

A COMPARATIVE EXAMINATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING ROUTES IN ENGLAND AND VIETNAM

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Abstract

Becoming a primary school teacher in England and Vietnam involves distinct pathways shaped by different educational systems, cultural contexts, and professional requirements. In England, aspiring primary teachers typically complete a university degree followed by a post-graduate Initial Teacher Training (ITT) program, which includes both academic coursework and practical classroom experience. This is followed by the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The focus in England is on a comprehensive approach to teaching, incorporating a broad curriculum with an emphasis on critical thinking and student-centered learning. In contrast, Vietnam's process of becoming a primary teacher typically involves completing a specialized teacher education program at a university, followed by a state exam and certification. Teaching in Vietnam is more traditionally structured, with a focus on knowledge transmission and discipline, and professional development opportunities are often more limited compared to those in England. This comparative analysis explores the differences in training requirements, teaching methodologies, and career development opportunities for primary teachers in both countries, highlighting the influence of cultural, policy, and pedagogical factors in shaping the profession.

Key words: Primary teacher, Initial Teacher Training, Qualified Teacher Status, training requirements.

I. OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

Education systems around the world are structured to reflect not only a nation's socio-economic priorities but also its cultural values and long-term developmental goals. Understanding how education is organized and delivered at the primary level provides essential insights into teacher training, policy implementation, and learning outcomes. This paper aims to explore and compare the education systems of England and Vietnam, with particular focus on the structure of primary education and the professional pathway to becoming a primary school teacher. By outlining the governance frameworks and institutional structures in both countries, this analysis provides the necessary foundation for comparing their approaches to teacher recruitment, qualification, and compensation.

1. Primary school system

Education in England is monitored by the Department for Education. Local authorities are responsible for implementing policies for public education and state-funded schools at the local level. The education system in England is divided into four main parts, primary education, secondary education, further education and higher education. The state-funded education system is divided into age-based stages:

- Key Stage 1 - Foundation year and Years 1 to 2 - for pupils aged between 5 and 7 years old
- Key Stage 2 - Years 3 to 6 - for pupils aged between 8 and 11 years old;
- Key Stage 3 - Years 7 to 9 - for pupils aged between 12 and 14 years old;
- Key Stage 4 - Years 10 to 11 - for pupils aged between 15 and 16 years old, and
- Key Stage 5 - Years 12 to 13 - for pupils aged between 17 and 18 years old.

Generally key stages 1 and 2 will be undertaken at primary school and at 11 years old a student will move onto secondary school and finish key stages 3 and 4.

Children in England must legally attend primary and secondary education which runs from about 5 years old until the student is 16 years old. This paper only mentions primary school and how to become a primary state schoolteacher in England, then compared to becoming a primary school teacher in Vietnam.

Education in Vietnam is a state-run system of public and private education run by the Ministry of Education and Training. It is divided into five levels: preschool, primary school, secondary school, high school, and higher education. Formal education consists of twelve years of basic education. Basic education consists of five years of primary education, four years of intermediate education, and three years of secondary education. The majority of basic education

students are enrolled on a half-day basis. The main education goal in Vietnam is “improving people’s general knowledge, training quality human resources, and nurturing and fostering talent.”

Thus, primary school age in both countries is between 6 and 11 years old.

2. National curriculum

Primary schools in England cover KS1 and KS2 and teaching content is broad, covering the whole range of national curriculum subjects: English, math, science, art and design, computing, design and technology, geography, history, languages (at KS2), music, physical education (PE), including swimming. The national curriculum is organized into blocks of years called ‘key stages’ (KS). At the end of each key stage, the teacher will formally assess the child’s performance.

In Vietnam, children normally start primary education at the age of six. Education at this level lasts for 5 years and is compulsory for all children. The country’s literacy rate is over 90%.

According to the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2006 of Vietnam’s General Statistics Office, 96% of six to 11-year-old children enrolled in primary school. However, there was still a significant disparity in the primary education completion rate among different ethnicities. While the primary completion rate for Kinh students was 86%, the rate for ethnic minority children was only 61%.

In school year 2009-2010, Vietnam had 15,172 primary schools and 611 combined primary and lower secondary schools. The total enrollment was 7.02 million pupils, of whom 46% were girls.

The renovated primary education curriculum in Vietnam is divided into two phases as follows:

- Phase 1 includes Grades 1, 2 and 3 with 6 subjects: Vietnamese Language, Mathematics, Morality, Nature and Society, Arts and Physical Education.
- Phase 2 includes Grades 4 and 5 with 9 subjects: Vietnamese Language, Mathematics, Morality, Science, History, Geography, Basic Techniques, Music, Arts and Physical Education.

Primary school from grade 1 to grade 5. In primary school, students will study Vietnamese Language, Mathematics, History, Geography, etc. which are taught by one teacher called the homeroom teacher. Other subjects such Art, Music, Physical Education, etc. are taught by other teachers.

In 2017, the MOET announced that it would introduce foreign language and computer training starting in grade three and offers minority languages as an elective subject.

The curriculum emphasizes rote memorization, and the language of instruction is Vietnamese. Textbook learning increases in higher grades. Promotion is based on continuous assessment and year-end exams. A final exit examination

used to be required until the 2000s but has since been abolished. Students finishing primary level will continue to study secondary level.

3. Tests and assessments

In England, year 1 phonics screening check. The check will take place in June when children read 40 words out loud to a teacher. Parents will find out how their children did, and their teacher will assess whether he or she needs extra help with reading. If the child does not do well enough in the check, they'll have to do it again in Year 2.

Key stage 1 tests cover: English reading; English grammar, punctuation and spelling; math. Children will take the tests in May. Parents can ask the school for the test results. Parents will be sent the results of their children's teacher assessments automatically.

Key stage 2: The child will take national tests in May when they reach the end of key stage 2. These test the child's skills in: English reading; English grammar, punctuation and spelling; math. The tests last less than 4 hours. Parents will get the results in July. The school will send parents the results of their children's tests and teacher assessments.

In Vietnam, a school year is divided into two semesters: the first begins in late August and ends in December, while the second begins right after the first, which is about late January and lasts until the end of May. And there is no entrance exam during primary school in Vietnam.

II. BECOMING A PRIMARY TEACHER

1. Role of the Teacher in Primary School

The similarity between primary school teachers in England and Vietnam are responsible for teaching approved national curriculum subjects to pupils aged 6-11, guiding them through what is arguably the most important stage of their education.

A teacher will be using creative, interactive and engaging teaching methods to encourage pupils to actively participate in classroom activities and develop cognitive, numerical and verbal reasoning skills.

Teaching, however, is not all about working with young children in the classroom. Frequently, teachers will have to attend meetings with other teaching staff, write reports, undertake in-service training and meet with pupils' parents to discuss their children's academic progress at parents' evenings. Teachers also need to keep their skills fresh. Therefore, you'll be required to keep up to date on new teaching methods and developments in the curriculum.

The role of a teacher is to use classroom instruction and presentations to help students learn and apply concepts such as math, English, and science.

Teachers prepare lessons, grade papers, manage the classroom, meet with parents, and work closely with school staff.

However, being a teacher is much more than just executing lesson plans. In today's world, teaching is a multifaceted profession; teachers often carry the roles of surrogate parent, class disciplinarian, mentor, counselor, bookkeeper, role model, planner, and many other related roles.

Primary school teachers play an important role in the development of students. What students learn in their formative years can shape the men and women they will become.

Duties of primary school teachers include:

- Planning lessons that teach specific subjects, such as math, science, and English;
- Teaching lessons in whole-group or small-group configurations;
- Assessing and evaluating student's abilities, strengths, and weaknesses;
- Preparing students for standardized tests;
- Communicating student progress to parents;
- Developing and enforcing classroom rules;
- Supervising children in extracurricular activities (such as lunch, playground);
- Conducting in-class activities; and
- Planning field trips.

2. Becoming a primary state-school teacher

2.1 Primary state-school teacher in England

To become a primary school teacher in England, you will need to obtain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). There are various ways to do this:

- Study an undergraduate degree which automatically gives you QTS, such as a BA in Education.
- If the undergraduate degree does not grant the QTS, do a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), or a Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), if you study in Scotland.
- Alternatively, pursue one of four other postgraduate routes into teaching: School-centered Initial Teacher Training (SCITT), the Registered Teacher Programme (RTP), the Graduate Teacher Programme, or the Overseas Teacher Training Programme (OTTP). Moreover, do the teacher training as part of the popular Teach First scheme.

Some Methods to get Qualified Teacher Status (QTS):

a) Meeting the Minimum Requirements

- Have at least a GCSE grade of a 4 in English and math. GCSEs are earned in secondary school through the completion of a course of study in the subject area, followed by a successful performance on a standardized exam. If you teach primary or early years you will also need a GCSE grade 4 or

equivalent in a science subject, as well. Some teacher-training providers may allow equivalency tests but you need to check with each program to find out more. Until 2017, GCSEs were graded on a letter scale. In this older system, you would have needed to earn a grade of “C” or above.

- Earn a 2:2 undergraduate degree at a university in the United Kingdom. The 2:2 generally requires 3 years of university study or the completion of 300-360 credits. To earn a 2:2 means you have performed in the 50-60% range in your university courses. The 2:2 designation refers to the British honors system, which divides the conferred degrees into first-class honors, second-class honors, and third-class honors. 2:2 refers to the lower division of second-class honors. If you wish to teach a specific subject, you should earn your degree in that subject area. For example, earn a physics degree if you want to go on and teach physics.

- Pass a criminal records check through the Disclosure and Barring Service. When you apply for a teacher training program or school-based position, they will run a background check on you. Your acceptance into the program or position will be contingent upon the results of this check. The Disclosure and Barring Service will look for criminal records or restrictions based on your prior conduct and personal history. It’s best to declare all your convictions up front, so that your school and future employers won’t be surprised by what they find. Less serious convictions, including things like drug possession or minor theft, probably won’t count against you. If you have been convicted in the past of a violent crime or of any offense against children or vulnerable adults, this will prevent you from passing a criminal background check.

- Pass the professional skills test in numeracy and literacy. After you have applied, before you can enter a teacher training course, you will need to pass the professional skills test. You must demonstrate mastery of basic literacy skills including spelling, punctuation, grammar, and reading comprehension. The numeracy test examines your proficiency in basic arithmetic including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, percentages, measurements, time, and conversions. The UK Department of Education offers information sheets, study guides, and practice tests on their website.

b) Pursuing an Undergraduate Degree in Teaching

- Enroll in a teacher training undergraduate program. If you know you want to go into teaching right from the start, then attending a full-time undergraduate program in teaching is a good path for you. Visit university websites to learn more about their teaching degrees. Visit their admissions offices to discuss their programs in person.

- Earn a bachelor’s degree in education, Arts, or Science. BA and the BSc are popular options for those wishing to go into secondary school teaching in specific subject areas. If you want to teach primary school, the Bachelor of Education is the most popular choice.

- Complete a 2:2 degree in your teaching program. To earn QTS you need

to complete your undergraduate degree with a 2:2. This means you will need to maintain decent grades throughout your course of study. Most undergraduate degrees require 3-4 years of full-time study.

c) Completing a Postgraduate Certificate in Education

- Obtain additional subject training if necessary. If you want to specialize in teaching in a certain subject area you may need to complete more coursework. Check with your program for specific information about their requirements.

- Enroll in a Masters-level PGCE program that leads to QTS. There are three types of PGCE offered. Choose one based on the age you want to teach: Primary PGCE training prepares you to teach children up to the age of 11. Rather than QTS, you would apply for Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status at the end of your program.

- Complete your coursework and in-school training. Over a 9-month period, PGCE courses cover teaching and learning theory, classroom management, and current educational issues. You'll also spend up to two thirds of your time in school classrooms, teaching and learning.

d) Pursuing the School Direct Pathway

- Complete any additional education. If you choose to teach in a specific subject area that differs from your undergraduate degree, you will need to take a subject knowledge enhancement course, or SKE. These requirements vary from program to program, so check to find out what your program expects of you.

- Pay tuition to attend a School Direct program. With the School Direct (tuition fee) program, college graduates who meet all the other minimum requirements can apply to earn QTS while they work in the classroom. This route allows you to learn on the job as you earn your QTS recommendation.

- Earn a salary through a paid School Direct program. There are salaried School Direct programs that let you learn on the job, earn your QTS, and earn an income. This employment-based option is particularly available to high-quality applicants who can offer subject-area expertise in high-need areas. To apply you must be able to provide an employment reference. This path is typically open to individuals who have at least three years of relevant work experience. Increase your chances of success with this route through volunteering at schools or getting paid jobs as a teaching assistant, after school club counselor, summer camp counselor, etc. This can also lead to a PGCE, but you need to check with each individual program as this can vary from place to place.

All teachers will also have to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS, formerly known as CRB, or Criminal Records Bureau) check before they can work in schools.

Newly qualified teachers (NQT) begin employment with a 12-month probationary period, during which all teaching activity is supervised, and a moderated timetable is assigned.

Trainee teachers are also paired with a dedicated mentor, who provides support and guidance on development areas raised in the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programme.

Upon successful completion of the probation period, teachers need to fulfil continuing professional development (CPD) requirements. This can usually be achieved through designated teacher training days or offsite training at regional training centers.

Opportunities for career progression include positions with more administrative and management responsibilities and recognition as an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST in England). Another possible option is to complete the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), which trains people who want to become headteachers.

Alternatively, you could become an OFSTED inspector or work for an examination board. You could also explore opportunities for private tutoring and education consultancy.

2.2 The practice requirements for teachers in Vietnam

It depends on the level of education. Pre-school and elementary school teachers must have a professional secondary school diploma in teaching, usually awarded by secondary teacher training schools. Lower-secondary school teachers commonly hold a teaching diploma from a pedagogical junior college, whereas upper-secondary teachers must have a bachelor's degree in education from a pedagogical university. Holders of bachelor's degrees in other disciplines can obtain a teaching qualification by earning a supplementary one-semester teacher training certificate.

In 2014 the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) issued a directive that suspended this practice, but the ban seems to have been lifted, as universities are presently again offering these programs. Like other parts of Vietnam's education system, teacher education is changing. The MOET seeks to strengthen teacher training while simultaneously trying to respond to teacher's shortages.

In 2012, authorities estimated that the country lacked 27,500 pre-school teachers alone.

Students in the Pedagogical schools in addition to studying professional knowledge, also learn other subjects such as "Age psychology and pedagogical psychology" to help future teachers understand and apply Teaching methods suitable for each age group. In addition, students of foreign language pedagogy also learn the "Dharma teaching method" to help teachers who teach foreign languages in the future have methods of lesson planning and teaching suitable for each student.

Students who do not study the Pedagogy school are not allowed to study the above-mentioned subjects, so they need to learn to add a certificate called

“Pedagogical Accreditation Certificate” to be allowed to attend teach at schools and establishments.

Therefore, if you do not graduate from the Teacher Training College, you need to attend a course to guide your skills, lesson planning skills, teaching skills appropriate for each student age and end the course They will be awarded a Certificate called CERTIFICATE OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING.

For each age group, each subject requires different teaching & training methods; Therefore, in order to teach at primary, secondary, high schools, centers, intermediate schools, colleges and universities, if you do not graduate from the school of Education, you must attend the course of PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE. DEPARTMENT OF LIFE so that later when being admitted into schools, it is also possible to apply the teaching and training skills appropriate to each student.

In the past, universities often applied the type of Pedagogical certificates of Level I and Pedagogical Level II, but according to the latest MOET circulars, Circular No. 10/2013 / TT-BGDDT dated March 28, 2013 of the Ministry of Education and Training and Circular No. 12/2012 / TT-BGDT dated April 12, 2012, subjects with a bachelor’s degree not belonging to the pedagogical system want to become Teachers of High Schools, Intermediate, College and University can choose one of the two forms of Pedagogical Certificate training which is a certificate of professional education for middle school professional to apply for those who want to teach at the Primary, Junior, High and Middle schools - and CERTIFICATE OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR COLLEGES, UNIVERSITY STUDENTS apply to you who want to teach at the schools ng College, University of the country.

The types of pedagogical certificates applied to different levels of teaching are different. Currently, according to the latest guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Training (Circular No. 10/2013 / TT-BGDDT dated March 28, 2013 of the Ministry of Education and Training and Circular No. 12/2012 / TT-BGDDT dated April 12, 2012) / 2012), those who have a bachelor’s degree not belonging to the pedagogical system who want to become Teachers of High School, Intermediate, College and University can choose 1 of 2 forms of Certificate training Pedagogical profession is as follows:

- Certificate of Pedagogical Professional Training for Professional Intermediate Teachers: applicable to non-graduates of pedagogical schools who want to teach at primary, junior high school, and high schools.
- Pedagogical professional certificate for college and university teachers: applied to non-graduates of pedagogical schools who want to teach at colleges and universities across the country.

According to the professional training program of Pedagogical Education issued under Decision No. 61/2007 / QD-BGDDT dated October 16, 2007 of the Deputy Minister of Education and Training. Total credits: 25 credits (In which the minimum required knowledge: 21 credits; The amount of elective

knowledge: 04 credits). Specifically, the content of the credits program is as follows:

- Content of minimum compulsory knowledge: 21 credits;
 Career pedagogical psychology: 04 credits Vocational education: 03 credits;
 Organize and manage the teaching process: 03 credits;
 Teaching methods and skills: 04 credits;
 Researching pedagogical science: 02 credits;
 Communication and pedagogical behavior: 02 credits;
 Pedagogical practice: 03 credits;
- Content of the minimum elective modules: 04 credits;
 Development of TCCN training program: 02 credits;
 Examination and assessment in vocational education: 02 credits;
 Using teaching facilities and technology in vocational education: 02 credits;
 Applying IT in teaching: 02 credits;
 Career counseling for students: 02 credits;
 Quality management in vocational education: 02 credits;

Required conditions: To be able to teach at schools, in addition to graduating from University, having a Certificate of Education, hardening at Computer Level B, English Certificate B (equivalent to TOEIC 400), must also pass the entrance exams of educational institutions and meet the specific requirements of each school.

3. Salary

Comparative Overview of Primary Teacher Salaries in England and Vietnam.

In England, primary school teachers are remunerated according to a standardized national pay scale. Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) commencing their careers outside of London receive an annual starting salary of approximately £21,588. In recognition of the higher cost of living in urban centers, particularly the capital, teachers working within Greater London receive higher starting salaries, ranging from £22,626 to £27,000, depending on the specific zone in which their school is located. Salaries increase incrementally with experience, reaching up to £31,552 annually outside London and up to £36,387 within London. As teachers in England progress through their careers their salaries will increase on an incremental basis towards £31,552 per annum (outside of London) and £36,387 per annum (in London). In England, some teachers eventually become Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs). These teachers have the potential for higher earnings, ranging from £38,493 to £64,036 in London, and from £37,461 to £59,950 outside London.

Additionally, England's education system provides advancement opportunities for experienced teachers through roles such as Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs), whose remuneration is substantially higher. ASTs may earn between £38,493 and £64,036 in London, and between £37,461 and £59,950 elsewhere in

the country. This tiered structure is intended to incentivize career progression, specialization, and retention within the teaching profession.

In Vietnam, the salary framework for primary school teachers is defined through joint regulatory circulars, most notably Circular No. 21/2015/TTLT-BGDDT-BNV issued by the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Home Affairs. Under this system, public primary school teachers are classified into three main grades: Grade II, Grade III, and Grade IV, with corresponding professional requirements and salary coefficients.

- Grade II teachers (Code: V.07.03.07) are typically university graduates in Primary Education or related pedagogical disciplines and must hold second-level foreign language certification or an ethnic language certificate, along with demonstrated computer proficiency. Their salaries are calculated based on the A1 coefficient scale, ranging from 2.34 to 4.98.

- Grade III teachers (Code: V.07.03.08) are graduates of pedagogical colleges and must meet similar language and computer skill requirements. Their salaries are determined according to the A0 coefficient scale, ranging from 2.10 to 4.89.

- Grade IV teachers (Code: V.07.03.09) generally possess intermediate pedagogical training and basic foreign language and computer literacy. They are paid based on the B category coefficient, ranging from 1.86 to 4.06.

Salary from July 1, 2019 = Basic salary of VND 1,490,000 (equivalent to £50.37) / month x Current salary ratio.

Until mid-2019, salaries were computed by multiplying the teacher's coefficient by the base salary of 1,490,000 VND per month. As of July 1, 2024, Vietnam enacted significant salary reforms by increasing the statutory base salary to 1.8 million VND. This new baseline substantially enhances the income of public sector workers, including primary school teachers. For example, a teacher with a coefficient of 2.34 now earns approximately 4.2 million VND per month, excluding additional allowances and bonuses.

As of July 1, 2024, Vietnam implemented significant salary reforms for public employees, including primary school teachers. The statutory pay rate was increased to 1.8 million VND per month, serving as the foundation for calculating salaries. Under the new system, primary school teachers' salaries are determined by their position coefficients, which are multiplied by the statutory pay rate. For example, a teacher with a position coefficient of 2.34 would have a base salary of approximately 4.2 million VND per month (2.34×1.8 million VND). Additional allowances and bonuses can further increase a teacher's monthly income. In urban areas like Ho Chi Minh City, local policies have further enhanced teachers' earnings. The city increased salary coefficients by 1.8 times, allowing some teachers to earn up to 40 million VND per month, significantly higher than the national average. Looking ahead, a draft Law on Teachers proposes additional improvements, including elevating teachers' salaries to the highest level within the public service pay scale, enhancing al-

lowances based on work nature and location, and introducing early retirement options for preschool teachers. These measures aim to further support and retain educators across the country. In summary, the salary reforms and proposed legislation reflect Vietnam's commitment to improving compensation for primary school teachers, with variations based on location, experience, and specific job responsibilities.

Despite differences in salary structures and reform approaches, a common challenge persists in both countries: inadequate compensation remains one of the primary factors contributing to teacher attrition. Numerous studies and surveys have highlighted financial dissatisfaction among educators, especially among married male teachers who often bear additional family responsibilities. The perceived lack of financial security discourages many from entering or remaining in the teaching profession, with low wages frequently cited as a key deterrent compared to more lucrative career options.

The comparison of teacher salary structures in England and Vietnam reveals both systemic differences and shared challenges. England operates a relatively centralized and transparent national pay scale, adjusted for regional cost-of-living variations, with clear progression pathways such as the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) designation. In contrast, Vietnam employs a coefficient-based system rooted in public sector pay frameworks, with ongoing reforms aimed at improving flexibility and alignment with local economic conditions.

Despite structural differences, both countries face the persistent issue of low teacher compensation relative to other professions with similar qualification requirements.

In England, while career advancement can yield substantial salary increases, early-career teachers often report financial strain, especially in urban areas with high living costs. In Vietnam, although recent reforms—such as the increase in the statutory pay rate and local policy adjustments—have improved income levels in certain regions, disparities remain, particularly between urban and rural areas. Furthermore, both systems reflect broader socio-economic pressures.

In England, financial dissatisfaction contributes to declining retention rates and recruitment shortages, especially in high-demand subjects. In Vietnam, while government efforts indicate strong political will, structural reliance on coefficients and base salary multipliers may limit responsiveness to actual market dynamics and workload realities.

Crucially, in both contexts, salary concerns are not isolated; they intersect with issues of professional status, workload, and long-term career sustainability. Without meaningful and systemic improvements in teacher compensation, countries risk undermining educational quality and workforce stability.

4. Discussion

The tension between maintaining education as a public good and adapting it to market-driven demands represents a complex and ongoing policy challenge. On one hand, the low starting salaries of teachers, especially in early education and primary levels, suggest systemic underinvestment in the human capital essential to educational quality. This financial disincentive may discourage high-achieving individuals from entering or remaining in the teaching profession, thereby potentially compromising long-term educational outcomes.

Allowing preschool and general education institutions to organize demand-based classes presents a pragmatic approach to alleviating funding pressures. Such classes could be tailored to emerging societal needs—such as foreign language acquisition, STEM enrichment, or soft skill development—providing parents with more diverse choices and generating additional income for institutions. However, this model requires careful regulation to avoid deepening educational inequality. Without proper oversight, institutions might prioritize profit-driven courses over foundational subjects, or offer premium services that are accessible only to families with greater financial means.

Furthermore, the implementation of demand-based services must not undermine the foundational principle that education is a universal right guaranteed by the State.

Educational reforms should be guided by the dual aim of ensuring equal access to core curriculum and offering flexibility to meet varying local and individual needs. This requires a well-calibrated policy framework that delineates which aspects of education can be diversified and monetized, and which must remain standardized and state-funded. In both England and Vietnam, efforts to reconcile the public mission of education with the socio-economic realities of the 21st century should involve multi-stakeholder dialogue, empirical evidence, and robust monitoring mechanisms. Only through such a balanced approach can education systems evolve sustainably while upholding equity, quality, and responsiveness to societal change.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

1. Conclusion

To become a primary school teacher in either England or Vietnam, prospective candidates are required to fulfill a series of formal prerequisites, including obtaining necessary certifications and successfully passing standardized examinations. Despite these rigorous entry requirements, the starting salaries for new teachers remain relatively low, which poses challenges in attracting and retaining talent in the profession.

In light of this, one potential solution is to allow preschool and general education institutions to organize socially-driven demand-based classes as a means of supplementing institutional income. This approach not only contributes to the financial sustainability of educational institutions but also affirms the role of education as a public service, intrinsically tied to the social responsibilities of the State.

Beyond the fundamental obligation to provide equitable access to education in alignment with established standards, the education sector must also strive to address the diverse and evolving needs of society. This should be undertaken on the premise of upholding State-determined quality benchmarks and operational conditions, while simultaneously respecting the autonomy and willingness of service users. In doing so, education can fulfill its dual role: safeguarding public interests and responding dynamically to social demand.

2. Recommendation

To address these challenges, a multi-pronged policy approach is essential in both England and Vietnam:

First, governments should consider raising baseline salaries for early-career teachers to attract high-caliber graduates and reduce early attrition. This is particularly urgent in subjects and regions facing acute teacher shortages.

Second, beyond years of service, salary progression should increasingly reflect professional development, leadership roles, and contributions to educational innovation. Introducing performance- and responsibility-based incentives can help reward excellence and foster long-term commitment to the profession.

Third, Vietnam's recent decentralization initiatives—such as local salary coefficient adjustments—should be further supported by transparent guidelines to ensure fairness across regions. England could explore similar localized flexibility to address affordability and housing issues in major urban centers, while still maintaining national equity.

Fourth, salary reform should be accompanied by comprehensive teacher welfare policies, including support for workload management, ongoing professional development, mental health services, and housing allowances—especially in high-cost urban areas.

Finally, both systems would benefit from public campaigns and structural reforms that aim to restore the social prestige of teaching. Particular attention should be paid to encouraging underrepresented groups, such as male educators, to enter and remain in the profession by demonstrating that teaching is both a respected and financially viable career path.

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