ethnic minority and mountainous areas-human trafficking activities continue to pose complex challenges. Perpetrators often use schemes such as offering high-paying jobs at companies or promoting a better life abroad to entice and deceive individuals lacking knowledge or driven by the desire to get rich, sending them overseas for prostitution or forced marriages.

3.1.2. Implementation of Ethnic Minority Policies in Conjunction with Strengthening the National Defense and Security Forces in Nghe An Province Today

3.1.2.1. Implementation of Ethnic Minority Policies to Ensure the Formation of an All-People's Defense Force for the Construction and Protection of the Nation in the Province

Currently, in Nghe An, with its vast and rugged terrain, lengthy borders, and underdeveloped infrastructure for information and communications, numerous difficulties and limitations persist. At the same time, hostile and reactionary forces continuously seek to exploit sensitive issues related to ethnicity and religion to infiltrate local communities, incite division, provoke disagreements and tensions within the population, and thereby undermine the strength of national solidarity.

3.1.2.2. Implementation of Ethnic Minority Policies in Conjunction with the Development of the People's Army, the People's Public Security Forces, and the Militia and Self-Defense Forces in the Province

With the motto “Listen to the people, speak so that the people understand, and act to earn the people’s trust,” the Provincial Police have recently intensified the “Skillful Mass Mobilization” movement throughout the entire province, particularly in special areas concerning public security and order. This includes launching a broad-based campaign for national security protection and deploying thousands of officers and soldiers directly to grassroots communities to live, work, and interact with residents (“three togethers”: eating together, living together, and working together), thereby effectively conducting public communication and strengthening local core security personnel.

3.1.3. Implementation of Ethnic Minority Policies to Build and Consolidate a Solid All-People National Defense and People’s Security Posture in Nghe An Province

3.1.3.1. Implementing Ethnic Minority Policies to Ensure the Integration of National Defense and Security with Socio-Economic Development and Vice Versa

The implementation of ethnic minority policies to ensure the integration of national defense and security with socio-economic development and vice versa focuses primarily on poverty reduction. To carry out these tasks, the armed forces of Nghe An have undertaken practical and meaningful actions with local people to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty while promoting gradual development. Notably,

they have effectively implemented programs and projects related to sustainable poverty alleviation efforts.

3.1.3.2. Implementing Ethnic Minority Policies to Ensure the Construction of a Solid All-People National Defense Posture in Tandem with a People's Security Posture

Nghe An has fostered cooperative relations with Laos, particularly in information sharing, criminal monitoring, training and development of human resources, economic and trade cooperation, border protection, and comprehensive development of the Vietnam–Laos border. Issues such as cross-border encroachment, illegal settlement, re-cultivation of opium, and spontaneous migration among the Hmong people have been effectively addressed through bilateral collaboration.

3.1.4. Implementing Ethnic Minority Policies to Build Comprehensive Strength to Counter Hostile and Reactionary Forces in Nghe An Province

In recent years, efforts to build a unified strength to counter the sabotage strategies and tactics of hostile and reactionary forces have contributed to maintaining political and social stability, thereby fostering a favorable environment for comprehensive local development. At the same time, these efforts have promoted national unity and social consensus, thus helping to safeguard national defense and security, especially in ethnic minority and mountainous regions. More complexly, hostile forces have exploited religious issues among ethnic communities to distort and undermine the party's perspectives on ethnic minority policies.

3.2. CAUSES OF THE CURRENT SITUATION AND EMERGING ISSUES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHNIC MINORITY POLICIES IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN PROVINCE

3.2.1. Causes of the Current Situation

3.2.1.1. Causes of Achievements

Firstly, the successes of the national renovation process and the provincial development efforts of Nghe An have laid the foundation for the effective implementation of ethnic minority policies in association with national defense and security.

Secondly, the central government has introduced numerous appropriate and timely guidelines, mechanisms, and policies on ethnic and mountainous affairs that have been rigorously implemented by the Party Committee and the government of Nghe An.

Thirdly, the role of the political system, particularly the grassroots political apparatus, has been pivotal in implementing ethnic minority policies in conjunction with national defense and security across the province.

Fourthly, ethnic minority communities in Nghe An have upheld a strong tradition of solidarity and close ties with Party committees, local authorities, and armed forces. They have actively participated and played a decisive role in the implementation process.

Fifthly, the stationed armed forces, especially those deployed in ethnic minority and mountainous areas, have played a proactive, responsible, and core role in the realization of these policies.

3.2.1.2. Causes of Limitations

Firstly, natural condition-related difficulties and the residential characteristics of mountainous districts in Nghe An continue to pose significant challenges.

Secondly, the adverse impacts of global and domestic political and socio-economic dynamics have affected the effectiveness of policy implementation.

Thirdly, emerging and unpredictable threats to national security and politics—such as new forms of warfare and criminal activity—have added complexity and strain to policy execution.

Fourthly, coordination among various organizations, agencies, and forces remains limited and lacks uniformity.

Fifthly, communication methods and the organization of ethnic minority policy implementation, especially regarding national defense and security, are often superficial and yield limited results.

3.2.2. Emerging Issues in the Implementation of Ethnic Minority Policies in Association with National Defense and Security in Nghe An Province

3.2.2.1. Despite Its Critical and Regular Nature, the Implementation of Ethnic Minority Policies Still Suffers from Weak Awareness, Capacity, and Leadership Among Some Party Committees and Local Authorities

The implementation of ethnic minority policies in association with national defense and security requires every party committee and local authority, particularly at the grassroots level, to fully grasp the party's viewpoints and the state's legal frameworks, as well as specific local programs and plans. Successful implementation hinges on effective communication to raise awareness and consciousness among all

stakeholders and to equip the public with the knowledge and mindset necessary for proactive engagement in the process.

3.2.2.2. Growing Demands in Ethnic Minority and Border Areas Contrast with Low Educational Attainment and Living Standards

The ongoing policy implementation demands tailored and effective approaches to ensure that people from ethnic minorities and residents of ethnic minority and mountainous regions of the province can promptly grasp the Party's policies, state laws, and local programs and initiatives. However, their generally low educational levels and difficult socio-economic conditions hinder policy absorption and engagement.

3.2.2.3. Ethnic Minority Policy Implementation Requires Uniformity and Comprehensiveness, Yet the Existing Policy Framework Remains Inconsistent and Overlapping

In practice, policy assessments reveal that although the mountainous regions of Nghe An cover vast areas, there are no region-specific development policies to stimulate local production or leverage endogenous resources. Despite multiple infrastructure development policies from the party, state, and province, these have not significantly transformed the livelihoods of communities in the western border districts. As a result, gaps in income and living standards between these ethnic minority regions and others persist.

3.2.2.4. Inadequacies in Balancing Stability, Development, and International Integration in Ethnic Minority Policy Implementation in Association with National Defense and Security

To this day, expansionist forces and aggressive nationalism from major powers continue to promote the concept of “ethnic territorial sovereignty” as synonymous with national borders. They argue that territories inhabited by their ethnic groups—whether currently residing in another country or having migrated historically—should belong to their national territory. Such claims pose challenges to maintaining sovereignty and stability, particularly in sensitive ethnic and border areas.

Chapter 4

REQUIREMENTS AND SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN PROVINCE, VIETNAM, IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT

4.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHNIC POLICY IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN PROVINCE, VIETNAM, IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT

4.1.1. The implementation of ethnic policy in association with national defense and security assurance is a strategic, fundamental, and long-term issue, while also being an urgent task in the sustainable development of the country and of Nghe A province at present

The implementation of ethnic policies alongside the stabilization and enhancement of national defense and security capacity constitutes an organic part of the national policy system and is inseparable from the country's overall renewal strategy. This requirement stems from the principle that national construction must go hand in hand with national defense, and the building of socialism must be closely linked with the protection of the socialist homeland.

4.1.2. A close connection between the implementation of ethnic policy and the assurance of national defense and security creates favorable conditions for effective ethnic policy implementation in Nghe A province at present

This requirement is based on the viewpoint of concentrating all resources and ensuring adequate investment for the diversification of economic production methods in connection with new-style rural development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas, while ensuring the enhancement of national defense and security capacity.

4.1.3. The implementation of ethnic policy in association with national defense and security assurance in Nghe A province at present must focus on socio-economic development in connection with the maintenance of political stability as the central task

Currently, the primary focus in development is on infrastructure investment, unlocking endogenous resources and local advantages at both the community and individual levels, while ensuring the protection of forest resources, water sources, and mineral resources.

4.1.4. The implementation of ethnic policy in association with national defense and security assurance is the responsibility of the entire political system, the armed forces, and the people of all ethnic groups in Nghe An province.

Nghe An is a densely populated province with a vast and complex mountainous region. Hostile forces will continue their acts of sabotage, attempting to disrupt and distract the leadership, administration, and governance of party committees and local authorities. Society is facing new and pressing issues due to the impact of external factors.

4.2. SOLUTIONS TO ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ETHNIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY ASSURANCE IN NGHE AN PROVINCE, VIETNAM, IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT

4.2.1. Enhancing awareness and capacity of the key stakeholders in the implementation of ethnic policy in association with national defense and security assurance in Nghe An province

To enhance the capacity of stakeholders involved in implementing ethnic policy and ensuring national defense and security in Nghe An, several key measures are essential: raising awareness of the role of the political system at all levels; fostering proactiveness and self-reliance among ethnic minorities; strengthening recognition of the armed forces' pivotal role; and deepening understanding of the importance of building and developing a capable contingent of ethnic minority cadres to meet the demands of the current context.

4.2.2. Promoting socio-economic development to improve the material and spiritual life of people in ethnic minority and mountainous areas in the implementation of ethnic policy associated with national defense and security assurance in Nghe An province

To establish a solid foundation for the effective implementation of ethnic policy in connection with national defense and security, improving the living standards of people in ethnic minority and mountainous areas is regarded as the most fundamental and long-term solution. This requires: formulating appropriate policies to foster socio-economic development, reduce poverty, and ensure sustainable livelihoods; introducing robust, context-sensitive mechanisms to support rural modernization—particularly through tourism-based economic development linked with cultural

revitalization; and nurturing a diverse, vibrant, and progressive cultural life that preserves and promotes the distinct identities of ethnic minority and mountainous communities.

4.2.3. Reviewing, supplementing, and improving mechanisms and policies for the implementation of ethnic policy in association with national defense and security assurance in Nghe An province

Priority should be given to implementing special incentive policies aimed at attracting investment into remote and isolated areas, along with applying tailored investment management approaches suited to specific mountainous regions. Key measures include: reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and projects in ethnic minority and mountainous areas; strengthening leadership, direction, inspection, and oversight in the implementation of ethnic and mountainous development initiatives; integrating socio-economic development planning with the establishment of defense zones and grassroots-level security postures; reviewing, supplementing, and revising cultural and social policies in alignment with new-style rural development and national defense and security enhancement; and placing greater emphasis on preserving and promoting the traditional cultural values of ethnic minorities in tandem with tourism development and the assurance of national defense and security.

4.2.4. Implementing ethnic policy in association with border diplomacy; promptly identifying and effectively resolving inter- and trans-border ethnic relations and complex internal issues within ethnic minority communities, particularly sensitive cases involving ethnicity and religion

In parallel with enhancing border diplomacy, attention must be paid to identifying and timely resolving emerging and complex issues within ethnic minority and mountainous communities in Nghe An. The following key measures are essential: Identify and assess the general context and situation regarding political, social, economic, cultural, and defense-security aspects of ethnic minority and border areas; Proactively and persistently identify and resolve inter- and trans-border ethnic relations; Actively and flexibly propose solutions to effectively address emerging and complex issues within ethnic minority communities in the province.

4.2.5. Innovating methods of ethnic policy implementation in association with national defense and security assurance in Nghe An province today

To effectively implement ethnic policy associated with national defense and security in Nghe An, in addition to mobilizing all resources and involving all relevant individuals and organizations, it is necessary to innovate the implementation approach: Diversify and enhance the flexibility of communication and educational methods on ethnic policy and national defense-security assurance; Strengthen coordination among departments, mass organizations, and armed forces in launching and organizing movements to mobilize the public in support of policy implementation; Actively research and establish new models and movements to mobilize the public in the implementation of ethnic policy linked to national defense and security; Combine the leadership and management roles of the political system with informal approaches to enhance ethnic policy implementation and ensure national defense and security.

4.2.6. Resolutely and proactively combating the plots and sabotage activities of hostile and reactionary forces in the implementation of ethnic policy in association with national defense and security assurance in Nghe An province today

To achieve this objective, it is necessary to focus on building a solid national defense-security posture and enhancing public awareness to defeat the “peaceful evolution” strategy and subversive schemes of hostile forces. The following synchronized measures should be taken: Increase communication and education to raise awareness and responsibility for preventing and combating hostile and reactionary forces among officials, Party members, and the general public throughout the province; Timely identify scenarios orchestrated by malicious actors; proactively and resolutely employ strategies to thwart all hostile plots and tactics in the locality; Closely coordinate with organizations and forces in ethnic minority and mountainous border areas to prevent and fight against sabotage activities by hostile and reactionary forces; Promote the role of respected individuals in countering all “peaceful evolution” plots and tactics by hostile and reactionary forces in the area; Maintain regular, close, and effective coordination with competent forces of neighboring Lao localities in combating hostile and reactionary schemes and activities.

CONCLUDE

1. In the current cause of national renovation and development, ethnic policy represents the strategic decisions of the central government targeting ethnic minority and mountainous communities. These policies aim to gradually improve and enhance the living conditions of ethnic minorities, with the overarching goal of fostering equality, solidarity, mutual respect, and support for shared development among regions and ethnic groups across Vietnam.

2. For Nghe An - a province with a vast and complex terrain of ethnic minority and mountainous areas bordering three provinces of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and home to 47 coexisting ethnic groups - the clear identification and effective implementation of ethnic policy is a major and strategic issue in both the nation-building and defense cause, as well as in fulfilling the province's political mission. Although recent achievements have been significant and meaningful, many limitations, difficulties, and challenges remain.

3. In practice, implementing ethnic policy in association with national defense and security plays a vital role within the overall framework of the Party's and State's policies on national construction and protection throughout the history of Vietnam's revolutionary cause. The contents presented in this dissertation represent an initial effort by the author, and as such, shortcomings and limitations are inevitable. The author sincerely looks forward to receiving feedback from scholars and experts to further improve this dissertation and to guide future, in-depth research directions.

**A LIST OF THE AUTHOR'S RESEARCH WORKS
PUBLISHED RELATED TO THE THESIS**

1. Nguyen Van Dieu (2022), “Preserving the Traditional Culture of Ethnic Minorities amid Cultural Changes and Integration”, *Electronic Journal of Political Theory*, Monday, December 5, 2022.
2. Nguyen Van Dieu (2022), “The Relationship between Socio-Economic Development and National Defense and Security Assurance in Ethnic Minority Areas in Nghe An Province Today”, *Journal of Political Theory & Communication*, Special Issue No. 2-2022.
3. Nguyen Van Dieu (2023), “Implementing the Sustainable Poverty Reduction Program in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas-From the Practical Perspective of Nghe An”, *Electronic Journal of Political Theory*, March 2, 2023.
4. Nguyen Van Dieu (2023), “Improving the Quality of Human Resources to Contribute to the Goal of Sustainable Poverty Reduction in Ethnic Minority Areas of Nghe An Province Today”, *Journal of Political Theory & Communication*, Special Issue No. 2-2023, p. p.194.