

## 【Abstract】

### A Comparative Study on Social Capital between Northern and Southern Vietnam

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This paper intends to conduct a comparative analysis of Northern and Southern Vietnam using a social capital theory for a more systematic understanding of the region. The purpose of the research is to empirically understand and verify the difference in economic development of Northern and Southern Vietnam through correlation between social capital and economic development.

In particular, the framework of the analysis to study social capital in Northern and Southern Vietnam is “good” social capital and “bad” social capital. There have been previous studies which divided social capital into the social capital conducive to economic development and the one which is not according to functional aspects, namely positive and negative functions. “Good” social capital which boosts economic growth holds open network of ‘weak ties’ that includes social relationship and at the same time derives social cooperation through generalized trust. On the contrary, “bad” social capital can hardly draw social integration as it has low levels of generalized trust and closed network of strong ties focused on primary groups like families.

As an analytical framework, the concepts to study social capital in

Northern and Southern Vietnam are network and trust which are essential components of social capital. Operational definition was made for a survey. Proxy variables for the network are frequency of exchange, intensity of the network, openness/closure of the network and those for the trust are trust in people, trust in institutions, a generalized trust/distrust tendency.

To measure social capital, a survey was conducted targeting 498 Vietnamese: 258 in Hanoi, representing the North, and 240 in Ho Chi Minh city, representing the South. The result indicates that the South, relatively more developed, has more open network of weak ties which works as "good" social capital, but has a lower level of generalized trust compared to the North. Meanwhile, the North has a higher level of trust in ordinary people and generalized trust. Regarding the trust in institutions, difference between the North and South was not found.

The research result on network is consistent with the previous studies, but that on trust is not. The discordance between network and trust can be understood from the historical context of Vietnam as social capital has characteristics of accumulation. Therefore, this research shows the social relationship and characteristics in the North and South that traditional Vietnam has retained in terms of geographical (topographical), cultural and historical aspects.

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Keywords: Vietnam, North, South, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh city, Social capital, economic development, network, trust, strong ties, weak ties, open, closed, generalized trust, limited trust, discrepancy