

## Quality of Life of Vietnam's Residents through Some Employment and Income Criteria

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**ABSTRACT:** Employment and income are core factors that determine people's quality of life, playing an important role in ensuring social security and promoting sustainable development of society. They not only directly affect access to health services, education and other essential needs, but are also the foundation for improving the human development index (HDI). In Vietnam, employment and income have improved significantly over the past decade, however, there are still many challenges that need to be faced, such as the high rate of informal employment, New income per capita is at an average level compared to the region. Therefore, studying the quality of life through employment and income criteria will provide an overview of the quality of residential life, from which the author offers solutions such as improving the quality of employment. work, improving working conditions and enhancing social benefits, to continue improving the quality of life and ensuring sustainable development for Vietnam in the future.

**KEYWORDS:** Quality of life, population, per capita income, employment, Vietnam.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, Vietnam has achieved many significant achievements in economic and social development, thanks to the strong integration and reform process. From an agricultural economy, Vietnam has transformed into a country with a dynamic and diverse market economy, with many strongly developing industries and services. However, parallel to those advances, the question of people's quality of life is becoming increasingly urgent. This context requires careful consideration of factors that directly affect people's daily lives, of which employment and income are two key factors.

The current employment situation in Vietnam reflects uneven development between regions and industries. The unemployment rate is low, but job quality is uneven, with a large proportion of workers engaged in informal work or having unstable income. The average salary in Vietnam is still quite low compared to many other countries in the region, this poses a big challenge in ensuring that people can meet their basic living and medical needs, and education. At the same time, the imbalance between economic sectors also contributes to creating a large income gap between population groups, thereby negatively affecting the quality of life.

Employment and income are not simply economic indicators but also reflect access to essential services and opportunities for personal development. Stable income and sustainable work are the foundation for people to ensure a better life, improve their education level, and participate in social and cultural activities. In particular, in the context that Vietnam is striving towards the goal of becoming a country with an upper middle income, improving the quality of life through employment and income becomes even more important. This is not only an urgent issue for each individual and family but also a decisive factor in the sustainable development of the entire country.

In that context, research on people's quality of life through employment and income criteria is very necessary. This not only helps to better understand the challenges people are facing but also contributes to making specific policy recommendations to improve quality of life and ensure equitable and sustainable development. for the entire population of Vietnam

### 2. RESEARCH METHODS

To research the quality of life of Vietnam's population, especially focusing on employment and income criteria, the author mainly uses data collection, synthesis and analysis methods. The data and figures in the article are compiled from previous studies, along with official documents from relevant agencies and departments, which are statistics in the statistical yearbooks of the General Department. Vietnam Statistics. Based on the analysis of the current status of employment and income, the author conducts an assessment of the impact on the quality of life, thereby making comments and proposing a number of solutions to improve the quality of life of the population. Settlement in the context of economic and social development in Vietnam.

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## 3. RESEARCH CONTENT

### 3.1. Quality of life

#### 3.1.1. Concept

Quality of life is a concern for everyone, regardless of age, gender or social situation. As society develops, people not only stop at meeting basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter, but also desire to lead an increasingly better life. Social development brings remarkable advances in health, education, environment, and economics, helping to improve the quality of life. However, this also poses challenges when people have to find ways to balance work, family and personal needs to achieve happiness and satisfaction in life. Therefore, caring for and improving the quality of life is not only a personal goal but also a common responsibility of the whole society.

So what is quality of life?

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), “*Quality of life is a concept related to individuals' satisfaction with life, including material factors (income, housing, etc.) housing) and non-material (health, education, social relationships, safety)*” [1].

According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP): “*Quality of life is not simply about income, but about having a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. It is about each person's ability to realize their goals and aspirations in life*” [2].

World Health Organization (WHO), “*Quality of life is individuals' perception of their position in life within the cultural context and value system in which they live, and in relation to others. their goals, expectations, standards, and concerns*” [3].

Thus, it can be said: Quality of life is an index showing the level of human happiness when satisfied with both material and spiritual life, and also satisfaction with the development of each person individuals in society. It is expressed through many criteria, such as: income, employment, health, education, living environment, security... This coincides with GS's opinion. Dang Hung Vo from the perspective of sustainable development, in which quality of life is emphasized in raising material living standards, improving the living environment and ensuring social justice [4].

#### 3.1.2. Criteria for assessing quality of life

According to the OECD Better Life Index, quality of life can be assessed through two groups of criteria: material criteria and mental criteria.

**Table 1. Group of criteria for assessing quality of life**

No	Material group	Spiritual group
1	Income and standard of living	Social relations
2	Job	Culture and entertainment
3	Health	Human rights and personal freedom
4	Living environment	Satisfaction and happiness
5	Education	
6	Security and safety	
7	Housing and infrastructure	

Source: [5]

The group of material criteria reflects the basic and necessary aspects of quality of life, related to living conditions that people can access and enjoy. These include factors such as income, housing, health, education, environment and employment, all of which can be specifically measured and evaluated. These criteria not only ensure financial stability and security, but also provide the necessary conditions to maintain and improve quality of life. A high quality life requires a balance between these elements, creating a foundation for health, personal growth, and advancement opportunities. The group of material criteria plays an important role in ensuring people have good living conditions, access to basic services, and develop sustainably. They are essential ingredients to create a peaceful, stable, and satisfying life in the context of modern society.

While material factors ensure that people have a stable economic foundation, health and living conditions, spiritual factors play an important role in nurturing emotions, psychology, and happiness. personal satisfaction. The spiritual criteria group reflects non-material aspects of quality of life, focusing on emotions, psychology, and personal satisfaction. These are factors that are difficult to measure but have a profound impact on people's happiness and satisfaction, their sense of meaning, purpose and balance in life. They relate to how people interact with family, friends, community, and broader society, as well as how they feel about security, freedom, and the ability to participate in cultural activities. culture, religion, and entertainment. These spiritual factors play a decisive role in building a meaningful life, helping individuals feel satisfied, love life and be able to cope with the challenges of daily life. The group of spiritual criteria, therefore, is the foundation for achieving a balanced and fulfilling life.

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Human happiness is the result of a harmonious balance between material and spiritual factors. When people achieve balance between material and spiritual factors, they not only feel safe and fulfilled physically, but also feel love for life, meaning in life and ability to deal with everyday challenges. This balance is a core factor that helps people have a happy and fulfilling life.

### 3.1.3. The significance of employment and income for quality of life

Employment and income are two core factors that strongly affect quality of life. While employment provides not only income but also spiritual and social values, income is the main resource that helps individuals and families access essential material needs and improve living standards. The combination of employment and income creates a solid foundation for a quality life.

Employment is the foundation of stability and personal development. Jobs are not simply a means to make money but also bring many other values to individuals. A stable job helps ensure financial security, thereby enabling workers to plan for the future, reducing financial stress and anxiety. In addition, employment also helps individuals develop skills, build a career and feel proud of themselves. According to a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), people with stable jobs often have higher levels of life satisfaction, because work brings not only income but also satisfaction. Personal satisfaction and growth opportunities. Employment also helps build social relationships and create a sense of community connection, contributing to improved mental health [6]. Along with that, income is a tool to improve quality of life. Income from work is the main resource that helps individuals and families meet basic needs such as food, housing, healthcare and education. Higher income often comes with access to better quality services, thereby improving quality of life. Income also plays an important role in facilitating leisure activities, travel, and future investments such as savings and children's education. A Gallup study shows that people with high incomes often have higher levels of life satisfaction, because they can meet personal needs and desires more easily. However, research also shows that after a certain level of income, the relationship between income and happiness tends to decrease, suggesting that income is not the only factor determining quality of life, but also depends on how that income is managed and used [7]. The combination of employment and income is a determining factor in quality of life. A good job with a stable income not only meets material needs but also brings mental satisfaction, helping individuals feel confident and in control of their lives. At the same time, financial security from income also helps reduce stress, facilitating a balanced and happy life. According to a study by the American Institute for Economic Research, people with stability in employment and income often have better health and are less likely to have psychological problems such as anxiety and depression, and have more positive family and social relationships [8]. This shows that employment and income not only impact the quality of personal life but also spread to the quality of life of the surrounding community.

Employment and income are two inseparable factors that play an important role in building and improving quality of life. Jobs provide not only a source of income but also personal development, building social relationships and creating a sense of meaning in life. Meanwhile, income is a tool that helps individuals access essential needs and improve living standards. The harmonious combination of employment and income creates a solid foundation for a quality, happy and sustainable life.

## 3.2. The quality of life of Vietnam's population through employment and income criteria

### 3.2.1. Job

Employment is one of the important factors that directly affects the quality of life of individuals and communities. Employment is the basis for sustainable income, helping individuals and families cover essential needs such as food, housing, healthcare and education.

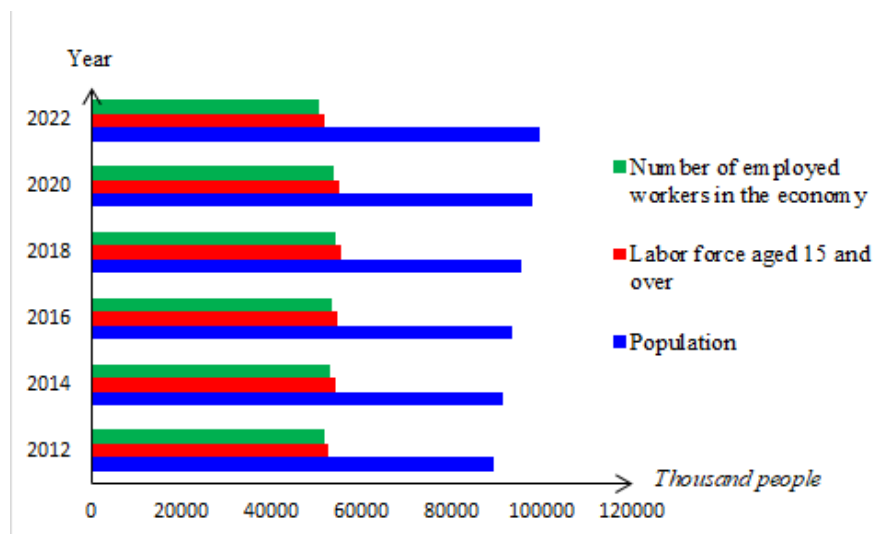


Figure 1. Labor force and employed labor force relative to population in Vietnam

Source: [9]

## Quality of Life of Vietnam's Residents through Some Employment and Income Criteria

Compared to the population, Vietnam's labor force is quite large: in most years it is over 50%, and among them, the number of employed workers is also quite high. In 2022, there will be about 50,605 thousand workers employed in the economy, greatly contributing to the financial stability of families and society. This financial stability helps reduce financial stress and increase feelings of security, thereby improving quality of life.

**Table 2. Employment rate of Vietnam**

<b>Labor rate</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2022</b>
Number of employed workers in the economy (thousands of people)	51691	53031	53346	54283	53610	50605
Ratio of employed workers compared to the labor force (%)	98.2	98.1	97.9	98.0	97.8	97.9
Ratio of employed workers compared to population (%)	57.9	58.1	57.2	56.9	54.9	50.9
Percentage of workers with informal jobs (%)		78.1	74.7	72.1	70.3	65.8

**Source:** [9]

The above data table shows that: The number of employed workers increased from 2012 (51,691 thousand people) to 2018 (54,283 thousand people), then decreased slightly in 2020 (53,610 thousand people) and decreased more sharply in 2022 (50,605 thousand people). The significant decline from 2020 to 2022 is related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced many businesses to close or lay off staff, thereby reducing the number of employed workers.

Jobs provide opportunities for personal and professional development. A job that matches your abilities and interests not only brings income but also helps workers feel satisfied, proud and fulfilled. The ratio of employed workers to the labor force remains high, from 97.8% to 98.2% in the period 2012-2022, showing that a large part of the labor force has had the opportunity to develop and build. build your career. This not only improves the quality of life of each individual but also contributes to the sustainable development of society.

The work environment is also a place where people can connect and communicate with others, helping to reduce loneliness and create a sense of belonging to a community. The ratio of employed workers to population will decrease slightly from 57.9% in 2012 to 50.9% in 2022, but still shows that a significant portion of the population participates in the labor force. These social relationships at work not only provide emotional support but can also help workers feel more connected and motivated in daily life.

Work can also have a major impact on psychological and physical health. Jobs that are demanding, stressful, or unstable can lead to stress, anxiety, and other health problems. Sustainability is also an important factor in maintaining long-term quality of life. Although the rate of employed workers is always above 97.8% in the period 2012-2022, the rate of workers with informal jobs is still quite high: in 2014 this rate was 78.1%, then there has been a trend. gradually decreasing, in 2022 it will still be 65.8%. This also poses challenges for Vietnam in creating career opportunities for workers to create stability and sustainability.

In addition, with the ratio of employed workers to population gradually decreasing from 57.9% in 2012 to 50.9% in 2022, additional measures to support and develop employment opportunities may be needed to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the workforce and achieve work-life balance.

Thus, employment has a close relationship with quality of life, affecting many aspects such as finances, health, personal development and social relationships. Ensuring employment opportunities and improving working conditions will make an important contribution to improving the quality of life of the community.

### 3.2.2. Income

Income plays an important role in meeting basic human needs. High income helps people have better access to medical services, education, and other amenities, thereby improving their quality of life. Although income is not the only factor, it is a necessary condition to ensure stability and happiness.

**Table 3. Average income and expenditure per capita of Vietnam (Unit: Thousand VND)**

<b>Income and expenditure index</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2022</b>
Average income per capita per month at current prices	2000	2637	3098	3874	4250	4673
Average expenditure per capita per month at current prices	1603	1888	2157	2546	2892	2795
Excess money	397	749	941	1328	1358	1878

*Source:* [9]

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Based on the data table, Vietnam's per capita income over the past 10 years (from 2012 to 2022) has continuously increased, with an increase of more than 2.3 times in 2022 compared to 2012. Growth This strength reflects Vietnam's stable and continuous economic development. As people's income increases, they have more opportunities to participate in economic activities and improve their living standards. Households can invest more in basic needs such as food, housing, and healthcare, as well as more advanced needs such as education and entertainment.

Along with income growth, the per capita spending index also continuously increases, reflecting the increasingly improved living standards of the people. They have more opportunities to access higher quality services and products, thereby improving their overall quality of life. However, the growth rate of per capita spending is slower than income (the spending index increased more than 1.7 times), leading to a large increase in surplus money. Specifically, in 2012, the amount of surplus money in a year was 397 thousand VND, but by 2022 it had increased to 1,878 thousand VND, or 4.7 times more. The increased amount of surplus money means that many households have surpassed the poverty threshold, moving from the low-income group to the group with a higher standard of living. This helps reduce the poverty rate nationwide: from 11.1% in 2012 to only 4.2% in 2022. The sharp decline in the poverty rate has contributed to the creation of a fair and equitable society. more stable, as more households escape poverty and are able to accumulate assets and build a more stable life.

Poverty reduction not only improves the living conditions of people in the low-income group but also reduces pressure on government social welfare programs. When more people are able to manage their own lives, social assistance costs can be reallocated to other areas such as education and health, thereby improving quality of life. shared.

An increase in income not only helps people meet basic needs but also reduces financial pressure, especially in emergency or unforeseen situations. With higher income, households can save more, invest in long-term assets such as homes, and afford insurance services, thereby increasing financial security. In addition, higher income helps households have better financial reserves, making it easier for them to cope with economic fluctuations such as inflation, recession, or unemployment. This not only enhances personal financial stability but also contributes to a stronger economy, with stable levels of consumption and investment.

As income increases, people are able to plan for the future more proactively. They can spend part of their income to invest in their children's education, buy health insurance or retirement, and accumulate assets to prepare for old age. This ability not only helps minimize future risks but also creates mental peace of mind, thereby improving overall quality of life.

**Table 4. Average income per capita of Southeast Asian countries**

No	Nation	Average income per capita (USD/person)
1	Singapore	88,450
2	Brunei	35,110
3	Malaysia	13,310
4	Thailand	7,810
5	Indonesia	5,270
<b>6</b>	<b>Vietnam</b>	<b>4,620</b>
7	Philippines	4,130
8	Cambodia	2,630
9	Laos	1,980
10	Tiamo	1,450
11	Myanmar	1,250

Source: [10]

Compared to other countries in the region, Vietnam's per capita income is average, ranking 6th out of 12 countries, with an income of 4,620 USD/person; The difference with the leading country in the region in terms of income, Singapore, is up to 83,830 USD, and the country with the lowest income is Myanmar, with a difference of 3,370 USD/person.

Thus, looking at the development process, Vietnam's per capita income has grown and life has increasingly improved, but compared to other countries in the region, Vietnam's per capita income has increased. Vietnamese people are just average. Therefore, Vietnam needs to make more efforts to improve the quality of life for its people.

Stable income is the premise for building a stable and solid life, creating favorable conditions to improve quality of life, while expanding opportunities for personal development in education and age advancement. longevity. These benefits are clearly reflected in the human development index (HDI), an important measure of a country's comprehensive development in health, education and living standards. HDI not only reflects current living standards but also indicates the ability to maintain and improve quality of life in the future.

**Table 5. Human development index (HDI) of Vietnam**

Year	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022
Human development index	0.66	0.68	0.68	0.69	0.7	0.74



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Source: [9]

Vietnam's Human Development Index (HDI) has had a significant increase in the period 2012-2022, increasing from 0.66 in 2012 to 0.74 in 2022. This shows that Vietnam has achieved remarkable progress significantly in improving people's quality of life over the past decade. HDI's steady growth rate reflects the government's efforts to invest in education, health care and economic development. The steady increase in HDI in Vietnam also reflects improving levels of income and employment. As analyzed, from 2012 to 2022, Vietnam has maintained an employment rate of over 97.8% and the number of employed workers remains high, although there will be a slight decrease in 2022. This stable income has created conditions for Vietnamese people to have better access to health and education services, thereby improving the component indices of the HDI. The increase in Vietnam's HDI index is due to Vietnam's strong investment in education and health. Increasing levels of universal education and access to basic health services have helped increase the average life expectancy and education level of the population, important components of the HDI. However, Vietnam's HDI in 2022 (0.74) compared to countries in the Southeast Asia region, it can be seen that Vietnam is in an average position. In the chart, Vietnam's HDI is 0.703, lower than countries such as Singapore (0.939), Brunei (0.829), Malaysia (0.803) and Thailand (0.8). However, Vietnam has a higher HDI than some other countries such as the Philippines (0.699), Laos (0.607), and Cambodia (0.593). This proves that the quality of life of Vietnamese people is gradually improving, but more efforts are needed because it is only at the average level in the region.

### 3.3. Some solutions to improve the quality of life for Vietnamese people

To further improve the quality of life through employment and income targets, Vietnam can implement a number of solutions such as:

- Create high quality jobs. Vietnam should develop industries with high added value, such as information technology, manufacturing, and services... to create more jobs and help improve workers' income, at the same time. Reduce dependence on low-income and unstable occupations.
- Training and improving labor skills. To meet the needs of the ever-evolving labor market, investment in vocational education and skills training is necessary. Training programs should focus on improving technical competencies, soft skills, and the ability to adapt to new technology. This helps workers have the ability to switch jobs better and increase their income.
- Promote small and medium enterprises. Support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises by improving access to finance, simplifying administrative procedures, and providing technical assistance programs. Promoting small and medium enterprises is one of the important sources of employment, contributing to creating stable job opportunities and increasing income for workers.
- Improving the working environment to ensure safe, healthy working conditions, and support work-life balance is an important factor in improving labor productivity and employee satisfaction. This also helps reduce turnover and increases workforce stability.
- Strengthen salary and social welfare policies; It is necessary to adjust the minimum wage to match the increasing cost of living, while expanding social welfare programs such as health insurance, unemployment insurance and pensions. These policies will protect workers from economic risks and help them have a more stable life.
- Developing rural economies and reducing inequality to improve the quality of life in rural areas requires investment in infrastructure, education and health in these areas. At the same time, rural economic development programs need to focus on creating employment opportunities and increasing people's income, helping to reduce inequality between regions.

By synchronously implementing these solutions, Vietnam can continue to improve the quality of life for its people, promote sustainable development and enhance the human development index (HDI) in the future.

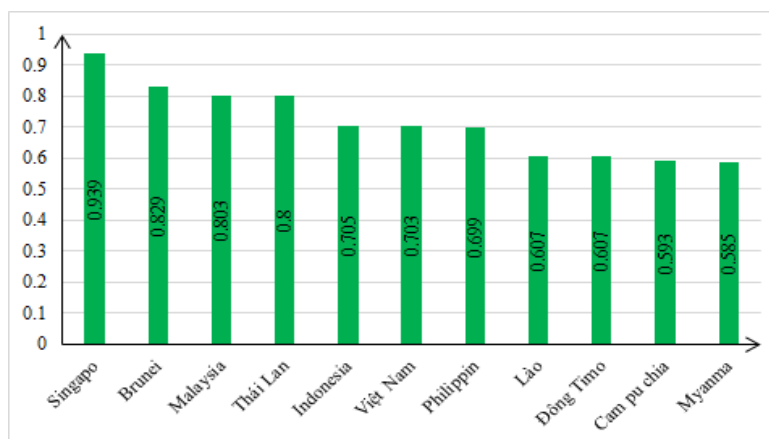


Figure 2 . Human development index of southeast Asian countries, 2021

Source: [11]

### 4. CONCLUSION

The quality of life of Vietnamese people is constantly improving, thanks to stability and sustainability in employment and income. With the employment rate remaining high and income increasingly improving, people have better conditions to access health services, education, and other essential needs. This is an important foundation to help improve not only daily life but also contribute to raising the country's human development index (HDI).

However, although significant progress has been achieved, Vietnam needs stronger measures and policies to maintain and promote this development. Stable employment and income are essential premises, but to raise the quality of life and HDI to a higher level, it is necessary to focus on improving the quality of jobs and creating conditions for workers to develop their skills, capabilities, while improving income to meet the increasing needs of modern life. These efforts will not only strengthen the foundation for economic development but also bring Vietnam closer to the goal of sustainable and comprehensive development in the future.

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