

INFORMATION OF SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES

Scientific Workshop: Research and Capture Public Opinion of Ethnic Minorities in the South

On May 15, 2020, in Ho Chi Minh City, Graduate Academy of Social Sciences (GASS) in collaboration with the Southern Institute of Social Sciences (SISS), both units under the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences - VASS, organized the scientific workshop “Research and capture public opinion of ethnic minorities in the South” which attracted numerous researchers. The workshop is within the framework of the State-level scientific project “Theoretical and practical issues about public opinion of ethnic minorities in Vietnam in the context of globalization” (Project No. 37.18/16 -20). The workshop focused on four main issues related to public opinion of ethnic minorities in the South, namely, 1) Psychological and emotional characteristics of the people expressed through public opinion on specific issues; 2) Cultural and social characteristics of the people - the basis of public opinion on specific social issues; 3) Meaningful and standard lifestyle of the people - the basis for the emergence of public opinion on specific social issues; 4) Socio-economic status of the people as the basis of forming, developing and losing public opinion.

According to attendees, public opinion is a form of daily collective thinking shown as a complex of discussion, assessment, recommendations, claims, solutions, etc. of social groups on social issues related to their interests and concerns. The South is a home to several ethnic minorities. The role and function of public opinion in the their lives in this region like many others is undeniable. Psychological, emotional,

linguistic, and lifestyle characteristics and socio-economic status are the basis of formation and also factors affecting public opinion of the local people of ethnic minorities in the South.

Various papers focused on the cultural characteristics of ethnic minorities in the South and the impacts on their public opinion. Among the ethnic minorities in the South, the Khmer (mainly residing in Tra Vinh, Soc Trang, ...) is said to account for a relatively large number of population, who has a distinctive and unique culture chiefly governed by Theravada Buddhism. Therefore, the Khmer public opinion is greatly influenced by Buddhism and monks who play a certain important role in the formation and orientation of public opinion. Along with the process of innovation, integration and socio-economic development, public opinion of the Khmer ethnic minorities has changed recently.

Apart from the traditional ways of forming public opinion such as “rumor”, there are “official” information with high accuracy and reliability. Several Khmer residents, mainly young people, have considered choosing information to create public opinion in society. They have different ways of expressing their attitudes and personal opinions in the media as a contribution to public opinion. Discussions and exchanges on public opinion in other ethnic minority areas other than the South have been welcomed, including public opinion on public policy implementation in ethnic minority areas; interests in public opinion in ethnic minority areas; “spiral of silence” in public opinion in ethnic minority areas;

HOAI PHUC

Scientific Workshop: Building a Database for Socio-economic Development of Phu Yen Province and the South Central Region

On June 26, 2020 in Phu Yen province, the Institute of Social Sciences Information (under the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences - VASS) held a workshop on “Building a database for socio-economic development of Phu Yen province and the South Central region” with the participation of various agencies, departments, associations of Phu Yen province and researchers from the Institute of Social Science Information, Institute of Social Sciences of the Central region, Central Vietnam Industrial and Trade College, and Central Construction University.

There were 11 multidisciplinary papers of economy, society, culture, literature, archival, etc., which aimed at exchanging information and research results to build a database for socio-economic development of Phu Yen province in particular and that of the South Central region in general.

In terms of the database system, the papers highlighted the its role in building development strategies and policies for Phu Yen province and the South Central Coast; and briefly overviewed the current state of the database on the South Central Coast archived at the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.

With regard to economic field, institutional analysis and foreign direct investment attraction in the southern central provinces were focused on. The results of applying spatial economic models to estimate the

role of local institutions in luring FDI in the South Central region in the 2007-2016 period show that FDI in this region is drawn by cheap labour costs, reflecting the nature of labor-intensive projects. Furthermore, the attendees believed that local institutions have partially impacted on FDI attraction; and the legal strength and social security level in each locality play an important role as well.

Meanwhile, too much preference for domestic enterprises in some localities may present a “headwind” for FDI inflows to this sector. Besides, some papers analyzed data from the PCI index of Phu Yen province for investors; clarified the current situation and solutions to the marine economic development policy of the South Central Coast; highlighted potentials and challenges of Phu Yen marine economy.

In terms of culture and literature, the value of Cá Ông (Lord Whale) belief to the lives of people living in the South Central Coast was indicated, from which proposing a number of solutions to ensure the belief preservation and promotion in the current context. Few papers also referred the issues of enhancing the cultural values of ethnic minorities in Phu Yen province; resources for the sustainable development of literature in Phu Yen province; folklore in the cultural and spiritual life of the Phu Yen people in numerous documents archived at the Library of Social Sciences, thereby confirming its major role and influence on local residents’s spiritual and cultural life.

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