

## SUMMARY INFORMATION

### ON THE NEW CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

**PhD Candidate:** Nok SOUTHIVONG;      **Candidate Code:** NCSD32223

**Major:** Finance - Banking

**Major Code:** 9340201

**Thesis Title:** Internal Financial Management of Public Universities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

**Supervisors:** 1. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Trong Than; 2. Dr. Vo Thi Phuong Lan

**Professional Department:** Public Finance

#### **New Contributions of the Thesis:**

*First:* In terms of theory, the dissertation systematizes and clarifies the theoretical foundation of internal financial management (IFM) in the context of university autonomy. It identifies IFM as a closed-loop governance cycle comprising four organically interrelated components: (i) financial planning; (ii) implementation; (iii) internal control; and (iv) financial settlement and analysis. Concurrently, the dissertation establishes a comprehensive evaluation framework consisting of four indicator groups (management effectiveness, financial efficiency, operational efficiency, and financial governance quality), tailored to the specific context of Laos – a developing country with high dependency on the state budget.

*Second:* In terms of practice, this is the first systematic and comprehensive research to assess the actual state of IFM at four key public universities in Laos (NUOL, UHS, SU, CU) for the period 2020–2025, based on a mixed-method approach combining secondary data analysis and field surveys. The dissertation reveals a profound differentiation in IFM capacity among universities, identifying three characteristic models: (1) High-stability model (SU); (2) Relatively stable model with bottlenecks (NUOL, CU); and (3) Unstable, dependent model (UHS).

The research also uncovers a paradox in management: expenditure control is very tight (98.4%), yet revenue execution effectiveness is low (94.9%), especially for self-generated revenue, exposing excessive dependence on the state budget and the ineffectiveness of the accounting – internal control system.

*Third:* regarding solutions, the thesis proposes a synchronized system of solutions with a high level of differentiation, oriented towards 2030. The solutions are structured into four closely interrelated main groups: (i) perfecting institutions and management processes; (ii) improving the capacity of staff and leadership; (iii) modernizing tools and applying information technology, digital transformation; and (iv) strengthening internal control and building a governance culture (including auditing, supervision, disclosure, transparency, and accountability). The breakthrough aspect is that the solutions are specifically differentiated, tailored to the characteristics and weaknesses of each group of universities. At the same time, the thesis provides layered recommendations addressed to the National Assembly, the Government, the parent ministries, creating favorable conditions for implementation, thereby contributing to improving governance efficiency and financial autonomy for the higher education system of the Lao PDR.

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