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RESEARCH ON SOCIAL SECURITY IN VIETNAM

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ABSTRACT

In state management, social security plays a key role as a policy tool to ensure the realization of human rights, guaranteeing peace, security, and safety in society. Therefore, social security issues need to be institutionalized and adjusted appropriately to adapt to social changes, creating a legal and practical basis for state entities and citizens to implement them effectively and efficiently. Thus, research on social security and related issues – factors directly affecting social security – is essential. This study focuses on institutional factors and social change factors. The theoretical model designed for this research includes two independent variables “Institutional factors” (IF) and “Social change factors” (SC), and one dependent variable “Social security” (SS). Based on this theoretical model, the author surveyed the opinions of 240 local government leaders at the commune level to conduct an empirical analysis of social security and the impact of institutional and social change factors on social security in Vietnam. Simultaneously, the author presents research conclusions and discusses solutions to enhance the effectiveness of social security in Vietnam as a policy tool and an important part of building a welfare state and sustainable development.

KEYWORDS: Social Security; Institution Of Social Security; Social Change; Vietnam.

1. INTRODUCTION

Vietnam is on a path of development and has achieved many breakthroughs in the last 10 years; political stability is a solid foundation, creating a safe and reliable environment for Vietnam to attract investment, promote sustainable economic development, thereby improving living standards and ensuring social security. In state governance, localities have effectively managed the social security system, contributing to minimizing losses for the state and the community, and contributing to the realization of social justice.

Vietnam's social security system is institutionalized with five main pillars: social insurance; health insurance; unemployment insurance; social relief; and social assistance and benefits. The strategic functions of Vietnam's social security system are defined as risk prevention, risk mitigation, and risk remediation. Overall, the implementation of social security policies contributes to ensuring human rights, improving material and spiritual well-being, and strengthening public trust. The social assistance system has expanded and become an important social security network: Social assistance coverage has increased from 2.7% of the population in 2016 to 4.5% in 2025 - with approximately 4.5 million people receiving regular assistance each year. And every year, approximately 1.5 million people receive emergency assistance due to the impact of natural disasters, storms, floods, epidemics, price fluctuations, and catastrophes (Long, T., 2025).

The institutionalization of the social security system in Vietnam is strictly implemented: the Constitution stipulates that citizens have the right to social security; the Social Insurance Law is an important legal document in the field of social security, profoundly affecting socio-economic fields and directly impacting all strata of the population (Thin, H.B., 2024). This creates a legal basis for agencies and localities to uniformly and effectively implement social security goals. However, social change trends such as population aging, wealth inequality, urbanization, etc., are also posing new challenges to the social security system, requiring attention and research, which is the reason for the author's choice of research topic in this study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In general terms, social security is a system of state policies and measures aimed at protecting people from risks, such as ensuring basic living conditions, income security, health, and education through insurance funds and subsidies; a system of state

policies and measures aimed at achieving social justice, helping people overcome difficulties, and contributing to sustainable economic and social development.

Specifically, according to Dung, N.H. (2010) and HSF & ILSSA (2012), social security is a state policy measure aimed at ensuring income and other essential conditions for people in difficult situations such as reduced or lost income due to reduced or lost working capacity or unemployment; ensuring income for vulnerable groups - lonely elderly people, orphaned children, disabled people... Similarly, ILSSA & GIZ (2013) affirm the nature of social security as a state policy tool - a multi-tiered safety net for social classes when facing difficult circumstances, such as reduced or lost income or other risks.

Studies by Dung, N.H. (2010), HSF & ILSSA (2012), and ILSSA & GIZ (2013) also affirm the significance of social security as an important part of building a welfare state, sustainable development, and equity; the structure of the social security system consists of three basic components, corresponding to three main functions: risk prevention, risk mitigation, and risk remediation. The scale "Social security" (SS) is designed to imply the main contents regarding the objectives of risk prevention, risk mitigation, and risk remediation, including: The social security system (social insurance, health insurance, social relief, etc.) is guaranteed by the state, helping people to access/secure employment and income, and preventing risks for the state and society (SS1); The social security system is guaranteed by the state, promoting people's participation, contributing to minimizing risks for the state and society (SS2); The social security system is guaranteed by the state, helping people to be safe when facing difficult circumstances, mitigating risks for the state and society (SS3).

From a state governance perspective, the social security system is used as a policy measure to mobilize the participation of all segments of the population, aiming to ensure risk prevention, risk mitigation, and risk recovery for the state and society. Therefore, it is necessary to clearly institutionalize the social security system to create a legal basis for state agencies and citizens to implement it strictly and uniformly; at the same time, appropriate adjustments are needed so that the social security system always adapts to social changes and meets the practical requirements of state governance. This is also an issue affirmed and explained by many studies when analyzing social security and factors affecting social security (Hung, L.N. et al., 2017;

Dung, L.T., 2021). In that sense, this study establishes the research viewpoint and hypothesis that: Institutional factors (H1) and Social change factors (H2) directly influence the implementation process and outcomes of social security policies.

- Firstly, institutional factors are crucial, providing the legal basis for implementing the social security system. Institutionalizing the social security system through synchronized mechanisms and policies, along with a modern information system, will mobilize numerous social resources for the goal of social security and community protection.

According to Hung, L.N. et al. (2017) and Mai, N.T. (2025), institutionalizing the social security system creates equal opportunities for people to seek employment and income, ensuring that people are protected and supported in terms of health, employment, income, and basic living conditions; therefore, it is necessary to continue improving the legal framework, innovating the implementation model, modernizing the governance platform, and strengthening community participation in social security work. Lan, P.T.H. (2021) emphasizes that ensuring social security is implemented through mechanisms, policies, and solutions of the state and community to assist all members of society so that everyone has job opportunities and improved income, ensuring social equity, with particular attention to the unemployed, those facing risks, illness, maternity, accidents, occupational diseases, the elderly who are no longer able to work, or those who, due to other objective reasons, fall into poverty and destitution and need help from the state and community. The scale "Institutional Factors" (IF) is designed to imply the main contents: The social security system is institutionalized through synchronized mechanisms and policies and a modern information system, mobilizing many social resources for the goal of social security and community protection (IF1); The institutionalized social security system is the legal basis ensuring that all citizens are protected and supported in terms of health, employment, income, and basic living conditions (IF2); The institutionalized social security system helps people have job opportunities, improve income, protect vulnerable people, and ensure social justice (IF3).

- Secondly, social change, manifested in political, economic, cultural, and environmental aspects, can occur sequentially or in sudden shifts, directly

impacting the implementation of social security policies and altering the objectives of the social security system.

Hung, L.N. (2010) defines social change as a social process in which the constituent elements of society and the entire social system change from one state to another. According to this approach, political, economic, demographic, environmental aspects, etc., are constituent elements of society; when their states change, they directly affect the entire social system, requiring appropriate policy adjustments to ensure effective state governance processes. Huyen, B.V. (2025) notes that the complex and unpredictable global political and economic situation, numerous conflicts worldwide, and policy adjustments by major countries negatively impact the economic growth of many nations, thereby creating risks to employment, workers' income, and resources allocated to social security and addressing social issues. On the other hand, climate change is having a strong impact, increasing social security risks and related social problems; posing risks to socio-economic development, especially to the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable groups. Ha, V.V. (2023) argues that changes in social structure such as the rise of the middle class and population aging raise social security issues, especially policies for the elderly, pension insurance, healthcare, and social assistance. The scale "Social Change Factors" (SC) is designed to imply the main contents: Social change (political, economic, demographic, environmental) poses risks to employment, workers' income, and resources allocated to social security (SC1); Social change puts pressure on pension systems, healthcare, and social assistance, increasing social security risks and related social problems (SC2); Social change poses risks to socio-economic development, especially to the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable groups (SC3).

Through a comprehensive review, the core issues of social security are analyzed and interpreted. Based on this, a theoretical framework is developed that analyzes the influence of institutional factors and social change factors on social security. The theoretical model consists of 3 scales and 9 observed variables, designed as 9 corresponding questions in a survey questionnaire and measured using a 5-point Likert scale: 1 - Strongly disagree; 2 - Disagree; 3 - Neutral; 4 - Agree; 5 - Strongly agree (Table 1, Figure 1).

Table 1. Theoretical framework.

| No | Scales | Encode | Rating levels | | | | |
|------------|---|-----------|---------------|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I | Institutional factors | IF | | | | | |
| 1 | The social security system is institutionalized through synchronized mechanisms and policies and a modern information system, mobilizing many social resources for the goal of social security and community protection | IF1 | | | | | |
| 2 | The institutionalized social security system is the legal basis ensuring that all citizens are protected and supported in terms of health, employment, income, and basic living conditions | IF2 | | | | | |
| 3 | The institutionalized social security system helps people have job opportunities, improve income, protect vulnerable people, and ensure social justice | IF3 | | | | | |
| II | Social change factors | SC | | | | | |
| 4 | Social change (political, economic, demographic, environmental) poses risks to employment, workers' income, and resources allocated to social security | SC1 | | | | | |
| 5 | Social change puts pressure on pension systems, healthcare, and social assistance, increasing social security risks and related social problems | SC2 | | | | | |
| 6 | Social change poses risks to socio-economic development, especially to the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable groups | SC3 | | | | | |
| III | Social security | SS | | | | | |
| 7 | The social security system (social insurance, health insurance, social relief, etc.) is guaranteed by the state, helping people to access/secure employment and income, and preventing risks for the state and society | SS1 | | | | | |
| 8 | The social security system is guaranteed by the state, promoting people's participation, contributing to minimizing risks for the state and society | SS2 | | | | | |
| 9 | The social security system is guaranteed by the state, helping people to be safe when facing difficult circumstances, mitigating risks for the state and society | SS3 | | | | | |

Source: Compiled by the author through the review.

Research Model.

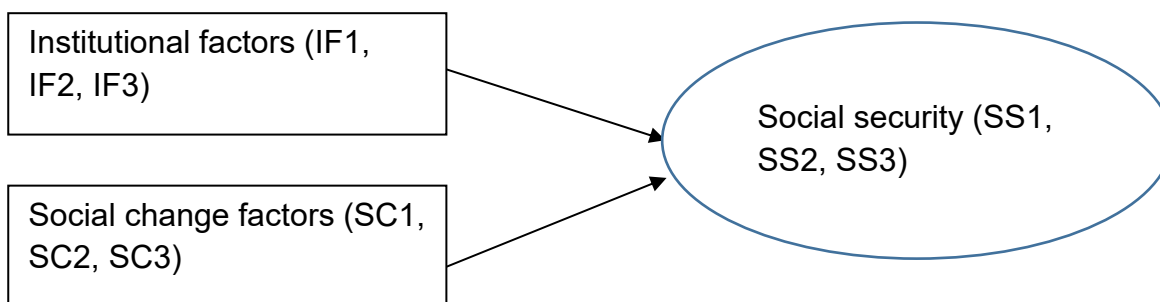


Figure 1. Research model.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the author uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve the objective of constructing a theoretical framework and conducting empirical analysis of social security in Vietnam.

- Qualitative research method: Conducted through the collection and analysis of secondary data to build a theoretical research framework, including 3 scales: "Institutional factors" (IF), "Social change factors" (SC), and "Social security" (SS) [Table 1, Figure 1].

- Quantitative research method: This was conducted through the collection and analysis of primary data in the form of surveys of 240 local government leaders at the commune level in 3 provinces, including Quang Ninh province (Northern), Khanh Hoa province (Central), and Vinh Long province (Southern).

According to Hair, J.F. et al. (2009), the minimum sample size required for exploratory factor analysis and correlation analysis of the 3-scale and 9-observed variable model in this study is $N = 9 \times 5 = 45$. In practice, the author conducted a formal survey with a sample size of $N = 240$ local government leaders at

the commune level, ensuring reliability in conducting empirical research. The survey was conducted with the consent of the respondents after preliminary interviews; the survey results yielded 240/240 valid responses, achieving a 100% valid response rate.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data collected from a survey of 240 local government leaders at the commune level were statistically analyzed, and the reliability of the scales and observed variables in the theoretical model was tested. According to Hair, J.F. et al. (2009), the scales have reliability when they meet the Cronbach's alpha criterion > 0.6 ; the observed variables have reliability when they meet the Corrected Item-Total Correlation criterion > 0.3 . The test results show that all 3 scales and 9 observed variables in the theoretical model have reliability (Table 2).

Table 2. Statistical results and testing results of the scale.

| Scales | Observed variables | N | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Deviation | Cronbach' Alpha | Corrected Item-Total Correlation |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|----------------|-----------------|--|
| 1. Institutional factors (IF) | IF1 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.11 | .681 | .759 | IF1 = .544 IF2 = .602 IF3 = .582 |
| | IF2 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.10 | .628 | | |
| | IF3 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.12 | .713 | | |
| | | 240 | | | | | | |
| 2. Social change factors (SC) | SC1 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.21 | .654 | .748 | SC1 = .488 SC2 = .556 SC3 = .607 |
| | SC2 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.16 | .713 | | |
| | SC3 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.19 | .674 | | |
| | | 240 | | | | | | |
| 3. Social security (SS) | SS1 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.18 | .715 | .755 | SS1 = .605 SS2 = .589 SS3 = .619 |
| | SS2 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.14 | .679 | | |
| | SS3 | 240 | 1 | 5 | 4.15 | .694 | | |
| | | 240 | | | | | | |
| Valid N (listwise) | | 240 | | | | | | |

Source: Author's survey results

Table 2 data shows that observations of the scales

"Institutional factors" (IF), "Social change factors" (SC), and "Social security" (SS) were rated at mean ≥ 4.09 and mean ≤ 4.21 , all statistically significant according to the Likert scale (1-5). This indicates that the general assessment of local leaders confirms:

- Firstly, the social security system (social insurance, health insurance, social assistance, etc.) is guaranteed by the state, helping people access/secure employment and income; promoting people's participation; helping people stay safe when facing difficult circumstances, contributing to risk prevention, risk mitigation, and risk recovery for the state and society.
- Secondly, the institutional factor is well-regarded and directly influences the implementation of social security policies in Vietnam. The social security system, institutionalized through synchronized mechanisms and policies and a modern information system, provides a legal basis for ensuring that all citizens are protected and supported in terms of healthcare, employment, income, and basic living conditions. It also mobilizes various social resources for social security goals, protects the community, helps people find employment opportunities, improves income, protects vulnerable groups, and ensures social justice.
- Thirdly, social change factors have a significant impact on the implementation of social security policies in Vietnam. The observed variables of the "Social Change Factors" (SC) scale are rated higher: Mean (SC1) = 4.21, Mean (SC2) = 4.16, Mean (SC3) = 4.19, further demonstrating that social change (political, economic, demographic, environmental) poses risks to employment, workers' income, and resources allocated to social security; puts pressure on pension systems, healthcare, and social assistance, increasing security risks and related social problems; and poses risks to socio-economic development, especially to the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable groups.

The aforementioned social changes directly affect the implementation of social security policies in Vietnam, necessitating appropriate solutions to enable localities to proactively prevent, mitigate, and address risks for both the state and the community.

The scales and observed variables have reliability test values that meet the standards, serving as the basis for conducting further analyses. The author performed exploratory factor analysis with Varimax

rotation to preliminarily assess the basis for drawing research conclusions about the unidimensionality, convergent validity, and suitability of the proposed theoretical research model discriminant validity of the scales, providing further (Tables 3 and 4).

**Table 3. Total Variance Explained
KMO and Bartlett's Test.**

| KMO and Bartlett's Test | |
|--|--------------------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | |
| | .740 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square |
| | 4238.968 |
| | df |
| | 36 |
| | Sig. |
| | .000 |

| Total Variance Explained | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Component | Initial Eigenvalues | | | Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings | | | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings | | |
| | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1 | 3.504 | 38.935 | 38.935 | 3.504 | 38.935 | 38.935 | 3.152 | 35.026 | 35.026 |
| 2 | 3.015 | 33.499 | 72.434 | 3.015 | 33.499 | 72.434 | 2.938 | 32.640 | 67.666 |
| 3 | 1.086 | 12.066 | 84.500 | 1.086 | 12.066 | 84.500 | 1.515 | 16.834 | 84.500 |
| 4 | .492 | 5.470 | 89.970 | | | | | | |
| 5 | .446 | 4.957 | 94.927 | | | | | | |
| 6 | .153 | 1.696 | 96.623 | | | | | | |
| 7 | .134 | 1.487 | 98.110 | | | | | | |
| 8 | .098 | 1.093 | 99.204 | | | | | | |
| 9 | .072 | .796 | 100.000 | | | | | | |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Author's survey results

Table 4. Rotated Component Matrix

| Rotated Component Matrix ^a | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|------|------|
| Scales | Observed variables | Component | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. Institutional factors (IF) | IF1 | .848 | | |
| | IF2 | .855 | | |
| | IF3 | .824 | | |
| 2. Social change factors (SC) | SC1 | | .844 | |
| | SC2 | | .851 | |
| | SC3 | | .878 | |
| 3. Social security (SS) | SS1 | | | .853 |
| | SS2 | | | .880 |
| | SS3 | | | .867 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Source: Author's survey results.

Theoretically, exploratory factor analysis is performed appropriately with the dataset as shown by the values: $0.5 \leq KMO \leq 1$; Bartlett's test has an observed significance level $Sig. < 0.05$; Eigenvalue ≥ 1 ; Total Variance Explained $\geq 50\%$; Factor Loading ≥ 0.5 (Hair, J.F. et al., 2009). Data from Tables 3 and 4 show that:

- The $KMO = 0.740 > 0.5$ confirms that exploratory factor analysis is appropriate for

the dataset; the Bartlett test has an observed significance level of $Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that the observed variables are linearly correlated with the representative factor. The total variance extracted with Cumulative % = $84.500\% > 50\%$ (Table 3) shows that 84.5% of the variation in the representative factors is explained by the observed variables; all observed variables have Factor Loading > 0.5 (Table 4), indicating that

the observed variables are statistically significant. The initial theoretical research model is consistent with the survey research.

- The observed variables were extracted into 3 factors corresponding to the 3 original factors with Eigenvalues > 1 (Table 3), further confirming the suitability of the original research model. The original research model was retained, consisting of: 2 independent variables "Institutional factors" (IF), "Social change factors" (SC) and 1 dependent variable "Social security" (SS), with a total of 9 observed variables of good statistical significance, allowing for correlation analysis to examine the relationship between the scales in the model. The results of the correlation analysis are shown in Table 5, which forms the basis for the author's research conclusions.

Table 5. Correlation analysis results of the scales.

| | | Correlations | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|--------|
| | | IF | SC | SS |
| Institutional factors (IF) | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .375** | .438** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 240 | 240 | 240 |
| Social change factors (SC) | Pearson Correlation | .375** | 1 | .524** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | .000 |
| | N | 240 | 240 | 240 |
| Social security (SS) | Pearson Correlation | .438** | .524** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | |
| | N | 240 | 240 | 240 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author's survey results.

5. CONCLUSION

Table 5 data shows:

- + The correlation coefficients of the scales reached a value of $0 < r < 1$, indicating a positive correlation

between the two independent scales/variables "Institutional factors" (IF), "Social change factors" (SC) and the one dependent scale/variable "Social security" (SS); hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted; the theoretical framework and the initial theoretical model are confirmed to be suitable for the survey dataset.

+ Based on the r values [r (IF) = .438 and r (SC) = .524], it can be concluded that the correlation levels of the independent and dependent variables, in increasing order, are: "Institutional factors" (IF), "Social change factors" (SC).

Based on the above analysis and verification results, the author concludes that the empirical research on social security and the influence of institutional factors and social change factors on social security in Vietnam is of particular interest to the author, which is:

1. The social security system is guaranteed by the state; the institutional factors are well-assessed and directly influence the implementation of social security policies in Vietnam, helping people access/secure employment and income; promoting people's participation; helping people stay safe when facing difficult circumstances, contributing to risk prevention, risk mitigation, and risk recovery for the state and society.
2. Social change factors significantly influence the implementation of social security policies in Vietnam; posing risks to employment, workers' income, and resources allocated to social security; putting pressure on pension systems, healthcare, and social assistance, increasing social security risks and related social problems; and posing risks to socio-economic development, especially to the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable groups.

The aforementioned social changes directly affect the implementation of social security policies in Vietnam, necessitating appropriate solutions for localities to proactively prevent, mitigate, and overcome risks for the state and the community. Firstly, the state should develop the public service system in the following direction: In addition to providing services, it is necessary to expand socialization with diverse and flexible organizational models and forms to meet the increasingly high demands of the people, especially the poor and vulnerable in society, to become important tools for responding to social changes within communities. Secondly, develop a diverse social security system that encourages/mobilizes social entities (social organizations, individuals, households) to

participate in social security programs, supporting the poor and vulnerable groups; Proactively prevent, minimize, and mitigate risks arising from economic, social, and environmental impacts.

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