



# Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education in Viet Nam: Different Stakeholders' Perspectives and Current Practices

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**Family Involvement in Early Childhood  
Education in Viet Nam: Different Stakeholders'  
Perspectives and Current Practices**

ベトナムにおける幼児教育への家族の関与  
—多様なステークホルダーの視点と現在の実  
践—

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## **ABSTRACT**

Recent research has shown that early childhood education (ECE) helps children not only with cognitive development, but also with building social competence and communication skills as well as to getting familiar with the learning environment in order to make a foundation for life long education. Family involvement in ECE creates positive effects on children's future learning outcomes. Thus, Education for All (EFA) Goal 1, 2000–2015, was to expand early childhood care and education (ECCE) and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4, Target 4.2, 2015–2030, focuses on improving the quality of ECCE.

Accordingly, the government of Viet Nam has continuously adapted its policies to attain these development goals since 2002. In 2010, the Prime Minister signed Decision 239 approving the proposal on universalization of pre-primary education for 5-year-old children, 2010-2015. One of the outcomes of the socialist era in Viet Nam is a high enrollment rate; however, this also causes parents to be reliant on the government and the public education system, including ECE. Thus, in order to change the situation, the government has launched the policy for extending the responsibility for support of education since 2008 to mobilize available sources from society and families in education. In addition, the new Child Law 2016 also requests that families support the universalization of ECE and collaborate with teachers to improve ECE quality. Nevertheless, family-school and parent-teacher relationships have recently experienced controversial issues due to the lack of mutual understanding and information sharing from both sides.

Parental involvement theory by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) suggests that the parental role construction and perceptions of the nature of involvement will determine the level and quality of parental involvement. Thus, it is important to understand different stakeholders' perspectives on involvement in their children's schooling for the ultimate purpose of improving ECE quality. Besides, research has shown that parents' and teachers' beliefs and expectations for children's education are affected by socio-cultural and historical orientations (Lawson, 2003), and research on family involvement in different countries and cultural settings gives different results (i.e. LeVine, 2004 and O'Gara, 2013), which matches Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory (1986). Moreover, although it has been found that extended family members have a significant role in children's development, most of studies in Asian countries focus on parenting within the immediate family, and research on extended family involvement in ECE is limited.

This study intends to fill gaps in the previous literature, with a particular focus on Viet Nam, by investigating the following research questions (RQ): (RQ1) How is family involvement in ECE perceived by different stakeholders? (RQ2) How is family involvement in ECE practiced? and (RQ3) How is family involvement in ECE perceived in extended families? The objectives of the study are to understand the perceptions of policy makers (government stakeholders) and practitioners (school stakeholders and parents) on family involvement in ECE, shedding light on the pathways through which families are involved and get involved. It compares and contrasts insights into rural-urban and public-private school settings, and explores family involvement in ECE in extended families since this is a unique characteristic of Vietnamese families that does not tend to be found in family involvement studies in developed countries. Beside Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theory and

Bronfenbrenner's theory to explain the connection among the questions, Epstein's six taxonomy of family involvement is utilized to investigate RQ2.

Together with document review of policies and reports, questionnaires for semi-structured interview were designed to collect data for this study. Since the purposive sampling technique is the most common for data collection in qualitative studies (Marshall, 1996), this research employed the maximum variation and the informant sampling techniques – both are sub-types of purposive sampling – to select participants for the interviews. The combination of these two techniques helps answer the research questions in the best manner because the key informants help provide the overall picture of the situation and the maximum variation sampling provides insights on the issue from different perspectives.

In total, 4 ministerial leaders and staff, 8 provincial officials, 16 district officials, 16 principals, 32 teachers and 32 parents of children aged 3 to 5 years were interviewed. Since this is a comparative study between rural and urban areas and between private versus public schools with some insights into extended families, the interviewed parents are limited to the parents of children who are living with both mothers and fathers and/or with their extended families. These interview participants are distributed equally in two central cities, namely, Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh (also the two biggest cities nationwide), and two medium-sized provinces, Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau, representing the north and south regions of the country. In each central city, one suburban and one urban district were selected. In each district of the two central cities, one public, one normal private, and one high-class private ECCE schools were selected. In each province of Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau, one public school in a rural district and one public and one private school in one urban district were selected because there are no private schools in rural districts of these provinces.

The questionnaires were designed based on Epstein's typology of family involvement with adaptation to the specific context of Viet Nam after the pilot study.

For qualitative data analysis, this study employed the induction method so that themes could be extracted and concepts generated. The data was organized into coherent patterns through the development of categories in order to demonstrate the phenomena under study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The first significant result of this study in applying Epstein's typology of parental involvement in ECE to the Vietnamese context is that it finds *paying schooling fees* to be a pathway of family involvement in ECE because "it implies parents' commitment." One important content of the policy on parental involvement in education is to encourage higher income parents to pay more for education by sending their children to private schools where the government does not provide financial support. In addition, the government spends a big amount of money to promote education in mountainous and poor areas. Thus, city parents can help share the financial burden so that the government can focus more on the expansion of access to ECE and quality improvement.

The second significant result is that rural and urban parental involvement is different in terms of *concerns, perspectives, financial contribution, types of parenting at home and parenting at school*. For example, in relation to home-based involvement, while parents in big cities and parents with high income tend to spend more money on their children, families in rural areas are likely to spend more time with their children. That is, while urban children go to extra-curriculum classes from English and math to swimming and art, rural children engage in more social communication such as playing with their siblings, being taken care of by their grandparents, and learning to count or learning to sing a song with their relatives. Significantly, concerning the school-based involvement, this study finds that the lack of rural school's leadership in initiating parental involvement and guiding them on how to be more involved are more important to explain the parent's perception gap on family involvement among regions. The perception gap of parents cannot be fully explained by the conventional way of thinking: the gap of educational background among parents, parents' wealth quintiles

or the limitation of internet and computer use in the rural areas. Therefore, even with almost the same parental role construction and rather similar perceptions, the actual practice of family involvement differs dramatically in rural and urban school settings. Given this finding, Taylor (1995) recommends that parenting workshops can assist in cultivating realistic expectations regarding development of their young children.

Thirdly, *parent-teacher communication* in high-class private pre-schools (so-called international pre-schools) is reported to *focus on difficulties due to language and culture issues*. Due to a long history of being colonized and struggling with wars in the past, Vietnamese grandparents and parents want to compensate for their lost time and opportunities in the wars, so they have worked hard to obtain the best opportunities for academic success of their children in the hope that their children would have a better future than themselves. They want their children to be able to receive the education provided by the most developed countries in the world, and for their children to be able to compete with international partners in the future. Further, they expect them to learn the curriculum in English from the beginning to shorten the gap and save time in the future. Even though they have to pay up to ten times more than normal Vietnamese private schools and fees can be twenty times higher than public pre-schools, parents still try to afford sending their children to study at the most expensive private schools. However, since the management committee and teaching staff in these schools are almost all foreigners, parent-teacher communication can be problematic. Consequently, educators must have an understanding of the status of parents and their attitudes toward child rearing (Hendrick, 1988 and Click, 1981).

Finally, parental involvement in extended families is observed to be due to the traditional custom that married couples have to live with the husband's family and be supervised by the husband's parents. Consequently, involvement in the extended family is seen differently by mothers and fathers, both positively and negatively. For instance, many mothers experience difficulties in reaching consensus on how to educate children inside the family and how to intervene or participate in their learning at school. This is

because of the sensitive relationship between the child's mother and her mother-in-law, a legacy of the Confucianism adopted from the thousand years of Chinese colonization (London, 2011). The conventional trend of this relationship is that the mother-in-law gives herself the right to make decisions and it is seen as not suitable for the daughter-in-law to defend her opinions. Thus, many interviewed mothers expressed that intervention of the child's paternal grandmother makes it difficult for parents to educate their child consistently in the way that they believe to be good for the child. For example, when the young mother teaches the child the behavioral manners such as the way of reasoning or critical argumenting (Western style), the grandmother teaches the child to obey adults without any reasoning, which means all that adults say or do are right, children are not taught to have their own opinions. These two ways of educating children create conflicts between the child's mother and grandmother. This is considered as one of the remained legacies of the impacts of Confucianism's educational philosophies (Dang, 2009). Although some mothers reported that they have applied positive listening and negotiation skills to get agreement with their mother-in-law through peacefully direct talks on how they should educate their young children, many other mothers complain that they feel stuck when dealing with this problem. Mass media such as TV or radio programs have recently launched some issues on this problem to explain more about generation gaps and how to deal with it, so it is expected that this matter will gradually change.

In short, the parental involvement theory by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) and the ecological system theory by Bronfenbrenner can explain the family involvement in Viet Nam in terms of history and culture, as discussed in the significant findings on how the colonized history and Confucian ideology influence parenting and family involvement. However, these two theories could not explain the influence of government policies on the practice of parental involvement in early childhood education: paying school fee (different from Epstein's typology of involvement) and the lack of school's leadership role that makes rural family involvement less active than



the involvement in urban areas. In conclusion, family involvement in ECE in Viet Nam is not only determined by parental role construction and the perceptions of family involvement, but it is also guided and shaped by the government policy and school policy; in other words, parents get involved not only because they decide to get involved but also because they are requested to.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AY	Academic Year
BOET	Bureau of Education and Training
CTR	Children-Teacher Ratio
DOET	Department of Education and Training
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
FI	Family Involvement
GSO	General Statistic Office
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMC	School Management Committee
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

## **LIST OF ACRONYM and TERMINOLOGY IN LOCAL LANGUAGE**

### **ACRONYM**

BOET	Phòng Giáo Dục và Đào Tạo (Bureau of Education and Training)
DOET	Sở Giáo Dục và Đào Tạo (Department of Education and Training)
ECCE	Giáo Dục Mầm Non (Early Childhood Care and Education)
GSO	Tổng Cục Thống Kê (General Statistic Office)
MOET	Bộ Giáo Dục và Đào Tạo (Ministry of Education and Training)
PTA	Ban Đại Diện Cha Mẹ Trẻ (Parent Teacher Association)

### **TERMINOLOGY**

Commune	Xã
Family	Gia Đình
Kindergarten	Mẫu Giáo
Nursery	Nhà Trẻ
Parent	Phụ Huynh (Cha mẹ)
Principal	Hiệu Trưởng
School	Nhà Trường
Teacher	Cô giáo
Village	Làng

## TERMINOLOGY

1. **Early childhood care and education (ECCE):** a wide range of interventions aimed at developing the whole child - the cognitive, social, emotional and physical development of children - theoretically from birth to age 7 or 8 before they officially enter primary education in order to establish a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing (UNESCO, 2005).
2. **Early childhood development (ECD):** a comprehensive approach to policies and programs for children from birth to eight years of age, their parents and caregivers to protect the child's rights to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential (UNICEF, 2001).
3. **Early childhood education (ECE):** any activities and/or experiences that are intended to effect developmental changes in children prior to their entry into primary school (Encyclopedia of Children's Health, updated 2017).
4. **Family involvement** in ECCE: parenting at home, communicating with teachers, volunteering in the classroom/at school, helping children to study (reading, numbering) at home, decision making and collaborating with the community (Epstein, 1995).
5. **Father/Mother:** Father/Mother of children aged 3 to 5.
6. **Grandmother/Grandfather/Grandparents:**  
Grandmother/Grandfather/Grandparents of children aged 3 to 5.
7. **Kindergarten:** is the level of pre-school education for children from age 3 to age 5. A Kindergarten can be a separated unit or can belong to a pre-school (Ministry of Education and Training, 2005).
8. **Pre-school:** of, relating to, or constituting the period in a child's life that ordinarily precedes attendance at primary school (Merriam-Webster dictionary).
9. **Pre-primary education (ISCED 0):** is defined as the initial stage of organized instruction, designed primarily to introduce very young children to a school-type

environment, that is, to provide a bridge between home and a school-based atmosphere (OECD, 2004, p.87).

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background of the Study

The world has obtained some remarkable movement since 2000 thanks to the establishment of the six Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) along with the commitments of most governments in developing countries and the support of developed countries in order to achieve these goals. While the deadline year 2015 for both EFA goals and MDGs has already passed, the missions were not completely fulfilled. Thus, continued action was clarified during the World Education Forum 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea in order to complete the unfinished agenda. Especially, the focus was shifted from access to education to quality of education. The priority for primary education during the period 2000-2015 was almost realized by 2015, and researchers and policy makers now recognize a need to focus on early childhood care and education (ECCE). Therefore, the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) is to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (Education 2030, p.20). A Framework for Action was also established in order to achieve this goal and its corresponding targets by 2030 (which is referred to as Education 2030).

Among the seven main targets of SDG4, Target 4.2 is set for ECCE, which states that “By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education” (Education 2030, p.20). This target meets the social justice for children which states that “all young children should have equal access to and fair treatment of ECCE, without any discrimination of gender, race, religion, age, belief, disability, geographical location, social class or socioeconomic circumstances” (Li et al. 2014, p.164). Results in a number of research have also presented that ECCE is a

foundation for life. Quality ECCE is associated to social and economic benefits (Campbell et al., 2014; Heckman & Masterov, 2007; and Vandell & Wolfe, 2000) and better child well-being and learning outcomes with ECCE as the foundation for lifelong learning (Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Jalongo et al., 2004; Vandell & Wolfe, 2000; Barnett, 1995; and Phillips et al., 1987). Mitchell (2009) and Heckman & Masterov (2007) also state that ECCE helps bring more equitable outcomes and reduction of poverty.

The birth rate of Viet Nam has continually increased during the last few decades with the average national birth rate in 2015 at a peak of 2.1 (highest in the last ten years) – rural 2.3 and urban 1.8 – as updated by the General Statistics Office (GSO) in 2016. The population of people aged 0-14 accounts for approximately 24% of the 90 million total population. Since this 24 percent of the human resource will become the main source of labor for the country in the next one to two decades, the socio-economic development of the country will depend heavily on the quality of this human resource, which means ECCE should be a focus in the development strategy of the country. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), experience from OECD countries have proved that ECCE helps increase intergenerational social mobility (OECD, 2009). Therefore, researchers and policy makers worldwide including Viet Nam have paid more attention to ECCE development.

In accordance with the development trend of education all over the world, the Government of Viet Nam has continuously adapted its policies to keep track with this trend, showing the commitment of the government in education development in general, and ECCE in particular. ECCE in Viet Nam has a long history dating back to late 1945 with government initiatives in establishing state-run kindergartens and nurseries. However, according to the report by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in 2015, before 2002, the government's responsibility for financial investment for ECCE development was very little. A small change started in late 2002 when the Prime Minister signed Decision 161/2002 to increase governmental financial investment for



ECCE development. The initial targets set out were very modest: state-run nurseries-kindergartens-pre-schools/ECCE schools<sup>1</sup> are only built for extremely disadvantaged communes<sup>2</sup> and the government encouraged people to establish non-public nurseries-kindergartens-pre-schools/ECCE schools in urban and more developed areas.

A big innovation in the policy is Decision 149/2006 by the Prime Minister in 2006 to define pre-school or ECCE as the first level of education in the national education system. With this new policy, the government made a greater priority for ECCE development and more financial investment has been borne by the state budget. In an effort to ensure the achievement of Education for All (EFA) Goal 1, in 2010 the Prime Minister signed Decision 239/2010 approving a proposal on Universalization of pre-school education for children aged 5 years for the period 2010-2015. The objective of the project was to assure readiness for primary education among 5-year-old children<sup>3</sup>. The total budget for this proposal by the government is 14.660 billion VN dongs (approximately 657.6 million US dollars<sup>4</sup>). The World Bank supported the MOET with 100 million US dollars in obtaining the goals of this project – this is the first budget from the World Bank for the development of ECCE in Viet Nam so far.

With better awareness of the government and schools on the importance of reading for children’s cognitive and future learning achievements, in late 2015, policy document no. 6841 by the MOET was delivered to all provinces in the country with the aim to renovate the libraries and develop the reading culture in schools and the ECCE institutions. One of this policy’s contents is to encourage ECCE teachers to spend time reading and telling stories to children regularly, and for teachers to also instruct and encourage parents to read books and tell stories for children regularly at home. On the

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<sup>1</sup> Pre-schools or ECCE schools means “trường mầm non” in Vietnamese language which is also translated as “young sprout schools” is the type of school that provides both nursery and kindergarten classes. Nursery means “nhà trẻ” and Kindergarten means “mẫu giáo” in Vietnamese language.

<sup>2</sup> An administrative unit under the district level in Viet Nam.

<sup>3</sup> The pre-school education for children aged 5 years in Viet Nam is defined as one-year pre-primary education by the MOET, which is not compulsory but is legally encouraged and supported by the Government.

<sup>4</sup> 1 USD = 23,000 VND (exchange rate of August, 2018)

other hand, the government has also urged for better-income parents to financially invest more in their children's development (Decree 69 in 2008 by the Central Government on Socialization of Education).

Especially, as progress has ensured children's rights legally as a whole, in 2016, the 13<sup>th</sup> National Assembly launched the new Child Law (No.102) which took effect on June 1, 2017 and replaced the Law on Child Protection, Care and Education by the 11<sup>th</sup> National Assembly in 2004. There are six new principal points in the new law compared to the 2004 law. Noticeably, the policy to universalize the school readiness program for children of 5 years of age to go to kindergarten is now written in the law with the statement that the government needs to have equivalent policies to ensure that all 5-year-old children go to the kindergarten to prepare for primary school. The law also states that parents and schools have to facilitate children's learning opportunities to ensure their development to their fullest potential.

Within socio-economic development (GDP growth rate at 6.2% according to GSO), the education sector has also gained its own achievements – with evidence from the results of the PISA<sup>5</sup> tests, for which Viet Nam ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in 2012 and ranks 8<sup>th</sup> in 2015 among all participated countries and regions. Since Viet Nam obtained universalization of primary education in 2000 and universalization of lower secondary education in 2010, it can be said that the young parents' educational background has improved a lot compared to two to three decades ago (MOET, 2015). Thus, parents' perception of education has also improved in general, which partially explains the increase of the enrollment rate in ECCE.

## **1.2. Problem Statement and Research Questions**

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<sup>5</sup> PISA is the abbreviation of Programme for International Student Assessment

A number of recent research has presented connections between families and children's schooling. Early childhood education (ECE) helps children not only with cognitive development, but also with building social competence and communication skills as well as to getting familiar with the learning environment in order to make a foundation for life long education; and family involvement in ECE creates positive effects on children's future learning outcomes (Christenson, 2000; Cooper et al., 2006, Mantzicopoulos, 2003; and McWayne et al., 2004). Urie Bronfenbrenner, one of the pioneering researchers in family involvement in ECCE, argues that "the family seems to be the most effective and economical system for fostering and sustaining the child's development. Without family involvement, intervention is likely to be unsuccessful, and what few effects are achieved are likely to disappear once the intervention is discontinued" (Harvard Family Research Project, 2006, p.1). However, it is noticed that most of the conducted research on family involvement (FI) in ECE are in developed countries.

Together with the adapting policies as presented in the background, the government of Viet Nam in collaboration with international donors has initiated efforts to develop an effective integrated model of ECD for preschool children. Findings by Watanabe et al. (2005) on early childhood intervention in rural Viet Nam suggest that early childhood program interventions for children aged 4–5 years increase the potential for cognitive development, particularly for malnourished children. In addition, along with the implementing and renovating of the revised curriculum over the last decade, Dang and Wendy (2014) examine the change of ECCE teachers' work according to the implementation of curriculum innovation since 2006 by the MOET and show the challenges that ECCE teachers face.

With Decision 149 by the Prime Minister in 2006 to define ECCE as the first level of the national education system, Decision 239 in 2010 by the Prime Minister to universalize one year pre-school for 5-year-old children, policy document no. 6841 by the MOET to encourage ECCE teachers and parents to read books to their children and

the new Child Law to protect rights of children, not only teachers' work has been changed, but the involvement of family in ECCE has also changed a lot in the last decade. Watanabe et al focus their research on nutrition intervention for young children only, and Dang and Wendy's work reflects the job of ECCE teachers from the perspective of curriculum. Since there has been no research investigating family involvement in early childhood development in Viet Nam so far, it is crucial to conduct this research; because home or family, as Halgunseth et al. (2009) states, is one of the two most influential systems for young children to develop – the other is the ECCE programs. Especially, with its typical social characteristics of the popularity of the extended family, findings of FI in ECD in Viet Nam may be different from most other developed countries. Not yet mentioning that fact that Viet Nam has achieved rather high enrollment ratios not only in early childhood education but also in primary education and the literacy rate in this country is much higher than other countries at approximately the same economic level (Hamano and Yonemura, 2007). One of the reasons explaining for this situation is the general enthusiasm about education among a great number of Vietnamese parents and a cultural tradition that prioritizes education and schools (Hamano and Yonemura, 2007; Ngo, 2011).

In addition, research on family involvement in different countries and cultural settings gives different results. For example, LeVine (2004) finds that Gusii mothers (in Kenya) are less interested in connecting with young children than American mothers; and Bidwell and Watine (2014) and O'Gara (2013) notice that African parents expect that a good preschool emphasizes academic skills whilst parents of high income countries agree with the play-based approach. In other words, parents' and teachers' beliefs and expectations for children's education are affected by socio-cultural and historical orientations (Lawson, 2003). Last but not least, although it is found that the extended family members have a significant role in children development (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; McAdoo, 2000; Valdes, 1999; and Hachett et al., 1993), there is little

to no research on parents' perception of extended family involvement in early childhood education.

Therefore, studying the insights of family involvement in early childhood education in Viet Nam prospects a significant contribution to the global literature. Based on the described background and presented problem statement, this study investigates the following questions:

**Question 1.** How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived by different stakeholders?

1.1. How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived by the *government stakeholders*?

1.2. How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived by the *school stakeholders*?

1.3. How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived by the *parents*?

**Question 2.** How is family involvement in early childhood education being practiced?

2.1. Through which pathways do parents actually involve in early childhood education?

2.2. How is family involvement in early childhood education being practiced in rural and urban areas?

2.3. How is family involvement in early childhood education being practiced in public and private kindergartens (in ECCE schools)?

**Question 3.** How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived in extended families?

3.1. Who are involved in educating children in extended families?

3.2. What are the mothers' perspective on other family members' involvement in educating their children?

3.3. What are the fathers' perspective on other family members' involvement in educating their children?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Because of the significance of family involvement in early childhood education (ECE) and the changing in the way of parents' practices of parenting and participation in educating young children as well as the shortage of previous studies focusing on this issue in Viet Nam, this research aims to investigate the current situation of family involvement in ECE in Viet Nam and to make an academic contribution to the theory of family involvement in ECE through the following four main sub-objectives:

*Firstly*, the study will explore family involvement (FI) in early childhood education in Viet Nam through the perspectives of policy makers (government stakeholders) and practitioners. The practitioners include school stakeholders (principals and teachers) and parents. The understanding of the perception of different stakeholders on family involvement in ECE will be helpful to understand the practice of FI in ECE in the Vietnamese country context.

*Secondly*, this study investigates current practices of family involvement in early childhood education (ECE) in Viet Nam. By revealing the pathways through which families are involved, the study will provide comparison between FI in rural and urban areas and FI in public and private kindergartens/pre-schools (ECCE schools). The private pre-schools will be classified into two categories: normal private pre-schools and high-class private pre-schools based on the schooling fees that parents have to pay to register their children in order to provide in-depth understanding of the Vietnamese context.

*Thirdly*, the study will explore family involvement in early childhood education in extended families since this is a unique characteristic of Vietnamese family compared to families in developed countries. Specifically, this study will realize which extended family members get involved in educating children and investigate mothers'

and fathers' perception of the influence of extended family member involvement on children's education.

#### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

This study is original and significant because of the following main reasons:

*Firstly*, this research analyses family involvement for early childhood development in Viet Nam using a qualitative approach. Most of the related research on family involvement in ECCE has been conducted so far in the United States of America (U.S.), United Kingdom (U.K.), Canada or similar developed countries, and they use quantitative approaches to define determinants to children's outcomes. For example, studies show that parental involvement improves children's academic achievement in the U.S. (Epstein, 1991; Hill & Craft, 2003; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999; Stevenson & Baker, 1987) or in the U.K. (Muijs et al., 2004; Reynolds, Muijs & Treharne, 2003). Other research focuses on increasing parental involvement through school leadership, such as Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler (1997), Hoover-Dempsey et al., (2005), and Kim (2009) in the U.S.; Edwards & Warin (1999) and Tett (2001) in the U.K.; and Deslandes & Bertrand (2005) and Li (2003, 2006) in Canada. One study in Southeast Asia by Zakaria et al. (2013) proves that family context in Malaysia contributes 41.1 percent to the involvement of parents at home and school. This study aims to grasp stakeholders from policy makers to practitioners' perceptions on family involvement, so it can make an academic contribution to family involvement theory with justification and elements collected from authentic people that quantitative studies using statistic data may have missed. In addition, this study can fill the gap of literature in low -and middle- income countries because very little research can be found in low -and middle- income countries that studies parents' perception of early childhood education (Kabay et al., 2017 and Bidwell and Watine, 2014).

*Secondly*, this research investigates family involvement in relation with the government policy perspective and school perspective, while most of other research in Southeast Asia only focuses on parenting within the family scope (Chang, 1995; Phanjaruniti, 1994; Kibria, 1993; Schelnfeld, 1993; Morrow, 1989; Chan, 1986; Wood, 1983; Suzuki, 1980; Kubow, 1977; etc.). Another study by Tran (2013), in the field of psychology, also discusses parenting in Viet Nam and focuses on parents' attitudes towards Western parenting behaviours and interventions, but also analyses parents' attitudes mainly within family context and limits the scope of the study to parents of primary and secondary students, not kindergarten age. Other studies found on ECCE in Viet Nam including Dang and Wendy (2014) focusing on ECCE pedagogy and Watanabe et al. (2005) focusing on nutrition intervention.

*Thirdly*, this study provides comparative perspectives between rural and urban parents' perceptions and practices. This is substantial because in developing countries like Viet Nam, urbanization causes problems (Kabay et al., 2017) and parents' perception can be very different between rural and urban (Keller et al., 2004). Besides, with the specific context of Viet Nam, this study provides comparison between private and public kindergarten/pre-schools, which can hardly be found in the literature. A study by Britto et al. (2014) on family involvement in early childhood education in Cambodia failed to cover the rural-urban and public-private angles.

*Last but not least*, with the fact that the extended family is popular in Viet Nam, findings of family involvement in early childhood education in this study will present unique perspectives compared to those of other countries, especially developed countries where extended family has almost disappeared. Especially, mothers' and fathers' perception on the influence of extended family involvement in early childhood education, which is very controversial in Viet Nam but could not be found in literature, will be covered in this study.



## **1.5. Organization of the Dissertation**

This dissertation will be structured into six chapters. Chapter 1 will be the introduction of the study with explanation on the background, problem statement, research questions, research objectives and significance of the study. Chapter 2 will give an insight into the history, development as well as government policy of ECCE in Viet Nam as well as the socio-economical context of family background (the co-existence of both core and extended family). Chapter 3 is literature review of previous studies on family involvement in early childhood care and education with explanation on applied model for this study. Chapter 4 will present the methodology of the study with details on research design, research framework, sampling, and data collection. Chapter 5 will present the findings of the study, and Chapter 6 will include the discussion of the significant findings of the study, statement of limitation and conclusion of the study.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

The main objective of this chapter is to present the academic background and findings of previous research, based on which this study is developed. It will firstly explain the definition of family involvement as an academic terminology used in this research and the positive impacts of family/parental involvement in education that have been studied so far. Secondly, factors influencing parental role construction and parents' perception of family involvement in education will be demonstrated throughout existing theories and previous studies. Thirdly, literature on perceptions of family involvement in early childhood education by different stakeholders will be explained, as a guiding light for research question 1. Then, pathways of family involvement in early childhood education that have been shaped by previous studies will be presented and will be later used as foundation for questionnaire and data collection of this study. In addition, comparative studies on family involvement in early childhood education will be discussed in relation with research question 2 of this study. Finally, family involvement in early childhood education in extended families will be presented as a premise for research question 3 of this study.

### **2.2. Definition of Family Involvement and Its Positive Impacts on Education**

#### **2.2.1. Definition of Family Involvement**

Results in varied disciplines have shown that family involvement has significant influence on children development; however, there is no exact common definition of family involvement or parental involvement in early childhood education to be adopted

by all interested stakeholders. For example, it is noticed in Young et al. (2013) that parents, teachers, and administrators have different definition and perception of parental involvement according to their different background and experiences. Another example is found in Bracke and Corts (2012) who concluded that family involvement covers both home-based and school-based activities at home and at school. This study applies the concept of family involvement provided by Bracke and Corts (2012) to included home-based and school-based involvement.

### **2.2.2. Positive Impacts of Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education**

It is seen that family involvement or parental participation in education has long been a topic of interest among educational researchers. In the case of early child care, parenting is unavoidable so it is not a controversial issue, but in case of sending children to nurseries or kindergarten, the collaboration or mutual communication between parents and schools become significant in giving the best resources and methods in raising the children exclusively. Furthermore, early childhood education is as complicated and controversial as any other levels of education. Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory in 1979 states that family and surrounding world affects the child (beside the factors within the child). He then in 1986 further developed his theory and stated that social, political, biological and economic conditions also affect the child.

All children are born with an innate of learning everything they perceive in the world, and "Parents are the children's first educators" (unknown). Even though the parents might not notice, children start to learn everything within their eyes and ears right when they are able to hear and to listen. Then, when the children start at school, it does not mean that education by parents stops. Parents' continued support and involvement increase children's achievements.

According to Cooper et al. (2006), good relationship between parents and children is not only meaningful to the family but also good for the children

academically. In addition, as already mentioned, Urie Bronfenbrenner, one of the pioneering researchers in family involvement in ECCE, believes that “the family seems to be the most effective and economical system for fostering and sustaining the child’s development. Without family involvement, intervention is likely to be unsuccessful, and what few effects are achieved are likely to disappear once the intervention is discontinued” (Harvard Family Research Project, 2006, p.1).

In addition, family involvement in ECE has been approved to create positive effects on children’s learning outcomes in the future (Henrich & Gadaire, 2008; Weiss, Caspe, & Lopez, 2006). Other research shows that parental involvement improves children’s academic achievement in the U.S. (Stevenson & Baker, 1987; Epstein, 1991; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999; Hill & Craft, 2003) or in the U.K. (Muijs et al., 2004; Reynolds, Muijs & Treharne, 2003).

### **2.3. Parental Role Construction**

The parental role construction as foundation for parental participation in education is developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995). Basically, parents’ perceptions and beliefs of child development and how to rear a child will determine their role construction in educating children. Based on that, parents decide to engage in education activities at home and at school in accordance with schools’ demand and children’s needs. In other words, parental perceptions will influence the parents’ commitment to involve.

According to Uemura (1999) and Bray (2000), there are six main rationales explaining why parental participation and family involvement are important: first, it can help maximize the limited resources; second, it helps recognize and tackle problems; third, it helps improve home environment; fourth, it contributes to education achievement; fifth, it helps guarantee sustainability and finally, it improves accountability.

Concerning the maximization of limited resources, in Viet Nam, the government has recognized the importance of mobilizing sources to supplement government's limited sources by launching the policy on socialization of education in order to impulse better income parents to invest financially more on their children's development so that the government can spend the state budget for more disadvantaged children (Decree 69 in 2008 by the Central Government). Besides, with the tradition of yearning for knowledge to improve life condition, parents in Viet Nam has a definite contribution to the academic results of their children since they really have a concern about that (Tran et al. 2003).

#### **2.4. Perceptions of Family Involvement by Different Stakeholders**

Blich (2017) interviewed 72 teachers and parents to studied on teachers' and parents' perception on teacher-parent relationship and communication. It is found that teachers perceive teacher-parent communication includes information sharing and cooperation, which is important in assuring the aims of ECE. This communication is to make sure that parenting and schooling approaches in educating children should be synchronized. In another context, Winder and Corter (2016) found parents are perceived by teachers to be less knowledgeable not only about curriculum, and teaching, but also about child development. Also in the same topic, Hughes and MacNaughton (2000) concluded that teachers expect to receive respect and understanding of family stakeholders concerning their knowledge so that they can maintain effective teacher-parent relationship.

As for parents' perception of family involvement, Yoder and Lopez (2013) studied on minority parents and found marginalized parents are keen on getting involved in young children's education; however, they are not proactive because they are unconfident and hesitate about talking to the teachers and other parents. On the other hand, Hilado et al. (2013) argued that the level of FI is related to the characteristics of pre-school program and family background. Therefore, cultural aspects cannot be

ignored in learning about family involvement in ECE. Therefore, more recent research has changed their focuses on school's role as initiator in increasing parental involvement (Epstein, 1995, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Kim, 2009; Edwards & Warin, 1999; Tett, 2001; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; and Li, 2003, 2006).

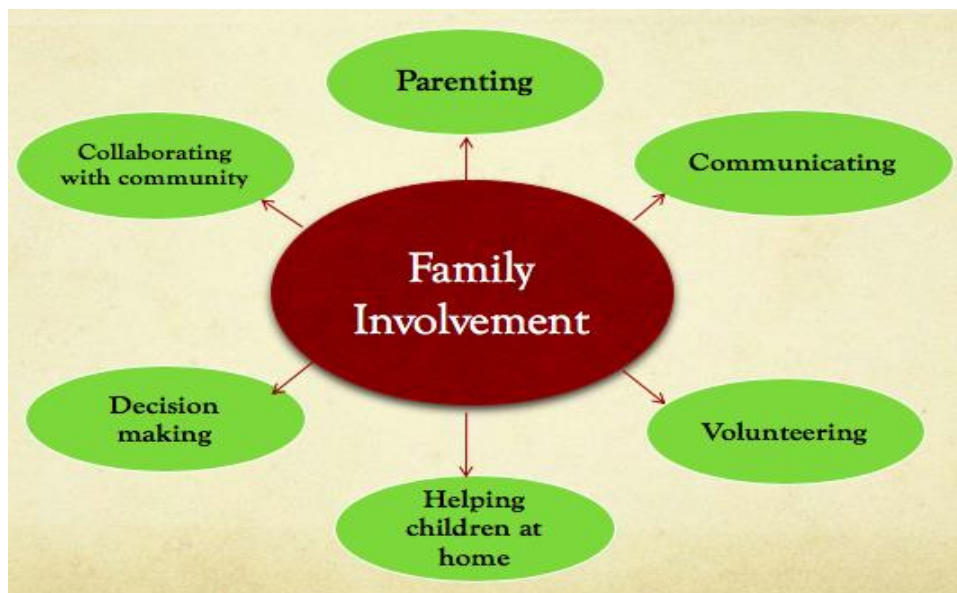
According Weiss et al (2006), *home-school relationships* are the formal and informal connections between the family and educational setting; or in other words, this can be understood as *communication* between family and school. This is an essential component of the parental participation because it refers to the transferring or sharing of information between school staffs and household members. Dimmock et al. (1996) clarifies this definition by stating that this communication process includes two facets: the school's communication to parents and the parents' communication to school. *Responsibility for learning outcomes* is an aspect of parenting that focuses on activities in the home and community in order to promote learning skills in the young child.

## **2.5. Pathways of Family Involvement**

Traditional pathways of parental involvement that have been studied so far have been primarily focused on parental behaviors and tasks that parents perform at home or at school including: parents talk with child about a day at school, parents communicate with teachers, participate in the parent-teacher association (PTA) and/or volunteer to class activities. They can also volunteer/take charge or actively partake in school trips or events; in some cases, parents can also help with fundraising for schools (Epstein, 1995). Last but not least, help children to learn or learn with children at home is considered as crucial (Mantzicopoulos, 2003; Rous et al., 2003; McWayne et al., 2004; and Carlisle et al. 2005).

As can be seen, the tasks covers both home-based and school-based activities performed by parents. Talking with child about a day at school is the first and also important task that a parent/ family member can do to engage in children’s schooling, through which parents understand more about the children and how they are raised and educated at school. Based on their talk with children, parents can easily communicate with teachers about their concerns of the children and will help parents and teachers cooperate better. The active participation of parents at school will rely much on schools’ leadership role.

**Figure 2-1: Epstein’s Model of Family Involvement (1995)**

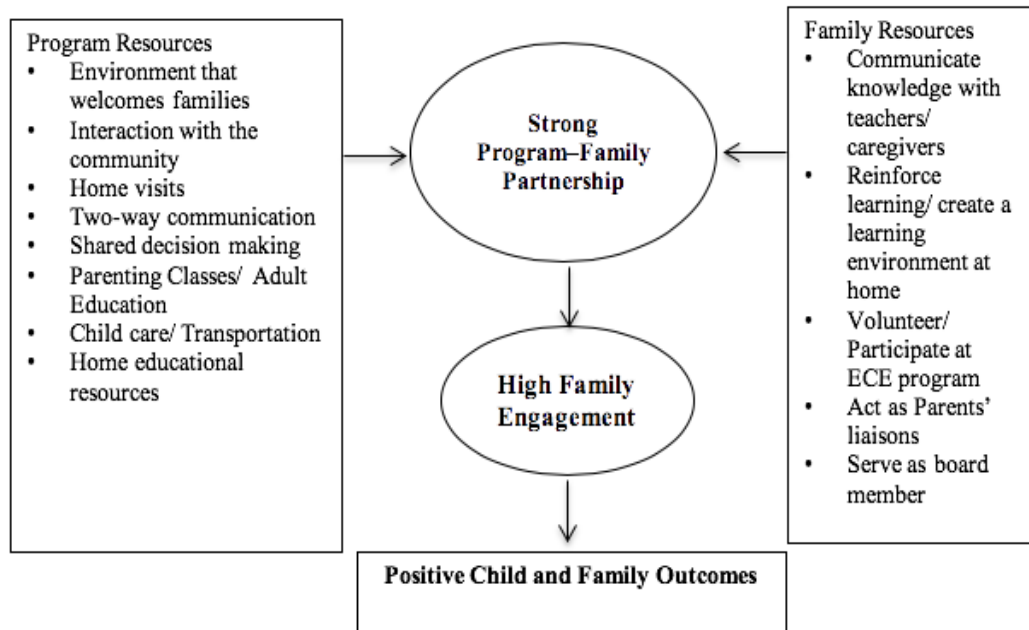


Source: Created by the author based on Epstein (1995)

Epstein (1995) is one of the pioneers in developing participating models for parents/families to get involved in educating children. In recognizing that there is no single model that can be applied to every child, Epstein suggests an appropriate cooperation among school-family-community to bring the superlative outcomes to each child. There are six elements in Epstein’s model of family involvement (FI) which are presented in Figure 2.1. Among the prototypes of FI that have been established,

Epstein’s model is the most well-researched and implemented so far (Caspé & Lopez, 2006; and Sanders & Simon, 1997).

**Figure 2-2: Social Exchange Model of Family Engagement**



Source: Halgunseth et al. (2009)

Halgunseth et al. (2009) analyze family-program<sup>6</sup> partnership based on social exchange and ecological theories, which include: “(1) evidence-based resources that early childhood education programs can offer to the program-family partnership, and (2) evidence-based resources that families can offer to the program-family partnership” (Halgunseth et al., 2009, p.7). According to them, the level of family engagement is closely related to the relationship between school/program and family/parents. In this sense, sources are needed from both sides and school and family have to work together for the benefits of children and children outcomes (Figure 2.2). This model may implies

<sup>6</sup> The word “program” implies ECCE programs. In Viet Nam, ECCE is considered as a formal level of education system according the Education Law; therefore, the places where ECCE services are provided are addressed as ECCE schools, except for the ECCE groups where the number of children enrolled is smaller than 100.



the social constructivism in family-school relationship in fostering education for early children.

## **2.6. Family Involvement in Comparative Perspectives**

### **2.6.1. Rural and Urban Family Involvement**

In developing countries like Viet Nam, rural and urban socio-economical conditions are very different, so it is crucial to study the family engagement in the local context, especially Viet Nam has a quite unique historical background of different imperialism or colonization such as China, France, and America. Previous literature has observed that family involvement in rural schools is limited, so some authors have initiated some debates on how the supply-side stakeholders can cooperate to take approaches that can foster the involvement of parents/family and society/community in education of children (Epstein, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997; Li, 2003).

On the other hand, Prater, Bermudez and Owens (1997) argue that family involvement may vary according to different characteristics of different communities and provide three important findings to support their arguments. Firstly, the finding on the frequency of talking between parents and children shows positive favor for the parents of urban areas. In addition, parents who talk more regularly with children about their schooling time also communicate more with teachers and pay attention to be present at meetings organized by school. To this extent, rural parents show lower performance than urban parents. Conversely, parents in rural areas were observed to be have higher attendance at the outdoor activities/events of school.

Secondly, sub-urban parents are put into comparison with parents of rural and urban areas. In this second result, two items are put into consideration: one is checking children's homework at home (home-based involvement) and prevent children from going out too much to play friends – keep them in control. For these two items, it is

found that rural and urban parents outweigh parents of sub-urban areas in the level of participation and controlling their children.

Lastly, parents control children on the amount of time watching TV. For this item, parents of urban and sub-urban areas share the same view and overshadow the parents in rural areas in the level of control, which means children in rural areas can watch TV with less supervision of parents (Prater et al., 1997). In a brief, it is seen that behaviors of parents varied across different communities namely rural, urban and sub-urban, and the patterns of different items are also very different and complicated, so it is very necessary to have in-depth study to understand the contextual features of parental involvement across geographical regions.

## **2.6.2. Public and Private Family Involvement**

Most of previous literature of family involvement in public and private schools focus on parents' school choice, in which the study attempts to explain the reasons why parents tend to choose private schools over public schools. For example, one of the reasons is that parents feel more respected and more listened at private schools; in addition, they also find it is easier to communicate with teachers in private schools than in public schools (Goldring and Phillips, 2006). Another observed factor is that parents' education background also indicates the likelihood of parents' choice in sending children to private or public schools (Long and Toma, 1988). Almost no literature was found to study the difference of home-based and school-based family involvement between families of children attending private pre-schools and families of children attending public pre-schools.

## **2.7. Family Involvement in Extended Family Cultures**

### **2.7.1. Family Involvement in Extended Family in Different Continents**

In some cultures, typically of developing countries in Asia, families of different generations living together (so-called extended family) are quite common. Therefore, together with father and mother, other family members in the extended families such as grandparents or elder siblings also participate actively or passively into the family education of young children (McAdoo, 2000 and Henderson and Mapp, 2002). The existence of extended family (three or more different generations living together under one roof) is very popular in Viet Nam, so the study of family involvement in ECE in extended family is very significant.

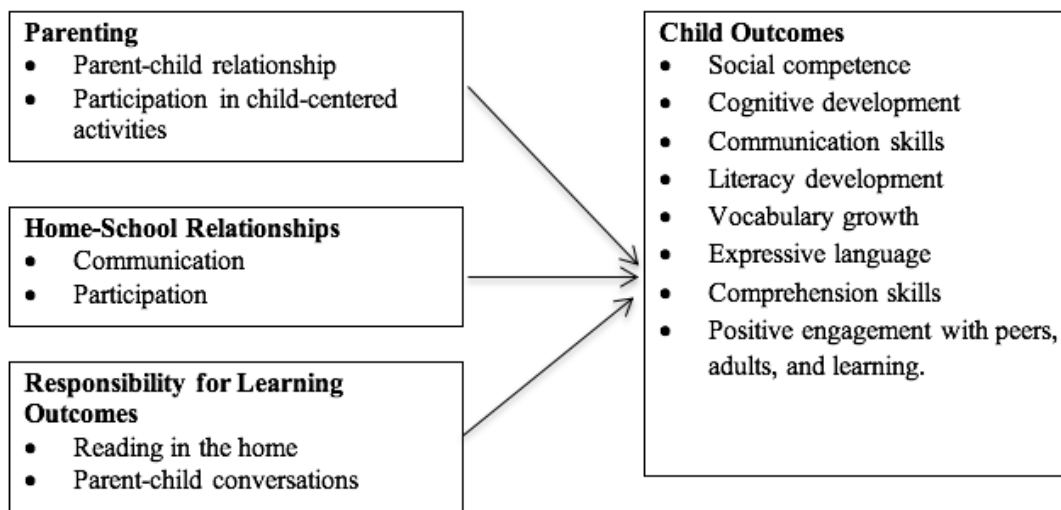
In addition, several studies in developed countries show the effects of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and siblings on children's educational outcomes (Fergusson et al., 2008; Barnett et al. 2010; and Jæger, 2012; ). Jæger (2012) analyzes the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study concludes that total effect of family background on children's educational attainment includes the effect of the immediate family (core family), the extended family and the interactions between the core and extended family. However, traditional parental involvement models have not paid attention to the role of these family members in children's development and learning.

In case of African American children, Hachett et al. (1993) found an important role of extended family members in helping young children to embrace cultural patterns. In another extent, Perry (2009) studies the difference of involvement of fathers between paternal and maternal extended African-American families. In this study, Perry measures how the support of paternal and maternal extended family influences the level of contribution of fathers to their child. The findings of the study show that support of paternal family has positive effect on father involvement while the support of the maternal family has negative effect on fathers' involvement in ECE.

Weiss et al. (2006) in the Harvard University Research Project on FI in ECCE have developed a model with evidence of family involvement and how it can affect children's development. Based on that, family involvement is categories into three

processes as illustrated in Figure 2.3. In the case of Viet Nam, this can be discussed widely in the context of popular existence of extended families where parenting does not only involve parents but also grandparents and other extended family members.

**Figure 2-3: Processes of Family Involvement and Young Children’s Outcomes**



Source: Weiss et al. (2006)

### 2.7.2. Extended Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education in Viet Nam

According to the Viet Nam Multiple Cluster Survey 2014 (MICS, 2014), 75.9 per cent of children from 36 to 59 months has an adult household member engaged in four or more activities that promoted learning and school readiness during the three days preceding the survey. These activities include: reading or seeing picture books together, telling stories, sing songs and taking children out for playing or sightseeing. However, only 26.2 per cent of children aged 0-59 months lived in households where at least three children’s books were present. The survey found that adults in urban areas engage more in these activities than those in rural areas do. The engagement level also differs among geographical regions and socio-economic status of the household. The best wealthy

household quintile has the highest involvement ratio in learning activities, reaching more than 70%. The poorest household quintile involves the least at less than 50%. Together with parents, siblings and other family members such as grandparents participate in taking care of children in both rural and urban areas.

According to MICS 2006, the most influential factor determining family involvement in ECE is the mother's educational background (MICS, 2006). More than 25% of children who were reported to be taken care of by less-than-10-year-old siblings are the children whose mothers did not enroll for upper secondary education. Among the mothers who have obtained a baccalaureate, only 6% of their children are reported to be let taken care of by less-than-10-year-old siblings.

## **2.8. Chapter Summary**

It can be seen throughout this chapter that the aforementioned literature of FI in ECE are mostly from developed countries, which means most of the findings are correct to socio-economic conditions of developed countries. Very few studies could be found in developing or low- and -middle-income countries. It is also seen in the results of previous research that family involvement in early childhood education causes positive impacts on early childhood development and their later life-long learning. Importantly, family involvement is affected by demographic, geographic and cultural factors, which causes the differences of family involvement in different geographic regions and different cultures. Thus, more research in the less-studied regions are very important in filling the literature gap and contribute to better knowledge of FI in ECE worldwide since local knowledge has become more and more important in this globalizing world. Last but not least, studies on family involvement in extend families have figured out that not only parents involve in children's education but other members such as grandparents, siblings and relatives also get involved, and in Chinese affecting cultures such as Viet Nam, these members have a very important role. However, very little

research has been conducted for this specific sphere of FI in ECE; therefore, more indepth study for insights of family involvement in extended family cultures is vital and will give significant academic contribution not only to the comparative education but also to the sociology.

## **CHAPTER 3: EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE) AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN VIET NAM**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter will firstly explain the usage of the key terminology in Vietnamese context, then present a brief summary of early childhood care and education (ECCE) development history. Together with the summary of the development history, family involvement in ECCE, especially family involvement in early childhood education (ECE) in different contexts will be explained. Then, the author will describe the legislation and existing system of early childhood care and education (ECCE) and government's policies to foster ECCE development in Viet Nam. Later, ECCE quality management and ECCE financing will be presented. Next, categories of current ECCE school types will be updated. Finally, national policies on family involvement in early childhood education will be explained and discussed.

### **3.2. Definition and Usage of Key Term in the Vietnamese Context**

*'Early childhood care and education'* (ECCE) in Viet Nam is defined as a formal education level belonging to the national education system, for children from 0 to 6 years old. Enrollment in ECCE is not compulsory but strongly encouraged by the government. The terminology 'Giáo dục mầm non' in Vietnamese language literally means 'Young sprout education' but its definition is equal to ECCE when translated into English. The Viet Nam National Education for All Review 2015 issued by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) sometimes uses the term '*pre-school*' to refer to ECCE and both terms are used interchangeably in the document. *Pre-primary* is used for education of children of age 5 to prepare readiness for primary school (World

Bank School Readiness Program in Viet Nam, 2012-2016). The ECCE system, as well as all other levels of education in Viet Nam, is governed by the MOET. For the convenience of terminology usage, from now on, the terms “ECCE school” and “pre-school” will be used interchangeably with the same meaning and can sometimes be addressed shortly as “school” only. If it is not specifically mentioned as “primary school” or “secondary school”, all the words “school” used singly in this dissertation are understood as “pre-school” or “ECCE school”.

### **3.3. History of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Viet Nam**

Because of the historical and political context, the origin of the current system of Early childhood care and education (ECCE) or pre-school in Viet Nam dates back to 1945 when Viet Nam got its independence and established the first Vietnamese government. The formation of ECCE is realized by Order 146 in 1946 signed by President Ho Chi Minh which states “early education level is for children under the age of 7 and is organized based on the permitted condition of the Ministry of National Education” (Report on 60 years of ECCE development by the MOET, 2006).

During four decades since its beginning in 1945 till the end of the 1980s, nurseries (for children aged 0-2) and kindergartens (for children aged 3-6) were operated separately as two different systems (the MOET, 2006). The very first kindergarten in Viet Nam named Tay Ho was established on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945 in the center of Ha Noi, recruiting 20 children of age 3-5 (the MOET, 2006). Three years later, about 10,000 children were enrolled in kindergartens (Table 3.1).

During the years of the resistance war (1946–1954), kindergartens and nurseries were operated in demilitarized areas to protect children from war and; moreover, to support Vietnamese women so that they could contribute to the resistance war and spend time and effort for the agriculture production. When Viet Nam was completely



independent from the French colonization (1954), the government immediately started to prepare for an education reform to re-build the country's economy and to re-unite the two parts (north and south) of Viet Nam (Kelly, 2000).

**Table 3-1: Key Achievements of ECCE Development from 1945 to 1986**

		1945	1948	1964	1975	1986
Number of Teachers	Kindergarten		200	5,682		57,204
	Nursery	0				
Number of Classes	Kindergarten		300	4,944	32,600	57,204
	Nursery	0			33,000	40,579
Number of Children	Kindergarten	20	10,000	149,000	1,200,000	2,782,178
	Nursery	0			550,000	

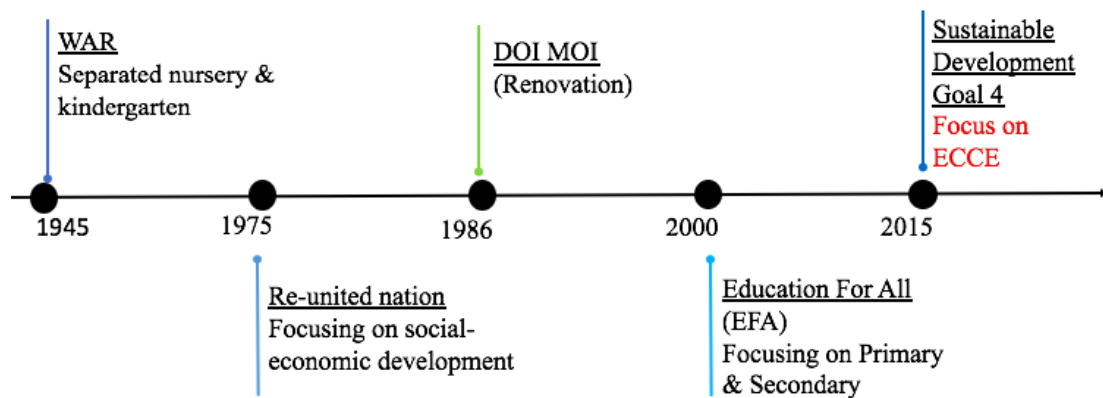
Source: Created by the author based on the MOET (2006)

During the 1960s and 1970s, Viet Nam suffered serious economic hardship owing to the American War. During this time, the operation of the nurseries and kindergartens are prioritized for two main objectives as following: “to safeguard children’s lives, protect their health and to take care of them so that their mothers can devote to the resistance against the American to defend the country” – stated in Regular 153 by the Prime Minister on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1966. During this time, most of the classrooms were allocated deeply under the ground or in the big A-shaped tunnels functioning both as a shelter and a safe learning place against the bombs (the MOET, 2006).

After the country’s victory in 1975, the school system was extended across the country and the government paid more attention on the management of the early child care and education quality. Research on early child care and education started together with the establishment of the Committee for the Protection of Mothers and Children (CPMC) in 1971. Research during this time focuses on health, nutrition, psychological

and linguistic development for children. To upgrade the ECCE quality, in 1972, the first Central College for ECCE teacher training was originated and then became the foundation of the later-on established colleges (the MOET, 2006). The government then also started rural kindergartens based on community operation and let the CPMC manage nurseries for children under 3 years old (Boyd and Dang, 2017). Thanks to that attempt of the government to extend the ECCE system, by the end of 1986, there were more than 153,000 ECCE teachers throughout the nation and nearly 2,8 million children could be enrolled in kindergartens (Table 3.1).

**Figure 3-1: Vietnamese ECCE in History and Development Context**



Source: Created by the author based on the MOET (2006)

In 1986, the Vietnamese government launched Doi Moi Policy (Renovation) that transferred Vietnamese economy from a centrally-planned system to a socialist-oriented marketing economy. Thus, the established kindergartens that used to be wholly supported by the government were challenged. As a result, childcare participation rates decreased from 27% in 1987 to 13% in 1992 because children were cared for at home due to parents' unemployment during the early stages of the reform (Boyd & Dang, 2017), which is equal to an annual decrease of 34,949 children accessing to

kindergartens from 1987 to 1992 (the MOET, 2006). In some provinces, kindergartens were almost erased during this time. In order to manage the crisis, initiatives were adopted to maintain state-run kindergartens and permit private kindergartens to be constructed and operated as well as to promote the enrollment of 5-year-old children in full-day kindergarten programs (UNESCO, 2004).

Before 1987, there used to exist the Ministry of Education and the Committee for the Protection of Mother and Children (CPMC); then, these two were united to form the current MOET (UNESCO-UNICEF, 2012). The Department of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) was born in 1991 as a unit in the MOET (UNESCO-UNICEF, 2012). The Central ECCE Department at the MOET take charge of the nationwide ECCE program. ECCE Offices under the Provinces' Department of Education and Training (DOET) are responsible for pre-school teacher education and training. In 1996, there were 2.8 million children being enrolled in ECCE nationwide (Boyd and Dang, 2017). However, it is not until 2006 that ECCE or pre-school was defined officially as the first level of the national education system by the Prime Minister under Decision 149/2006.

### **3.4. Government's Key Policies in Fostering ECCE Development**

It can be said that the greater interest in ECCE services mirrors the prominence of policies and practices to improve the steadiness of development; in addition, the quality of the ECCE programs and services is of major interest to early childhood development. In 1998, the Vietnamese government launched the first education law allowing the establishment of semi-public and community ECCE institutions in Viet Nam. The main purpose of this is to encourage richer parents to pay more for better facilities and for the state to assist development of ECCE in hardship areas (UNESCO-UNICEF, 2012).

In 2005, the new education law (Education Law 2005) was launched, replacing the law issued in 1998, with Article 10 focusing on the target of education for all with priority to be given to ethnic minorities, communities in poverty, and disabled and/or socially disadvantaged groups. The Education Law 2005 identifies the official language of education is Vietnamese, but the ethnic minorities might be taught in their own local language, where possible, in order to preserve their cultural identity and to help them access to education more easily (UNESCO, 2011). In November 25<sup>th</sup> 2009, the Education Law 2005 was amended to apply universal access to education for all 5-year-old children. Decision No. 239 in 2010 by the MOET to support lunch for children of age 5 at pre-primary schools was one of the efforts of the government to accomplish universal access to education for 5-year-old children. Another main content of Decision 239 is to raise parents' awareness of the importance of ECCE to their children's future development and encourage parents to support their children's early education and care.

With better awareness of the government officers and school leaders on the importance of reading for children's cognitive and future learning achievements, in late 2015, policy document no. 6841 by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) was delivered to all provinces with request to renovate the libraries and to foster the reading culture in schools and ECCE institutions. One of the main contents in this policy is to command ECCE teachers to spend time reading and telling stories to children as well as to instruct and encourage parents to read books and tell stories for children regularly at home. On the other hand, the government also urging for better-incomed parents to financially invest more on their children's development by sending them to private schools, for example. (Decree 69/2008 by the Central Government on socialization of education).

Especially, the 13<sup>th</sup> National Assembly in 2016 launched the new Child Law (No.102/2016/QH13) which took effect from June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. There are six principal new points in the new law compared to the previous law issued in 2004. These six new points of the new Child Law 2016 include: i) the change of the name from "Law on

Child Protection, Care and Education” to “Child Law”; ii) add more items to the definition of disadvantaged children: seriously physically and mentally injured children due to violence, labor-exploited children, traded children, poor children with serious diseases, refuged children without parents or guarantors; iii) add more items to the list of children rights: religion freedom, privacy, alternative nurture and adoption; being protected from sexual harassment, labor exploitation, violence, human trading, natural disasters, armed conflicts; rights to receive social welfares, and rights of non-nationality or refuged children. In addition, children also have responsibilities with themselves, their family, their schools, their community, society, their hometown and their country; iv) government has responsibility to issue policies to guarantee children’s rights to health care, education, entertainment, information, culture, sports and tourism, etc.; v) identify three levels of child protection: prevention, support and intervention; and vi) Children’s rights to raise their voice in children’s matters is added, with the Ho Chi Minh Central Youth Union as their highest representative.

Noticeably, the policy to universalize school readiness program for children of 5 years of age to go to kindergarten is now mentioned in the law with the statement that “the government needs to have equivalent policies to ensure all 5-year-old children to go to the kindergarten to prepare for primary school” (Child Law 2016, Article 44). The law also states that “parents and schools have to facilitate children’s learning opportunities to ensure their development to the fullness” (Child Law 2016, Article 98, 99).

### **3.5. Current System and Development of ECCE in Viet Nam**

#### **3.5.1. The Current System**

According to the MOET, there are three types of ECCE institutions at both public and private sectors namely: nurseries, kindergartens, and ECCE schools. Nursery is defined

as the service provided for children from 18 to 24 months old at public sector and 3 to 24 months old at private sector (may be different depending on specific private institution). At nursery, only child care is provided, there is no education at this level. Kindergarten is defined as the service provided for children from 3 to 5 years old at both private and public sector. Kindertartens provide early childhood education plus necessary child care of the relevant age. Most of the ECCE institutions nowadays provide both nursery and kindergarten services and are called “ECCE schools” (Table 3.2). In general, both public and private ECCE schools have to follow the curriculum provided by the MOET. Some private schools may have their own curriculum and extra activities for children but they need to assure that all the MOET curriculum is covered.

**Table 3-2: Categories of ECCE Institutions in Viet Nam**

	<b>Nursery</b> (Nhà trẻ)	<b>Kindergarten</b> (Mẫu giáo)	<b>ECCE School</b> (Trường Mầm Non)	<b>Curriculum</b>
<b>Public</b>	18 months to 24 months	3 to 5 years old	18 months to 5 years old	MOET
<b>Private</b>	3 months to 24 months	3 to 5 years old	3 months to 5 years old	MOET’s curriculum combined with schools’ own curriculum if any.

Source: Created by the author based on pilot study (2016)

Besides, there exists a so-called “early child care groups” (nhóm lớp mầm non - in Vietnamese language), which is similar to an ECCE center but not an ECCE school, which means they do not have a school management committee. They are individual-owned and normally managed by the owner (one person). They all have less than 100 children enrolled at a time, and if the number of children exceeds 100, they are or must be upgraded into a private ECCE school. The Commune People’s Committee<sup>7</sup> has the

<sup>7</sup>Commune People’s Committee is Ủy ban nhân dân xã in Vietnamese language – the word “commune” means “xã”, which is a collection of rural villages or urban communities and is an administrative unit directly under the district.

authority to sign the decision to establish the ECCE groups in the commune. However, the Commune People’s Committee will have to collaborate with the district office of education and training (Bureau Office of Education and Training or BOET) in the management of these small groups.

**Table 3-3: Number of ECCE facilities from AY 2009-10 to 2014-15 in Viet Nam**

School Year	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Total	12,357	12,908	13,172	13,548	13,867	13,867
<b>Nursery</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>
Public	29	23	22	24	17	14
Non-public	12	16	6	10	9	10
<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>2,870</b>	<b>2,877</b>	<b>2,560</b>	<b>2,807</b>	<b>2,709</b>	<b>2,520</b>
Public	2,302	2,416	2,400	2,549	2,529	2,403
Non-public	568	461	160	258	180	117
<b>ECCE schools</b>	<b>9,446</b>	<b>9,992</b>	<b>10,584</b>	<b>10,707</b>	<b>11,132</b>	<b>11,659</b>
Public	4,704	5,895	8,028	9,146	9,585	9,962
Non-Public	4,742	4,097	2,556	1,561	1,547	1,697

Source: Created by the author based on MOET (2015)

In 2010, MOET has launched a new policy to transform all the semi-public or community schools into private or public schools (Circular 11 in 2009 issued by the MOET). By 2014, the transformation of all the 1,789 semi-public or community ECCE schools (100%) into public and private had been successfully completed (MOET, 2016). As seen in Table 3.3, although total number of ECCE facilities increases steadily from 12,357 to 13,867 institutions during 2010 - 2015, the number of nurseries decreases sharply from 41 to 24 (nearly a half) after 5 years and the number of kindergartens also decreases slightly during this period.

This can be explained by the fact that the birth rate in Viet Nam decreases continuously between 2010 and 2015 (the World Bank data, 2016), and at the same

time the number of ECCE schools have increased significantly from 9,446 schools in academic year 2009-10 to 11,659 schools in academic year 2014-15, which means that more children have been enrolled into ECCE schools instead of nurseries or kindergartens. This shift can be explained by the fact that ECCE schools often offer better facilities and when enrolling into ECCE schools, parents can avoid troubles of moving their children from nurseries to kindergartens, so they children can stay in the same school throughout the years.

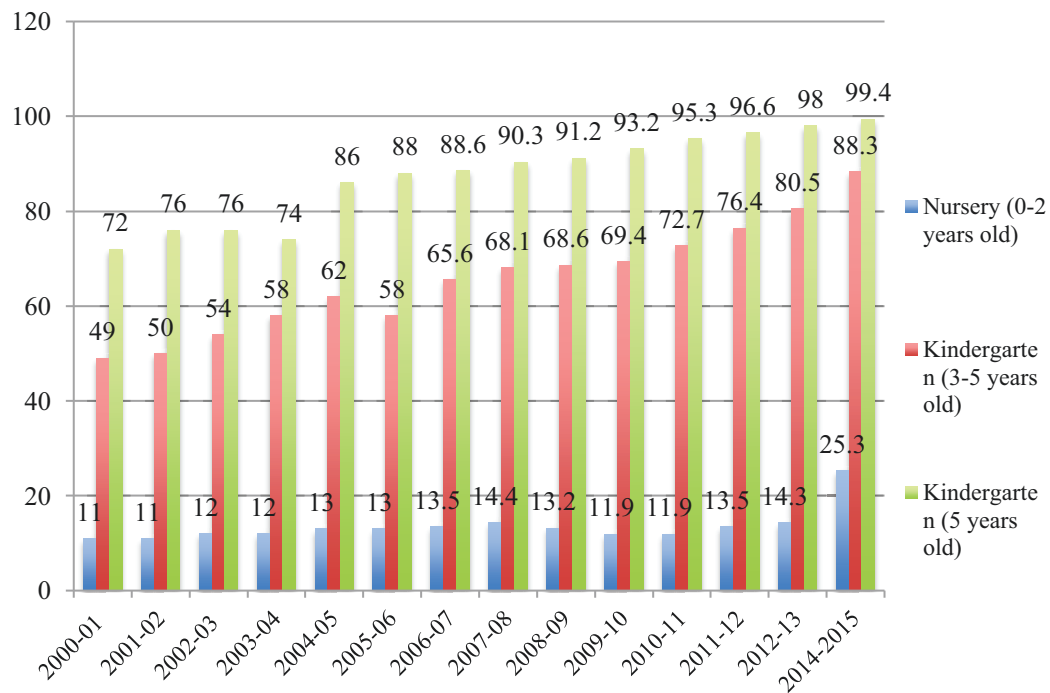
### **3.5.2. Current Development of ECCE in Viet Nam**

In the academic year 2000-01, enrollment rate to kindergarten was less than 50 percent and enrollment ratio to nursery was only 11 percent. However, with the government's big effort in changing policy as well as financial support, by the school year 2014-15, the enrolment rate of children into nursery was 25.3% (a more than twice increase after 15 years), the enrolment rate of children aged 3-5 into kindergarten was 88.3 percent and of 5-year-old children was 99.4% - almost all 5-year-old children have attended kindergarten (Figure 3.2).

Decision 239 in 2010 by the Prime Minister to approve the proposal on universalization of pre-school education for children aged 5 years for the period 2010-2015 plays a vital role in this national achievement. The enrollment of children in ECCE system keeps growing in the past 15 years (Figure 3.2) and in school year 2014-2015, population of enrolled ECCE children accounts for 19.9 percent of the whole enrolled students in the national education system from Pre-primary to University (Figure 3.3).

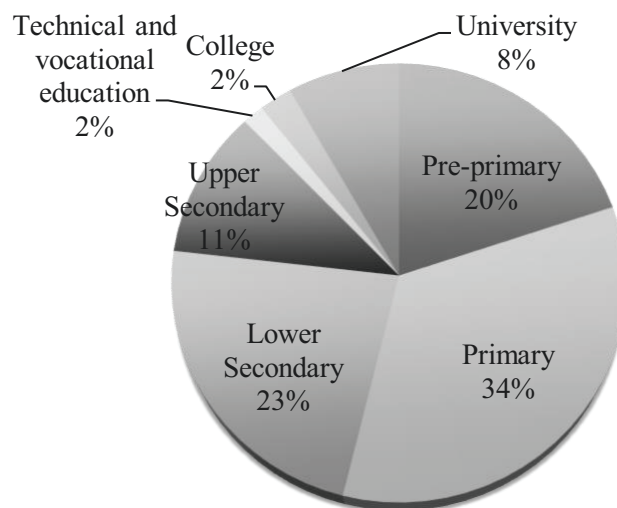


**Figure 3-2: Annual Enrollment Rate in ECCE by Age Group, 2000-2015**



Source: Created by the author based on MOET (2016)

**Figure 3-3: Student Population by Level as Percentage of Total in AY 2014-2015**



Source: Created by the author based on MOET (2015)

As seen in Figure 3.2, enrollment of 5-year-old children reached 99.4 percent in school year 2014-2015, which means the objective of universalization of pre-school for 5-year-old children is almost done. In addition, enrollment rate of kindergarten children (3-5 years old) also increased sharply between 2012-2013 and 2014-2015. Within just two years, the enrollment rate for kindergarten level increased almost 8%, from 80.5% to 88.3%.

### 3.6. ECCE Quality Management for Children Aged 3-5

In Viet Nam, a school year starts on September 5<sup>th</sup> annually and the official age for children to enter primary school is 6, which means children finish ECCE school at the end of age 5. However, there are children who reach the age of 6 later than September of the year and have to wait until the following September. By then, they are already in the middle of age 6. Therefore, kindergarten is extended to those children of age 6 while they are waiting to enter primary school.

**Table 3-4: Children-Teacher Ratio in ECCE**

School-year	Number of ECCE pupils	Number of ECCE teachers	Pupil-teacher ratio
2006-2007	3,147,252	163,809	19.21
2007-2008	3,195,371	172,978	18.47
2008-2009	3,305,391	183,443	18.02
2009-2010	3,409,823	195,852	17.41
2010-2011	3,599,663	211,255	17.04
2011-2012	3,873,445	229,724	16.86
2012-2013	4,148,536	244,478	16.97
2013-2014	4,227,047	263,499	16.04
2014-2015	4,416,852	277,684	15.91

Source: Created by the author based on Ministry of Education and Training (2015)

Though stated in the Law of Education that ECCE is not a compulsory school level, the government has paid more and more effort on developing ECCE recently. Thanks to the government's policies on training of staff in order to enhance quality of pre-school education and achieve universalization of pre-school education for 5-year-old children, the number of teachers since 2008 has grown faster than the growth rate in number of children enrolled in pre-school. Therefore, children-teacher ratio in ECCE decreased from 19.21 children per teacher in the 2006-07 to 15.91 children per teacher in 2014-15 (Table 3.4). This decrease in children-teacher ratio means that teacher can take care of each children better and class management will also be better, resulting in a better quality of ECCE outcomes. However, this can also be a financial burden for the government to have to pay salary for more teachers with less revenues from tuition fees.

In comparison of the children-teacher ratio (CTR) of nursery and kindergarten between public and private sector, it is recognized that CTR at private nursery is higher than that of public sector (12 compared to almost 10). In AY 2013-14, CTR of public kindergarten was higher than that of private kindergarten but in 2014-15 it changed, so in 2014-15, CTR of both nursery and kindergarten in public sector is lower than that of private sector. This may imply a better-quality management at public sector than private sector. In addition, the percentage of teachers with standard qualifications or higher increased from 93.53% in the academic year (AY) 2013-14 to 94.69% in AY 2014-15, which means 95% of ECCE teachers are qualified teachers, showing a good quality management of ECCE at national level (MOET, 2015).

The program for pre-school education for children aged 3-6 years is provided and supervised by the MOET. The aim of the curriculum is to support children in getting comprehensive physical, cognitive, linguistic, emotional and social skills together with aesthetic development. The program is designed for 35 weeks per year, five days per week, excluding summer holiday and other national holidays. One day at kindergarten is designed differently at schools but must follow the basic instruction

based on time allocation for different activities instructed by the MOET (Table 3.6). The curriculum content for kindergartens or kindergarten level at ECCE schools is divided into two main categories: 1) health care and child caring; and 2) education.

**Table 3-5: Children-Teacher Ratio (CTR) for Nursery and Kindergarten**

Year	Sector	Nursery			Kindergarten		
		Children	Teacher	CTR	Children	Teacher	CTR
2013-	Public	438205	43993	9.96	3186387	179512	17.75
2014	Non-public	174776	14562	12	427679	25432	16.82
2014-	Public	494387	47968	10.31	3280109	188640	17.39
2015	Non-public	167490	14198	11.8	474866	26878	17.67

Source: Created by the author based on MOET (2015)

**Table 3-6: Time allocation for one-day activities at the kindergarten/ ECCE schools**

Time Allocation	Activities
80-90 minutes	School open to receive children, let them play and make them do the morning exercise
30-40 minutes	Children learn with teachers
40-50 minutes	Teachers divide children into groups to play at different corners inside the class
30-40 minutes	Children play outside
60-70 minutes	Children have main course
150 minutes	Children sleep
20-30 minutes	Children have snacks
70-80 minutes	Children play or are given free time
60-70 minutes	Children prepare to go back home and teachers return children to their parents/family members

Source: Created by the author based on MOET (2009)

### **3.6.1. Health Care and Child Rearing**

According to the ECCE guiding book provided by the MOET, health care and child rearing include four main categories as following:

*Food and meals:* As for food choice, all schools have to contract accredited food companies to assure the quality of safe food for children. During eating time, class teachers will also support to organize eating space and management of eating room as well as observe around to give immediate actions when there is something happening to the children or their meals.

*Children's sleeping:* Class teachers are responsible for noon time sleep of the children i.e. remind them of sleeping time and give necessary support, make sure that all children sleep, give reasonable intervention when there are fights or disturbing actions between/among the children. A standard noon nap at kindergartens last for 150 minutes (about 2.5 hours).

*Cleaning and sanitary:* Teachers need to instruct children on how to keep themselves clean and support in needed cases. Besides, children are also taught to be aware of keeping or making the living environment clean including classroom, toys, equipment, water and water resources.

*Health care and children's safety:* At kindergarten, children get health check periodically provided by the health department of the district. Teachers have to make records of weight and height development of each child by age. Teachers are also educated to be aware of malnutrition and obesity of children, and inform school managers and parents as soon as possible, to cooperate for treatment or prevention. Besides, teachers need to have skills to help children prevent common diseases. In addition, tracking immunization and safety education are required.

### 3.6.2. Education

Curriculum of education at kindergarten as regulated by the MOET must cover five main contents presented below:

- Physical development education includes: muscle/physical movement practice and health and nutrition education;
- Cognitive development education includes: science discovery, getting familiar with basic concepts of math, and social discovery;
- Linguistic development education includes: listening, speaking, and getting familiar with reading and writing;
- Emotional and social-skill development education includes: emotional development education and social skill development education; and
- Aesthetic development education includes: helping children recognize and enjoy the beauty of nature, human and art, and listen to and move in the music; drawing, claying, puzzle, tearing and sticking papers to create shapes.

The MOET provides together with the curriculum a detailed description of the requirements for each education content to be gained as well as clear instructions on how to get them with specific steps to be followed. A study conducted by Dang and Wendy (2014) on ECCE curriculum in Viet Nam focusing on the job of ECCE teachers from the perspective of curriculum changes through education innovation policies by the government since 2006 reveals changes and obstacles in teachers' job. The obstacles are caused by the change in the curriculum of ECCE program initiated by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). According to Dang and Wendy, Viet Nam has made significant progress in meeting accessibility, affordability, accountability, sustainability and social justice goals in ECCE. However, constant investment of financial & human resources (teacher training), is vital to make ECCE more uniformly across the country.

### 3.7. Financing for ECCE in Viet Nam

The overall education system has experienced changes since the Budget Law 1996 and 2002 with administrative authorization being made more decentralized to local levels. Thanks to that, provinces have more autonomy in spending on education although they have to follow the MOET's regular instructions (MOET, 2016). According to the report on education financing by the MOET in 2015, before 2002 government's responsibility for financial investment for ECCE development was very little. Small changes started in late 2002 when the Prime Minister signed Decision 161 to increase governmental financial investment for ECCE development. Nevertheless, the targets set out were very modest: state-run nurseries, kindergartens and ECCE schools were only built for extremely disadvantaged communities<sup>8</sup> and the government has encouraged its people to establish non-public nurseries, kindergartens and ECCE schools in urban and more developed areas.

A big innovation in the policy is Decision 149 in 2006 by the Prime Minister to define ECCE as the first level of education in the national education system. With this new policy, the government has put more priority for ECCE development and more financial investment has been borne by the state budget. In an effort to ensure the achievement of Education for All (EFA) Goal 1, in 2010 the Prime Minister signed Decision 239 to approve the proposal on Universalization of pre-school education for children aged 5 years for the period 2010-2015. The objective of the project was to assure readiness for primary education among 5-year-old children<sup>9</sup>. The total budget for this proposal by the government is 14.660 billion VN dong (approximately 657.6 million US dollars<sup>10</sup>). The World Bank financially supported MOET with 100 million

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<sup>8</sup> In the case of Viet Nam, it is called "xã" and translated into English as communes, which is an administrative unit under "district" – the highest level is central government, next is provinces, then districts.

<sup>9</sup> The pre-school education for 5 years old children in Viet Nam is defined as one-year pre-primary education by the MOET, which is not compulsory but is legally encouraged and supported by the Government.

<sup>10</sup> 1 USD = 22,291 VND (exchange rate on March 16, 2016)

US dollars in obtaining the goals of this project – this is the first budget from the World Bank for the development of ECCE in Viet Nam so far.

According to the Central Government Resolution of 2008, government expenditure on education was targeted to reach 20% of the entire government budget by 2010. However, the target was achieved by the end of 2008 and it has been maintained around 20-21% since 2008 up to the present. According to Decision No. 59 in 2010 by the Prime Minister, around 20% of national budget expenditure would be spent for education annually, which is equivalent to approximately 5.5% of GDP - comparatively higher than other Southeast-Asian countries.

Since 2005, the target has been to allocate at least 10 percentage of total public expenditure on education for ECCE level (MOET, 2014), and as of 2012, the percentage of public expenditure allocated for ECCE reached 14.4%, which is much higher than the target (Table 3.7). Government expenditure on ECCE as a percentage of total GDP also increases sharply in the same period, doubling after 4 years, from 0.4% in 2008 to 0.8% in 2012, which is higher than the average in OECD countries (0.5% in 2010).

**Table 3-7: Government expenditure on education and on ECCE, 2008-2012**

Year	GDP (A)	Expenditure on education (B)	Expenditure on ECCE (C)	C as % of B	C as % of A
2008	99,130,304,099	3,483,827,554	394,598,717	11.3%	0.4%
2009	106,014,600,964	4,233,547,172	478,219,909	11.3%	0.5%
2010	115,931,749,904	5,189,358,934	639,675,205	12.3%	0.6%
2011	135,539,487,317	6,138,800,413	825,669,553	13.5%	0.6%
2012	155,820,001,920	8,341,976,582	1,203,759,365	14.4%	0.8%

Source: Created by the author based on the World Bank and Ministry of Finance (2014)

Note: Unit in US dollars



**Table 3-8: Local and Central government expenditure on ECCE**

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total ECCE budget	140,445,539	212,187,946	241,474,543	343,240,404
Central government	257.23	0	0	4,209,302
Local governments	140,445,282	212,187,946	241,474,543	306,031,102

Source: Created by the author based on Ministry of Finance and MOET (2015)

Note: Unit in US dollars

As seen in Table 3.8 above, government budget for ECCE increased sharply between 2011 and 2012 - from about 241.5 million dollars to about 343 million dollars, an increase of 42% in one year. Due to the decentralization in education financing system as mentioned above, the majority of the government expenditure on ECCE comes from local governments. The usage of each financial source for ECCE is displayed in Table 3.9. According to the Budget Law, the main sources of finance for public ECCE institutions in Viet Nam include:

- State budget: covers salary (both teaching and non-teaching staff), school construction and facilities, school management, procurement and repair, basic teaching tools and materials, health check and teacher training for ECCE quality;
- Tuition fee;
- International donation (ODA or loans); and
- Socialization: mobilize incomes for schools from parents, individuals, entrepreneurs, associations, and organizations.

**Table 3-9: Use of Each ECCE Source**

	Usage of the source	Beneficiaries
<b>Central government</b>	Allocated together with local governments' sources	Public pre-schools
<b>Local governments</b>	Teachers' salary, construction, facilities (limited), teaching materials (limited), disadvantaged students' stipends	Public pre-schools
<b>Private sector</b>	Facilities, teaching materials, scholarships	Public and Private pre-schools
<b>External sources</b>	Technical assistant training, lunch support	Public and Private pre-schools

Source: Created by the author based on field study in Viet Nam (2016)

### 3.8. Categories of Existing ECCE School Types

It is noticeable that in 2009 MOET launched a decision (Circular No. 11/2009) to transform all community schools into public or private schools, and by the end of year 2014, all community or semi-public schools were successfully transformed into public or private schools. Therefore, up to this moment, there are only two types of pre-schools in Viet Nam: Public and Private.

#### 3.8.1. Public ECCE School

There are two types of public ECCE school: *national standard type* – Type I (mostly in urban areas with good facilities and high teacher quality) and *standard type* – Type II (meeting the minimum requirements by the MOET). All the public ECCE schools are supervised by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and need to follow the ministerial guidance on mechanism, school fees, teaching materials and other class activities.

Type I schools focus on teaching quality and good facilities to support children's learning and playing to the best. The advantages of these schools are: high-qualified teachers with good pedagogical skills; large school area with clean and well-equipped classrooms and playground. The school fees in these schools range from 1,800,000 dongs to 3,000,000 dongs (~85-140 US dollars) per month (based on regulations of MOET plus payment for extra-activities), which are very reasonable because they are subsidized by the government. However, to get children enrolled in these schools are quite difficult because of the competitiveness and the crowded population in these urban areas. These schools organized a number of extra-curriculum activities or clubs such as English, sports, arts and music classes.

Type II schools can be found almost everywhere, mostly in suburban and rural areas, sometimes people call these as rural village schools. This is also public schools and subsidized by the government; however, these schools are much more smaller than Type I schools because they are distributed equally among local residents to assure the close distance (less than 2km) from home to school. These schools use the curriculum and teaching materials as assigned by the MOET. Teachers are normally at minimal standard and slow at updating new teaching method or new technology and knowledge. Extra-curriculum activities or clubs (like in Type I schools) are hardly found in these Type II schools. School fees of the Type II is based on regulations of the MOET, ranging from 1,000,000 dongs to 1,500,000 dongs per month, lower than Type I due to the absence of the extra-curriculum activities. Enrollment to these schools are quite simple, especially with children of local residency.

### **3.8.2. Private School**

#### **3.8.2.1. Normal Private School**

These schools are established by individual person (private) with permission of the local government. However, there is almost no subsidize or support from the government. These schools are often small, with few classrooms and limited playground with limited equipment. The main function of these schools are to take care of the children, so there are few activities and teaching materials as well as un-updated teaching method. Teachers are not strictly recruited with less requirements on qualification and pedagogical skills than in public schools. School fees range from 1,000,000 dongs to 2,000,000 dongs per month including meals.

### **3.8.2.2. High-Standard Private School and International School**

#### **Vietnamese High-Standard Private School**

This type of kindergartens/pre-schools also adopts the curriculum provided by the Ministry of Education and Training (compulsory); however, a number of lessons and extra-curriculum activities are organized and delivered in English. English-speaking teachers involve in 30-50% of the total curriculum. Recently, international education methods such as Montessori, Reggio Emilia or Waldorf are adopted by these schools to attract more parents to send their children to these pre-schools. Although the land area and facilities are from small to medium size, these schools are assured to have playground, swimming pool and physical exercise areas for the children. Especially, these schools often organize extra-curriculum activities such as art workshops or school trip to let children play with and learn about the nature for children and are highly appreciated by the parents (urban areas). School fees in these schools may range from 5,000,000 dongs to 15,000,000 dongs per month (approximately 250~750 US dollars).

## **International School**

Generally, international schools adopt international curriculum with English as main delivery language and they do not have to follow the curriculum guided by the Ministry of Education and Training. The majority of these schools in Hanoi have two types of classes: 100% English curriculum type and bilingual curriculum type (50% English and 50% Vietnamese). In Ho Chi Minh city, beside the same types as in Hanoi, there is one more category of international schools namely German International School, American International School, British International School, etc. Each of these schools adopts their own curriculum and languages. For example, the German International School delivers the curriculum in German and English and teaches Chinese as an added foreign language. These schools provide really good facilities with international standards; however, the school fees are very high for Vietnamese people, ranging from 700 US dollars to 2000 US dollars. These school has a lot of interesting extra-curriculum activities, really good facilities with separated swimming pool, sports fields, musical room, dancing room, art room, etc. It is assumed that these schools have the best facilities and conditions for the best development of children including linguistic, cognitive and physical development.

For the convenience of terminology usage, the high-standard private Vietnamese pre-schools and the international pre-schools will be combined together into one category and be addressed as “high-class private pre-schools” or “high-class private ECCE schools” in this study.

### **3.9. Policies on Family Involvement**

In awareness of the importance of family involvement in education in general and in early childhood education in particular, the Vietnamese Government has attempted to

foster family involvement in education through a number of policies and some articles in laws. Among the policies related to or covering the content of family involvement, there are three documents that are important to refer to family involvement in early childhood education, including: Education Law 2005 (Amendment 2009) where family involvement in education is understood as a legal right and responsibility, Decree 69 in 2008 by the Central Government (with Amendment Decree 59 in 2014) on socialization of education, and Circular 6841 in 2015 by the Ministry of Education and Training to foster reading for/with children at home and at school, with schools' leadership role especially in rural areas in improving reading culture for children.

### **Decree 69/2008 (Amendment Decree 59/2014): Socialization of Education**

This Decree issued by the Central Government on incentive policies for private sector involvement in education and training and often addressed as “chính sách xã hội hóa giáo dục” in Vietnamese language, which means “socialization of education”, including three main contents as following: to search for and encourage more sources of funding for education including families by law; to facilitate administration procedure for the establishment of private schools; and search for public-private partnership (PPP).

### **Circular 6841/2015**

This circular was issued by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in 2015 in order to foster schools' leadership role in improving reading culture among teachers and parents by requesting them to read for or with the small children to nurture reading culture for children in the future as well as for cognitive and linguistics development of children as suggested by psychological researchers. There are four main points in this circular as following:

- Develop & renovate library system in schools, so that teachers have more access to books, which is expected to help increase reading time and reading frequency among teachers for/with children;
- Improve reading at school: this is set as a goal to be obtained by schools;
- *Encourage parents to read for children at home; and*
- *Schools guide parents* on how to read for children.

### **3.10. Chapter Summary**

This chapter has shown that the Vietnamese government has made high commitment to ECCE development with evidence of high enrollment rate, reasonable teacher-children ratio in class and government's expenditure on early childhood care and education. In addition, the ministry of education and training has recognized parents' role in fostering ECCE development; thus, policies on family involvement in early childhood care and education have been launched. In addition, this review chapter shows that there are existing different forms of ECCE schools (so-called pre-schools) in Viet Nam, including both public and non-public schools.

## **CHAPTER 4: METHOD**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the scope of this study, theoretical framework, conceptual framework and hypotheses in relevant to its research questions. Then, details on the research design will explain the method through which the author use to find out the answers to the research questions. Next, the author will explain how the sample is designed, how the sample size is decided and how the data will be collected. After that, descriptive information of sampled provinces, districts and schools and sampled participants will be provided. The author will then explain why the research design and research method can guarantee the validity and reliability of this study. Last but not least, ethical issue is always a critical issue in conducting qualitative research.

### **4.2. Scope of the Study**

As explained in the terminology, ECCE or pre-school in Viet Nam is for children from 3 months to 5 years of age (Article 21, Law of Education). ECCE as the first level of national education system is under the management and supervision of Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). According to the MOET, ECCE is divided into two sub-cycles: nursery for 0-2-year-old children and kindergarten for 3-5-year-old children. The nursery program focuses mostly on taking care of the child (hygiene, nutrition and health) with different child care programs separated for children of 3-6 months, 7-12 months, 13-18 months, and 19-24 months. Kindergarten curriculum is designed year by year: curriculum for 3 years old children, curriculum for 4 years old and curriculum for 5 years old children, which are all designed based on the same framework but level of difficulty for each activity is advanced when age increases. That is within the same



time frame and the same activity but requirements for 4 years old children are more difficult than for 3 years old children and for 5 years old children are more difficult than for 4 years old children.

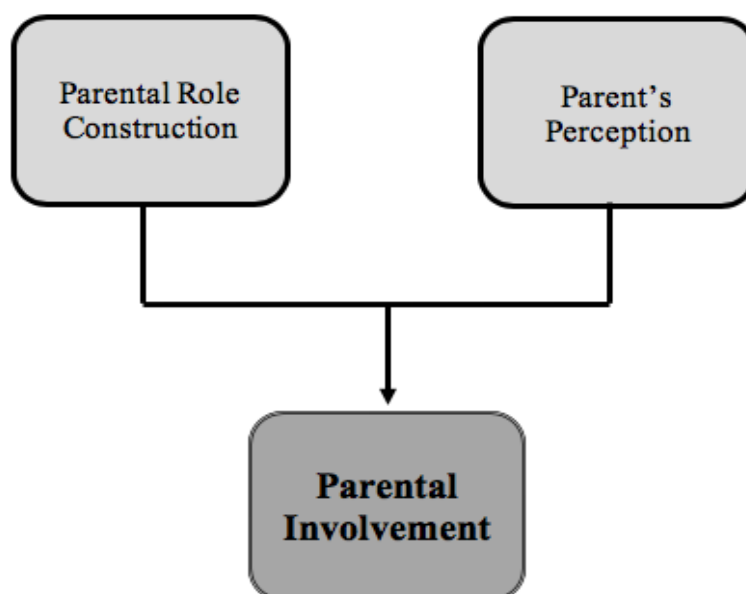
Therefore, in terms of programs and curriculum, it is not reasonable to combine both nursery and kindergarten into this one research. In addition, characteristics of family involvement at nursery and kindergarten are greatly different. Thus, this study will focus on family involvement for 3-5-year-old children in the kindergarten (both independent kindergarten and kindergarten in ECCE schools to match with the context of existing ECCE system in Viet Nam).

Concerning the selection of public and private schools in the samples, it is noticeable that there is no private school in rural areas of Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau provinces, but there are private schools in the sub-urban areas of the central cities namely Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city.

### **4.3. Theoretical Framework**

Urie Bronfenbrenner, one of the pioneering researcher in the field of family involvement in early childhood education first developed the Ecological Systems Theory in 1979 stating that “family and surrounding world affects the child” and later in 1986, he developed the theory for by adding social, political, biological and economic conditions as surrounding factors affecting the child development. This theory matches with the research results presented in Chapter 2 indicating that family involvement has connection to children’s development and learning outcomes. In 1995, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler developed the Theory of Parental Involvement as shown in Figure 4.1 below. Based on this theory, parents firstly construct their role about the responsibilities for the education of children. The real involvement will happen after that based on the parents’ perception constructed through their communication with children and teachers.

**Figure 4-1: Parental Involvement Theory**



Source: Created by the author based on Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995)

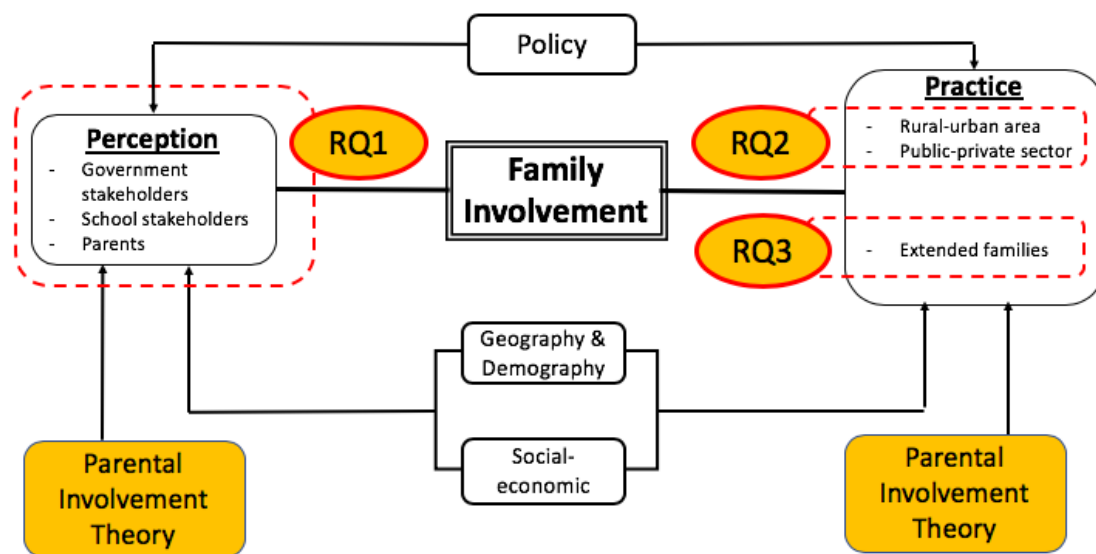
In order to study the real practice of parental/family involvement, Epstein (1995) has developed six taxonomy of family involvement indicating six pathways through which parents/families practice their involvement in education. More details of each component of the Epstein model was introduced in the Chapter 2: Literature Review of this dissertation. Epstein model has been well investigated and studied in previous studies, especially studies in developed countries (Caspé & Lopez, 2006; and Sanders & Simon, 1997). Therefore, this study also applies Epstein's model to investigate the practice of family involvement in early childhood education in the context of Viet Nam.

#### **4.4. Conceptual Framework**

This study is developed based on Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler’s theory of Parental Involvement. Based on that, the author first defines how parents in Viet Nam perceive their parental role construction by asking about who is the most important person(s) to children’s development: “Who do you think is the most important person(s) to your child’s education and development?” Then, parents’ perception on family involvement will be investigated and reflected in the practice of family involvement. Parents’ perception and practice of involvement in early childhood education and development will be analyzed in the context of their geography, demography and socio-economic background according to Bronfenbrenner’s theory of ecological system.

The conceptual framework shown in Figure 4.2 displays the structure of the study visually and is designed to illustrate the connection of the three research questions.

**Figure 4-2: Conceptual Framework**



Source: Created by the author based on Epstein (1995), Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) and Bronfenbrenner (1986)

Note: RQ = Research Question

#### 4.5. Hypotheses

This study consists of three research questions, each question consists of three sub-questions. The following hypotheses are presented in relevant to each sub-research question of this research:

**Research Question 1:** How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived by different stakeholders?

**Sub-question 1.1:** How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived by the *government stakeholders*?

**Hypothesis 1.1:** Government stakeholders expect families to share the financial responsibility in ECE and support ECCE schools because of the limited budget of the government of a developing country.

Parents are a key stakeholders in increasing access to ECCE and improving the quality of the services (Uemura, 1999 and Bray, 2000). The government's expectation of families' financial responsibility is revealed in the policy of mobilizing private sources for education (so-called socialization of education). Specifically, the government expects parents to be involved in ECCE through different ways: all parents should send their children to ECCE schools, wealthy families should share financial burden to the government by sending children to private schools; parenting at home: spend time reading to children. In addition, the government also notices the leadership role of schools in family involvement, as previous studies revealed (Epstein, 1995, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Kim, 2009; Edwards & Warin, 1999; Tett, 2001; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; and Li, 2003, 2006).

**Sub-question 1.2:** How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived by the *school stakeholders*?

**Hypothesis 1.2:** School stakeholders expect parents to involve by supporting schools' policies and activities in implementing ECCE services as well as helping children at home.

School stakeholders' expectation is firstly based on what are regulated or guided in the child law and ECCE policies. Secondly, it should be based on ECCE programs and curriculum and based on teachers' and principals' updates of research findings/evidence which have reveal that parents are not only the key to improving the quality of the services (Uemura, 1999 and Bray, 2000), but family involvement at home also helps shaping the child's characteristics and strengthening their cognitive development (Humble and Dixon, 2017).

**Sub-question 1.3:** How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived by the *parents*?

**Hypothesis 1.3:** Parents perceive family involvement as a need for their own child's development (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001) and as a role of parents (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1995, 1997), especially in Viet Nam where there is a long tradition of putting education as a high priority in many families (Hamano, 2009 & Ngo, 2011).

Within the socio-economic development and cultural relics, parents' perception of family involvement in ECD in Viet Nam may change quickly, especially recently with the explosion of internet and the usage of social network. However, because of the education gap among parents and the limitation of internet and computer use in the rural areas, parents' perception of family involvement in ECD may also vary. In addition, FI in ECD may also vary among different household wealth quintiles, which is revealed through sending children to public, private and expensive private ECCE schools.

**Research Question 2:** How is family involvement in early childhood education being practiced?

**Sub-question 2.1:** Through which pathways do parents actually involve in early childhood education?

**Hypothesis 2.1:** It is supposed that the pathways identified by the Epstein model of family involvement which have been studied in many other countries will match the practice in Viet Nam as well.

The practice of family involvement as Epstein (1995) states include: parenting at home, communicating with teachers, volunteering in the classroom/at school, helping children to study (reading, numbering) at home, decision making and collaborating with community.

**Sub-question 2.2:** How is family involvement in early childhood education being practiced in rural and urban areas?

**Hypothesis 2.2:** Because rural and urban parents' expectation can be different (Keller et al., 2004), family involvement in rural and urban areas may be assumed to be different because expectation is connected with involvement (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997).

In general, Viet Nam has a tradition of putting education as a high priority in many families (Ngo, 2011), especially in the north area. However, due to the regional socio-economic context as well as educational background of parents, the practice may be varied.

**Sub-question 2.3:** How is family involvement in early childhood education being practiced in public and private kindergartens (in ECCE schools)?

**Hypothesis 2.3:** Family involvement (FI) in public and private ECCE schools might be different in terms of level of involvement and types of involving activities.

It is learned that FI is affected by school factors such as teachers' requests (Comer and Haynes, 1991) and teachers' instruction (Fields and Smith, 2005), so family involvement in public and private pre-schools also implies differences due to different school policies. In addition, parents from different background may have different perceptions, which results in differences in their involvement.

**Research Question 3:** How is family involvement in early childhood education being perceived in extended families?

**Sub-question 3.1:** Who are involved in educating children in extended families?

**Hypothesis 3.1:** All family members from siblings to grandparents and other close relatives contribute in significant ways to children's education and development (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

**Sub-question 3.2:** What are the mothers' perspective on other family members' involvement in educating their children?

**Hypothesis 3.2:** Involvement of extended family member may create conflict between mother and grandmother due to the influence of negative parenting (Barnett et al., 2012).

However, Barnett et al. (2012) discuss the negative parenting by studying problems and pro-social behaviour of 36-month-old children of disadvantaged families. This study does not limit its sample by economic background, so the results may be more varied.

**Sub-question 3.3:** What are the fathers' perspective on other family members' involvement in educating their children?

**Hypothesis 3.3:** Fathers' perspective may be different from mothers' due to the different relationship between father-child and mother-child.

In addition, Perry (2009) finds that support from the child's extended family (different from the core family) is associated with the level of father involvement in early childhood education.

## **4.6. Research Design**

### **4.6.1. Document Reviews**

In order to understand the government's current policies on early childhood development, especially on what the government expects the society in general and young children's parents in particular to share the tasks of preparing the foundation for an entirely development of the children, the following reports and policy documents will be reviewed:

- National Report on implementing policies for ECCE development 2006-2015 (MOET);
- Report on ECCE finance during 2006-2015 by Department of Planning and Finance to submit to MOET (2015);
- Decree 69/2008 by the Central Government on encouraging socialization of education, vocational training, health, culture, sports and environment; and its amending Decree 59/2014 by the Central Government;
- Decision 60/2011 by the Prime Minister speculating some policies on ECCE development for the period 2011-2015; and
- The new Child Law 2016.

Thanks to that, family involvement as expected by the government will be figured out. Besides, school reports being collected at sampled schools will be screened and reviewed to analyze the real situation and practice of family involvement at school level.

#### **4.6.2. Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews**

In order to collect qualitative data to investigate personal perceptions, opinions and insights of phenomenon, semi-structured interview is one of the best way to collect these data since it both help researchers to control the interview in track of the research design and structure and still be able to make participants to raise more personal opinions and help researchers to have further indepth questions based on participants' responses (Barbara and Benjamin, 2006; Brinkmann, 2014). First, semi-structured



interview questions are designed for educational officers including ministerial, provincial and district officials in order to understand their expectations, perceptions and current practices of family involvement in early childhood development in both rural and urban areas of Viet Nam. The interview questions for educational officers are mostly designed as open-ended questions and based on Shojo (2009) in order to explore the way policies are delivered to schools, parents and society in general and how the government stakeholders interpret the policies.

Second, semi-structured interview is designed for principals, teachers and parents in order to understand their expectations, perceptions and current practices of family involvement in early childhood development. The interview questions for principals, teachers and parents are created based on Epstein's typology (1995) and family involvement questionnaire by Fantuzzo et al. (2004) with modification to match the specific context of ECD in Viet Nam. Each questionnaire includes 4 sessions as following:

- Session 1: Principals/ Teachers/ Parents' basic information (including child's information);
- Session 2: Principals/ Teachers/ Parents' perceptions of child development;
- Session 3: Principals/ Teachers/ Parents' knowledge of government policies;
- Session 4: Principals/ Teachers/ Parents' current practices of family involvement based on 6 taxonomy of family involvement defined by Epstein (2001). In this session, the questions are divided into different parts as below:
  - o Teachers: communicating with parents, conferencing, and family involvement in school governance;
  - o Principals: relations with parents and teachers, SMC, school governance and schools' leadership role;
  - o Parents: Parenting at home, school-family conferencing (school-family relationship), decision-making and involvement in school governance (behavioural, yes/no, frequency and subjective descriptive questions).

## **4.7. Sampling Method and Sample Size**

### **4.7.1. Sampling Method**

The purposive sampling technique is the most common technique for data collection in qualitative study (Marshall, 1996) to give nuanced and contextualized understanding of the research topic. In this study, the maximum variation sampling technique and the key informant sampling technique – both are sub-types of purposive sampling - are used for data collection in order to obtain the research objectives. On the one hand, maximum variation sampling (MVS), also known as *heterogeneous* sampling, is used to capture a wide range of perspectives relating to the researched topic. The basic principle behind the MVS method is to gain greater insights into a phenomenon by looking at it from all viewpoints. This can often help the researcher to identify common themes that are evident across the sample. On the other hand, the key informant sampling (KIS) technique allows researchers to target the participants with special expertise, those who can give better insights for the researchers to answer the research questions.

The combination of these two techniques will help answer the research questions of this study in the best manner since the key informants will provide the overall picture of the situation whilst the maximum variation sampling will help provide the understanding of the issue from different perspectives. Figure 4.2 below illustrates how key informant sampling is design for policy makers and authorities from local to central level of the government and maximum variation sampling is designed for ECCE practitioners at school level. The governmental stakeholders include district level, provincial level and central level officials. The school stakeholders (practitioners) include school principal, teachers and parents.

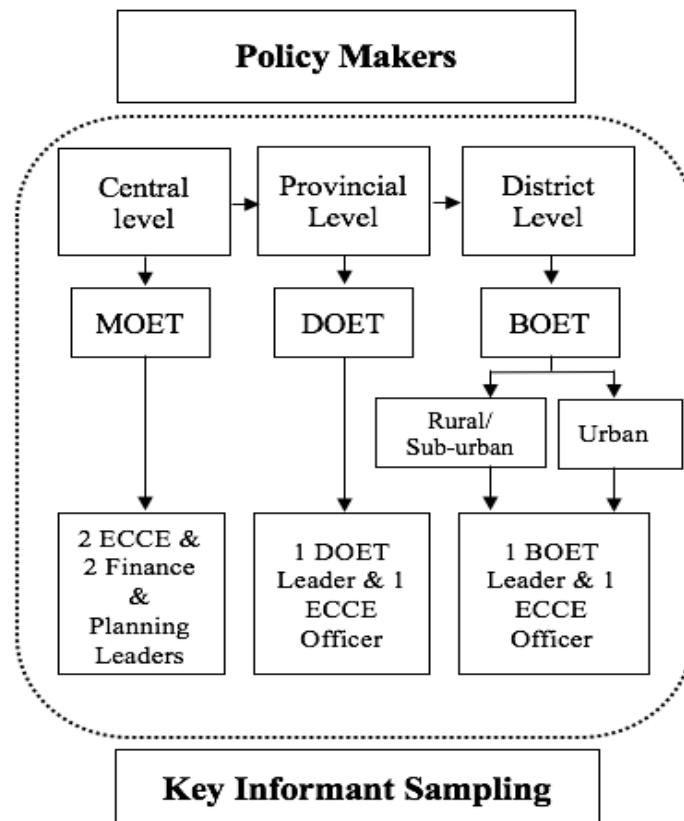
## **Key Informant Sampling**

Key informants are those who have special expertise in their field and are considered to be the best source of information who can provide researchers with deep insights into the research matter (Marshall, 1996). Therefore, key informants in this study are the leaders of ECCE management from central to local governments. They are the persons who have best knowledge of ECCE development in their country, their province and their district. These participants include:

- Director and one officer of ECCE Department, Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) (= 2 participants);
- Vice-Director and one officer of Finance and Planning Department, Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) (=2 participants);
- Director (or Vice-director in case the Director is unavailable) and officer of ECCE management of provincial Department of Education and Training (DOET) of the sampled provinces (4 provinces = 8 participants); and
- Officer manager and ECCE officer of district Bureau of Education and Training (BOET) of the sampled districts (8 districts = 16 participants).

In total, 28 participants were selected from local to central level. According to Campbell (1955), key informants to be chosen should satisfy two criteria: (1) they are engaged in the roles that make them knowledgeable about the issues being researched and (2) they are able and willing to communicate with the researcher. All the key informants defined in this study (from central level to local level) are selected based on these two Campbell criteria and satisfied with the criteria.

**Figure 4-3: Key Informant Sampling**



Source: Created by the author based on Marshall, 2006 and Suri, 2011

Note of abbreviation in the figure: MOET = Ministry of Education and Training; DOET = Provincial Department of Education and Training; BOET = District Bureau of Education and Training; ECCE = Early Childhood Care and Education.

### **Maximum Variation (Heterogeneous) Sampling**

Maximum variation sampling (MVS) is a strategy of sampling in qualitative research that is created by detecting “key dimensions of variations and then finding cases that vary from each other as much as possible. This sampling yields high-quality, detailed descriptions of each case, which are useful for documenting uniqueness; and important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity” (Patton, 2002, p. 235). The MVS method helps researchers to detect critical descriptions of a phenomenon that has been experienced by different

participants in diverse settings to obtain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon (Suri, 2011). The selection of schools to be studied is sophisticated due to the difference in socio-economic context between the central cities namely Ha Noi & Ho Chi Minh City and normal provinces namely Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province.

In general, in rural areas of normal provinces such as Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau, there are hardly private ECCE schools to be established except for small private groups who usually provide only care services for several dozens of kids and they are not reckoned as a nursery, a kindergarten or an ECCE school. Therefore, these groups are not included in this study.

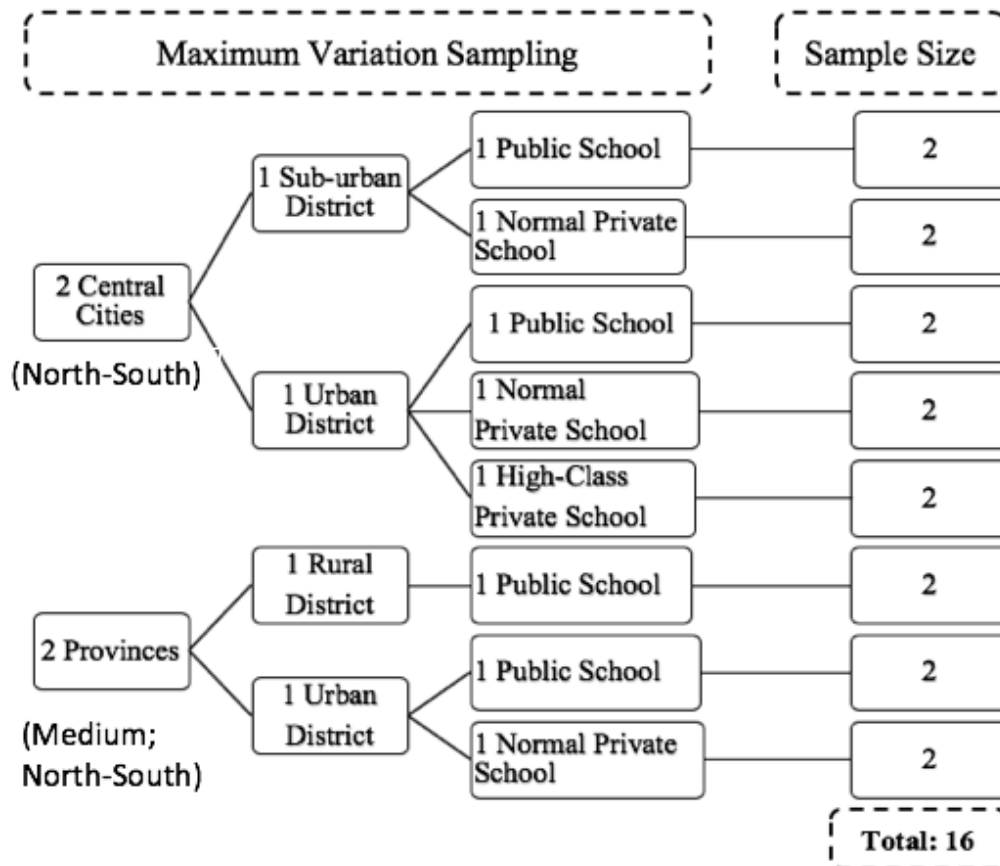
In central cities, namely Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city, there are a great deal of private schools varying in prices, types of services, facilities and quality. Based on categories of different types of ECCE schools classified in Chapter 3, this study focuses on two different types of private ECCE schools: i) the normal private school whose prices are payable by an average-income parent(s) and ii) the high-class private school whose prices are merely payable by high-income parent(s)<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, the sampling design at school level will be executed as shown in Figure 4.4.

In each urban district of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city, one public, one normal private and one high-class private ECCE school are selected. In each sub-urban district of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city, one public and one normal private ECCE school are selected – because there are hardly a high-class private school in these areas. In Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, one public school is designated at each rural district and one public and one normal private school are nominated at each urban district.

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<sup>11</sup> The GDP per capita in Viet Nam is US \$2185 in 2015 as reported by the World Bank

**Figure 4-4: Maximum Variation Sampling of Schools**



Source: Created by the author based on Marshall, 2006 and Suri, 2011

#### 4.7.2. Sample Size

Sample size in qualitative research varies depending on different types and purposes of research; however, “sample sizes in qualitative research should not be too large that it is difficult to extract thick and rich data” (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007, p. 242). Related to the big size of sampling in qualitative study, Lincoln and Guba (1985) also mention the redundancy of information. Except for biography or similar study where the sample size is often one; in general, the sample size is not expected to be so minor to achieve data saturation (Morse, 1995 and Flick, 1998) or theoretical saturation (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

**Table 4-1: Sample Size**

Participants	Central Level	Provincial Level				Total
	MOET	Central Cities		Provinces		
		Ha Noi Capital	Ho Chi Minh City	Nam Dinh Province	Ba Ria -Vung Tau Province	
Ministerial officials	4					4
Provincial officials		2	2	2	2	8
District officials		4	4	4	4	16
Principals		5	5	3	3	16
Teachers		10	10	6	6	32
Parents		10	10	6	6	32
Total	4	31	31	21	21	<b>108</b>

Source: Created by the author

Marshall (1996) suggests an approach to realize the adequate number of sample size by data analysis alongside the process of data collection until data saturation is obtained. Based on this theoretical justification, the sample size of this study was not decided from the beginning, but a pilot survey was conducted first and the data analysis was performed during the information collection process and then the sample size was decided at the point that the author found no new matters rising from further interview of the same group. Purposive sample sizes are often determined on the basis of data and theoretical saturation (the point in data collection when new data no longer bring additional insights to the research questions).

Table 4.1 demonstrates the sample size adopted in this study. As seen in the table, there are 4 participants at the central level including directors and officers of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). At provincial level, interviews were conducted to provincial officials of ECCE and finance at the selected central cities (Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City) and provinces (Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau), resulting in 8 participants to be interviewed. At district level, interviews were conducted to

district two ECCE officials at each district; two districts representing rural and urban areas are selected in each central city and province, so there are 8 districts to be covered; resulting in 16 officials to be interviewed.

As explained above in the sampling design, the number of schools selected in two central cities is different the number of schools selected in two normal provinces. Specifically, 5 schools (1 rural and 1 urban public school, 1 rural and 1 urban normal private school, and 1 high-class private school) are selected in each central city; and 3 schools are selected in each normal province (1 rural and 1 urban public school, and one normal private school). Thus, there are 16 schools in total. At each school, the interview is conducted to the principal, two teachers and two parents, adding up to 16 principals, 32 teachers and 32 parents to be interviewed. Totally, 108 participants were included in the study.

Since this is a comparative study between rural and urban areas and between private versus public schools with some insights into extended families, the interviewed parents are limited to the parents of children who are living with both mothers and fathers and/or with their extended families. No single-moms or single-dads are included in this study. Some parents who do not live in an extended family are also asked about their extended family involvement because extended family members (especially child's grandparents) may also involve to some extent even they live together in one house or not.

## **4.8. Data Collection Procedure**

### **4.8.1. Asking for Permission to Conduct the Study**

First, I had to contact the person in charge of ECCE and Finance and Planning at the Ministry of Education and Training, explaining to them my study proposal and plan to collect data and request for their cooperation and support to conduct the data collection.



The main contact method is through email and telephone. Once I have got their consent, I firstly conducted the interviews at the central level. At the central level, the interview was conducted with officers of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). The head of ECCE department and the head of the finance and planning were interviewed (January 2016). As the data analysis goes on, more insights were needed, so I requested for another interview with the Ministry of Education and Training in July 2017 and got the permission.

After being explained about the research objectives, the Director of Finance and Planning at MOET agreed to participate in the interview and then helped connecting me to the head of the four-selected provincial Department of Education and Training (DOET) to conduct the study at provincial level. At this level, ECCE officials were interviewed. The head of DOET then connected me to the head of district Bureau of Education and Training (BOET) who would assign the district ECCE officials to be interviewed by me.

Once the district officials have understood my study, they will explain it the school principals and request the principal to cooperate and support my study at the school level. At the school level, the principal will be interviewed first and then he/she will order the teachers to come to the principal office to conduct the interview with teachers.

In public schools, the teachers will suggest which parents to be interviewed whilst in private schools, the principals do that. As for the high-class private schools, since they are defined as international schools and are not monitored and supervised by the local government, the author of this study has contacted the principals directly to request permission for the interview and school visit.

#### **4.8.2. Sending Documents and Conducting Interviews**

Approximately one week before the interview, the participants are contacted via phone calls and emails. Once the agreement is made, the interview questionnaire including research statement is sent via email beforehand so that the interviewees can prepare for the interview. The research statement includes two main focus: i) a brief introduction of the researcher, the research topic and research purposes; and ii) the proclamation of confidentiality of participants' identity and the solely usage of the responses is for the research purpose. With that research statement, the researcher encourages participants to answer the questions to their best knowledge, best confidence and to feel comfortable to share their knowledge, opinions and experience.

Once the agreement is made and the interview date is appointed, the researcher will be present at the decided time and place to conduct the interview. With the government stakeholders, principals and teachers, the interviews were conducted during office hours at the government offices and schools respectively. As for parents, some interviews were conducted at school, most of the other interviews (90%) were conducted at parents' home.

Each interview lasts for some 60 minutes. Since the questions were sent beforehand, some participants had prepared the answers before the interview so the interview was proceeded quite fast - and in those cases, the researcher had more chance to ask for more in-depth questions.

Before each interview, the researcher asked the participant for permission to take the audio recording of the interview. However, in most of the cases, the participants expressed the hesitation to be recorded so the researcher took hand-writing notes instead to save the information collected. In some cases, the participants also prepared the answers in type-writing sheets so a lot of information has been collected through these forms as well.

For the convenience of further rising information, participants' contact details were also obtained and further questions were proceeded through email and message when clarification was needed during the data analysis.

#### 4.9. Description of Sampled Provinces

Because of the historical background and the differences in the socio-economic features between the north and the south of Viet Nam, the sampling four provinces are selected to represent these two regions. Ha Noi – the Capital - is also the biggest cities of the north and Ho Chi Minh city is the biggest city in the south. Both these two cities are called *central cities* according to the administrative category of Viet Nam<sup>12</sup>. The number of children aged 3-5 and the number of kindergartens/ECCE schools in these two cities are the biggest nationwide. Nam Dinh province has the medium number of children aged 3-5 and the medium number of kindergartens/ECCE schools in the north and Ba Ria-Vung Tau has the medium number of children aged 3-5 and the medium number of kindergartens/ECCE schools in the south. Thus, these two provinces are purposely chosen as samples to represent the north and the south.

**Table 4-2: Statistic Data on Kindergarten Development of Selected Provinces**

	2015				2016				2017			
	Schools	Teachers	Children	CTR	Schools	Teachers	Children	CTR	Schools	Teachers	Children	CTR
National Total	14513	231931	3978521	17.2	14863	250791	4409576	17.6	15241	266346	4599841	17.3
Ha Noi	1009	27081	391048	14.4	1044	31484	434153	13.8	1084	34174	466069	13.6
Ho Chi Minh City	1.006	15746	279257	17.7	1100	17728	312568	17.6	1208	19482	329065	16.9
Nam Dinh	266	4738	84821	17.9	266	4782	87502	18.3	266	4897	91693	18.7
Ba Ria - Vung Tau	164	2510	40233	16.0	164	2725	46517	17.1	167	2941	49451	16.8

Source: Created by the author based on collected data from the field

Note: CTR = Children-Teacher Ratio

<sup>12</sup> See Annex on Administrative unit

**Table 4-3: Selected Provinces As Percentage of National Total**

2016-2017							
	Schools	As percentage of national total	Teachers	As percentage of national total	Children	As percentage of national total	Children-Teacher Ratio
<b>National Total</b>	15241	100	266346	100	4599841	100	17.3
<b>Ha Noi</b>	1084	7.1	34174	12.8	466069	10.1	13.6
<b>Ho Chi Minh City</b>	1208	7.9	19482	7.3	329065	7.2	16.9
<b>Nam Dinh</b>	266	1.7	4897	1.8	91693	2.0	18.7
<b>Ba Ria - Vung Tau</b>	167	1.1	2941	1.1	49451	1.1	16.8

Source: Created by the author based on collected data from the field

### **Ha Noi Capital**

Ha Noi is the capital city, which is located in the heart of the country. With the population density ranks second, Ha Noi local government is leading in public spending on education with the expenditure on education accounts for 32% of its current public expenditure and 10% in the structure of the local budget expenditure (126,099 billion dongs in 2017) (Ha Noi Statistic Office, 2018). Ha Noi is also leading in education quality with the evidence that children-teacher ratio is lowest among selected province and much lower than national average (Table 4.3). Table 4.4 below provides an overview on the statistic of schools, classes, classrooms, teachers, children and children/teacher ratio (CTR) of pre-school education in Ha Noi from 2010 through 2017.

In Ha Noi Capital, Hoan Kiem district is selected to present the most central districts of the city and Thanh Tri district is selected to present the sub-urban area based on these districts' geographical location. The number of ECCE schools in these two districts is Hoan Kiem 28 and Thanh Tri 34; however, number of private pre-schools in Hoan Kiem district doubles that of Thanh Tri district. As seen in table 4.5, children-teacher ratio in Thanh Tri district of both public and private kindergarten classes is

much higher than that of Hoan Kiem district, implying better quality in central districts. In addition, this can be partially explained by the fact that parents in central areas are willing to pay more for their children's early childhood education – smaller children-teacher ratio in private schools implies higher schooling fees. Although the number of children in Thanh Tri district is much bigger than the number of children in Hoan Kiem district, 13981 and 5783 respectively, the kindergarten level enrollment rate as well as 5-year-old children enrollment rate in pre-schools in these two districts are the same.

**Table 4-4: Number of Schools, Teachers, and Children of Pre-schools in Ha Noi, 2010-2017**

	2010	2011	2015	2016	2017
<b>Total schools</b>	834	857	1003	1040	1085
Public	686	664	730	744	765
Non-public	148	193	273	296	320
<b>Total teachers</b>	21074	25459	38391	43915	48833
Public	18535	18193	28596	29903	29263
Non-public	2539	7266	9795	14012	19570
<b>Total Children</b>	339230	383971	484387	523700	566235
Public	311406	313398	400058	411763	417861
Non-public	27824	70573	84329	111937	148374
<b>Children/ Teacher Ratio</b>	16	15	13	12	12
Public	17	17	14	14	14
Non-public	10	17	12	13	11

Source: Created by the author based on Statistic Data by Ha Noi Statistic Office (2018)

**Table 4-5: Number of Schools, Teachers, and Children of Kindergarten Level in Hoan Kiem and Thanh Tri District, 2016-2017**

	Number of ECCE schools		Kindergarten level teachers		Kindergarten level children		Children-Teacher Ratio		Kindergarten level enrollment rate	5-year-old enrollment rate
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private		
Hoan Kiem	20	8	518	216	5783	1028	11	5	95	99.9
Thanh Tri	30	4	976	129	13981	1177	14	9	95	99.9

Source: Created by the author based on data collected at Ha Noi Department of Education and Training (2018)

### Ho Chi Minh City

Ho Chi Minh city is one of the five central cities, one of the two special cities (the other is Ha Noi) and is the biggest city of Viet Nam by population - with average population in 2016 was 8,441,902 people. Situated in the central south, Ho Chi Minh is one of the two most important cities of Viet Nam. Under the French Colony, it was known as Sai Gon and was the capital of Cochinchina. Later it became the capital of the independent Republic of South Viet Nam during 1955-1975. After the north and south of Viet Nam was re-united, Sai Gon was merged with Gia Dinh province and renamed Ho Chi Minh city after the revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh.

In the statistical data on education provided by the Department of Education and Training (DOET) of Ho Chi Minh city, there is no data on nursery. In Ho Chi Minh City, kindergarten school is defined as an educational unit of the pre-primary system that admits children from 3 to 6 years old. The kindergarten has two main functions: to take care of and to educate children to prepare them to enter the primary school.

**Table 4-6: Number of Kindergarten Classes and Schools in 2015-2016 by District**

	Kindergarten Schools			Kindergarten Classes		
	Total	Public	Non-public	Total	Public	Non-public
<b>Total</b>	<b>1006</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>12385</b>	<b>4525</b>	<b>7850</b>
<b>Urban Districts</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>9924</b>	<b>3547</b>	<b>6377</b>
District 1	26	16	10	290	186	104
District 2	41	14	27	393	113	280
District 3	46	22	24	424	215	209
District 4	19	15	4	183	115	68
District 5	30	21	9	328	226	102
District 6	37	18	19	385	182	203
District 7	63	16	47	474	135	339
District 8	37	17	20	431	224	207
District 9	33	20	13	332	202	130
District 10	36	17	19	446	170	276
District 11	32	17	15	309	163	146
District 12	48	17	31	1019	169	850
Go Vap	64	21	43	752	259	493
Tan Binh	67	26	41	850	274	576
Tan Phu	47	12	35	686	165	521
Binh Thanh	47	25	22	640	265	375
Phu Nhuan	35	15	20	293	147	146
Thu Duc	95	19	76	965	199	766
Binh Tan	58	16	42	724	138	586
<b>Rural Districts</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>2461</b>	<b>988</b>	<b>1473</b>
Cu Chi	38	29	9	529	320	209
Hoo Mon	27	17	10	753	234	519
Binh Chanh	51	22	29	786	234	552
Nha Be	18	9	9	290	103	187
Can Gio	11	10	1	103	97	6

Source: Created by the author based on Statistic Data by Ho Chi Minh City DOET (2017)

**Table 4-7: Number of Kindergarten Children and Teachers in 2015-2016**

	Kindergarten Teachers			Kindergarten Children		
	Total	Public	Non-public	Total	Public	Non-public
<b>Total</b>	<b>20875</b>	<b>9598</b>	<b>11277</b>	<b>335222</b>	<b>160963</b>	<b>174259</b>
<b>Urban Districts</b>	<b>16910</b>	<b>7649</b>	<b>9261</b>	<b>268825</b>	<b>129561</b>	<b>139264</b>
District 1	591	409	182	8867	6703	2164
District 2	599	237	362	8661	3751	4910
District 3	825	463	362	11581	7231	4350
District 4	356	252	104	5826	4345	1481
District 5	647	498	149	10295	8036	2259
District 6	643	388	255	11971	7902	4069
District 7	1069	295	774	13176	5823	7353
District 8	795	447	348	12119	7505	4614
District 9	659	426	233	9290	6666	2624
District 10	707	360	347	13043	6840	6202
District 11	468	299	169	8381	5573	2808
District 12	1389	358	1031	26020	6425	19595
Go Vap	1379	600	779	21896	10740	11156
Tan Binh	1503	607	896	22434	10768	11666
Tan Phu	1163	440	723	16991	6087	10904
Binh Thanh	1107	548	559	16294	8352	7942
Phu Nhuan	545	316	229	7448	4687	2761
Thu Duc	1502	425	1077	25098	7005	18093
Binh Tan	963	281	682	19435	5122	14313
<b>Rural Districts</b>	<b>3965</b>	<b>1949</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>66397</b>	<b>31402</b>	<b>34995</b>
Cu Chi	945	585	360	13894	9152	4742
Hoc Mon	1238	508	730	23208	8928	14280
Binh Chanh	1101	455	646	20813	7682	13131
Nha Be	473	205	268	5890	3159	2731
Can Gio	208	196	12	2592	2481	111



Source: Created by the author based on Statistic Data by Ho Chi Minh City DOET (2017)

Although local expenditure on education compared to current expenditure in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) is 27.3% - lower than that in Ha Noi, the percentage of local expenditure on education in the structure of the local budget expenditure is a little bit higher than that of Ha Noi – at 10.8% - with total budget expenditure at 80,064 billion dongs). Table 4.6 provides an overview on number of school and class of kindergartens in 24 districts in Ho Chi Minh city, and table 4.7 provides statistic data on the number of children and teachers of kindergarten level in these 24 districts.

**Table 4-8: Number of Schools, Teachers, and Children of Kindergarten Level in District 7 and Can Gio District, 2016-2017**

	Number of ECCE schools		Kindergarten level teachers		Kindergarten level children		Children-Teacher Ratio		Kindergarten level enrollment rate	5-year-old enrollment rate
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private		
District 7	16	47	295	774	5823	7353	20	10	88	99
Can Gio	10	1	196	12	2481	111	13	9	73	99.8

Source: Created by the author based on Data by ditrict bureau of Education and Training, District 7 and Can Gio district (2017)

In Ho Chi Minh City, District 7 is selected to present the most central districts of the city and Can Gio district is selected to present the sub-urban and rural area based on these districts' geographical location. As seen in table 4.6 and table 4.7, Can Gio district has the smallest number of children, teachers, schools and classes of kindergarten level among 24 districts in Ho Chi Minh city. This district is also one of the most rural district of Ho Chi Minh city. District 7 is located among the central districts of Ho Chi Minh city and has the medium number of children, teachers, schools and classes of kindergarten level among 19 urban districts.

## Nam Dinh Province

Nam Dinh is a northern province in the Red River Delta, approximately 90km to the south-east of Ha Noi. The administrative units of Nam Dinh province include Nam Dinh city (urban) and 9 rural districts. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Nam Dinh city was one of the three biggest cities in the country. The current population of Nam Dinh is 1.85 million with the land area of 1668 km<sup>2</sup>, resulting in the population density of 1109 persons/km<sup>2</sup>. In the context of the Agenda 2030 to foster early childhood care and education, the number of ECCE schools and number of children enrolled in ECCE institutions have increased dramatically especially since 2015 (Table 4.9). In 2017, there are 266 public ECCE schools compared to 259 in 2010. Current number of private schools in Nam Dinh is 4 schools.

**Table 4-9: Statistics of Public Kindergarten in Nam Dinh, 2010-2017**

	School	Classroom	Teacher	Children	Children-Teacher Ratio
<b>2010</b>	259	2265	3128	69600	22.3
<b>2012</b>	260	2366	3986	75600	19.0
<b>2015</b>	266	2581	4738	84821	17.9
<b>2016</b>	266	2974	4782	87502	18.3
<b>2017</b>	266	2798	4897	91693	18.7

Source: Created by the author based on General Statistics Office (2018)

In Nam Dinh province, Nam Dinh city is selected to present urban area and Y Yen district is selected to present rural area. According the data collected at Y Yen district, there is no private ECCE school in this district. By 2015, approximately 87.5 percent of total population in the district have had access to clean water. The annual birthrate has decreased 0.2 percent compared to the previous year and the population growth rate in 2014 was 0.95 percent, estimation for 2015 was 0.9 percent.

**Table 4-10: Statistics of Public Kindergarten in Y Yen District, 2010-2017**

	Number of ECCE schools	Kindergarten level teachers	Kindergarten level children	Children-Teacher Ratio	Kindergarten level enrollment rate	5-year-old children enrollment rate
2016-2017	38	611	11755	19	95.9	100
2015-2016	38	599	11037	18	95.4	100
2010-2011	38	643	10625	17	92.5	100

Source: Created by the author based on data collected at Y Yen Bureau of Education and Training (2018)

Due to the limitation in available data at hand, the author could not get the statistic of Nam Dinh city, so only data by Y Yen district is available as seen in Table 4.10. It is noticeable about Y Yen district that there is no private ECCE school in this district. All the schools are public schools and enrollment rate of 5 year-old children has reached 100 percent for years. The enrollment rate of kindergarten level children is also high compared to the national average (Table 4.10). The children-teacher ratio is less than 20 and is within the standard line provided by the MOET.

### **Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province**

Ba Ria-Vung Tau province is located on the coast of southeast region, approximately 100km by bus from Ho Chi Minh City. The population of the province in 2015 was approximately one million (General Statistics Office, Viet Nam). The province's economy relies on petroleum, electricity (Phu My Power Plant and Ba Ria Power Plant), petrochemicals (Phu My Urea Plant), polyethylene, steel production, and cement production. Tourism, commerce and fishing are also important economic activities of the province. Because of this specific characteristic of varied economic activities in this province, a district with industrial zone (Tan Thanh district) is selected to study. This district used to be a rural area but has recently developed into a sub-urban area.

**Table 4-11: ECCE Schools and Independent Kindergartens in Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province from 2000-2001 to 2016-2017, Public-Private**

	ECCE Schools		Kindergartens		Total Schools
	Public	Private	Public	Private	
<b>2016-2017</b>	106	45	9	6	166
<b>2015-2016</b>	107	42	7	7	163
<b>2010-2011</b>	88	15	5	20	128
<b>2005-2006</b>	67	9	21	12	109
<b>2000-2001</b>	63	8	25	19	115

Source: Created by the author based on data provided by Ba Ria-Vung Tau provincial DOET (2017)

In terms of ECCE development, Ba Ria-Vung Tau province is one of the leading province in supporting ECCE development. This province initiated the “Schooling Milk” (Sữa học đường) campaign in 2006 and has still been continued. Through this campaign, every child enrolling in a pre-school (both public and private) is provided with milk at school, the amount of milk for each child varies by age. Ba Ria-Vung Tau is also the only province among four sampled provinces that could provide specific data on the number of separated kindergartens that does not belong to a pre-school (or ECCE school) (Table 4.11).

As seen in Table 4.12, the province has paid great effort on ECCE development since 2006. According to the provincial reports, the schooling milk campaign is one of the factors that make parents send their small children to class. Before the campaign, the enrollment rate of kindergarten level children increased slowly from 52.7% to 58.9% for the five years period 2000-2005. However, with the province’s commitment to ECCE development since 2006, the enrollment rate increased by 20 percent, reaching 77.9% in school year 2010-2011. And, by school year 2016-2017, this rate was more than 93 percent (2 more percent to reach universalization). The enrollment rate for 5 year-old children in school year 2016-2017 was nearly 99%.

**Table 4-12: Teachers and Enrolled Children at Kindergarten Level in Ba Ria – Vung Tau Province from 2000 to 2017**

	Kindergarten Teachers			Kindergarten Children			KER	5 ER
	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total		
<b>2016-2017</b>	1,953	1,536	3,489	31,631	24,315	55,946	93.3	98.7
<b>2015-2016</b>	1,795	1,432	3,227	29,441	22,119	51,560	93.4	98.3
<b>2010-2011</b>	1,301	888	2,189	27,085	9,978	37,063	77.9	88.5
<b>2005-2006</b>	676	595	1,271	14,104	11,435	25,539	58.9	81.5
<b>2000-2001</b>	623	456	1,079	13,943	9,808	23,751	52.7	77.8

Source: Created by the author based on data provided by Ba Ria-Vung Tau provincial DOET (2017)

Note: KER = Kindergarten Enrollment Rate; 5 ER = 5 years-old-children Enrollment Rate

In Ba Ria-Vung Tau province, Ba Ria city and Tan Thanh district are selected to study, representing the urban and sub-urban areas respectively. As seen in Table 4.13 and Table 4.14, the enrollment rate of 5 year-old children in Tan Thanh District is slightly higher than that of Ba Ria City, and both are around 99-100 percent during 2010-2017. However, the enrollment rate of kindergarten level children in Tan Thanh district is much lower than that of Ba Ria city: 82% and 98.6% in 2016-2017 respectively. This data may imply the big difference in parents' perception of sending children to school at an early age between rural and urban areas, although Tan Thanh district has recently developed into a sub-urban area thanks to its economic development with the expansion of the industrial zone.

**Table 4-13: ECCE Schools and Kindergarten Level Teachers and Children in Ba Ria City from 2000 to 2017**

	Number of ECCE schools		Kindergarten level teachers		Kindergarten level children		Children-Teacher Ratio		Kindergarten level enrollment rate	5-year-old enrollment rate
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private		
2016-2017	12	6	251	119	3999	2014	16	17	98.6	99.7
2015-2016	11	5	220	117	3469	1929	16	16	98.5	99.7
2010-2011	8	2	146	87	2275	1777	16	20	98.4	99
2005-2006	7		80	60	1689	1107	21	18	81.9	88.5
2000-2001	7		63	51	1159	1022	18	20	80	85.5

Source: Created by the author based on data provided by Ba Ria City BOET (2017)

**Table 4-14: ECCE Schools and Kindergarten Level Teachers and Children in Tan Thanh District from 2000 to 2017**

	Number of ECCE schools		Kindergarten level teachers		Kindergarten level children		Children-Teacher Ratio		Kindergarten level enrollment rate	5-year-old enrollment rate
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private		
2016-2017	11	11	187	291	3326	5126	18	18	82	99
2015-2016	10	12	196	264	3020	4834	15	18	74	99
2010-2011	8	4	137	149	2655	2786	19	19	65	100
2005-2006	7	6	137	186	2703	2760	20	15	59	96
2000-2001	2	6	129	136	2549	2642	20	19	55	93

Source: Created by the author based on data provided by Tan Thanh district BOET (2017)

In addition, it is noticeable that although defined as a rural district, the number of kindergarten children in Tan Thanh district is much higher than that of Ba Ria city. And, if the enrolled children in public pre-schools in Ba Ria city almost doubles the number in private pre-schools, the trend in Tan Thanh district is on the opposite, which means number of children in private pre-schools almost doubles that of public pre-

schools (Table 4.13 and Table 4.14). This can be partly explained by the fact that there is an existing industrial zone in Tan Thanh district, which results in a great number of immigrated workers to this district. On the one hand, the number of public pre-schools cannot meet the demand of the fast increasing number of children. On the other hand, immigrant children are not prioritized in public pre-schools.

In terms of ECCE quality, it is also seen that children-teacher ratio (CTR) in Tan Thanh district is higher than in Ba Ria city in both public and private pre-schools. If the normal trend in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city is that CTR at public school is higher than CTR at private school, the trend in Tan Thanh district and Ba Ria city is on the opposite: the CTR at private school is higher than CTR at public school. This might be explained by the fact that private schools in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city have to compete the quality with public schools in order to attract parents and also schooling fees in these private schools are much higher than public schools. In Ba Ria-Vung Tau, on the contrary, private schools are open in partially share the overload of public schools and to provide service for immigrants. In addition, schooling fees in private schools in Ba Ria-Vung Tau province, especially in districts like Tan Thanh, is normally approximately equal or even a little bit cheaper than schooling fees at public schools.

#### **4.10. Descriptive Information of Collected Samples**

Descriptive information of the collected sampling so far, including number of participants, age, location, school type, educational background for all participants, and years of experiences for governmental and school stakeholders, as well as distance from home to school for parents/children and teachers/principals.

As seen in Table 4.15, all the teachers and principals at ECCE schools are female. This is a fact not only in sampled schools of this study but also in almost all of ECCE schools throughout the countries. According to government stakeholders who

are responsible for ECCE development in selected districts and provinces, this fact is caused by the professional characteristics of becoming a kindergarten teacher. Those justified characteristics are:

- Social norms: kindergarten teachers should be female because young children are taken care of by mothers rather than fathers at home. As a result, male students tend not to enter ECCE pedagogical institutions;
- Parents' expectation: parents normally feel that their children are safer with a female teacher/care giver than a male teacher or caregiver.

**Table 4-15: Descriptive Information of Sampling**

Respondents	Sample Size	Gender		Location		Age Range		Experience (years)		School type	
		Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Min	Max	Min	Max	Public	Private
Government Stakeholders	28	50%	50%	28%	72%	30	61	5	20		
Principals	16	0%	100%	38%	62%	34	55	3	15	50%	50%
Teachers	32	0%	100%	38%	62%	22	41	2	20	50%	50%
Parents	32	13%	87%	38%	62%	22	35			50%	50%

Source: Created by the author

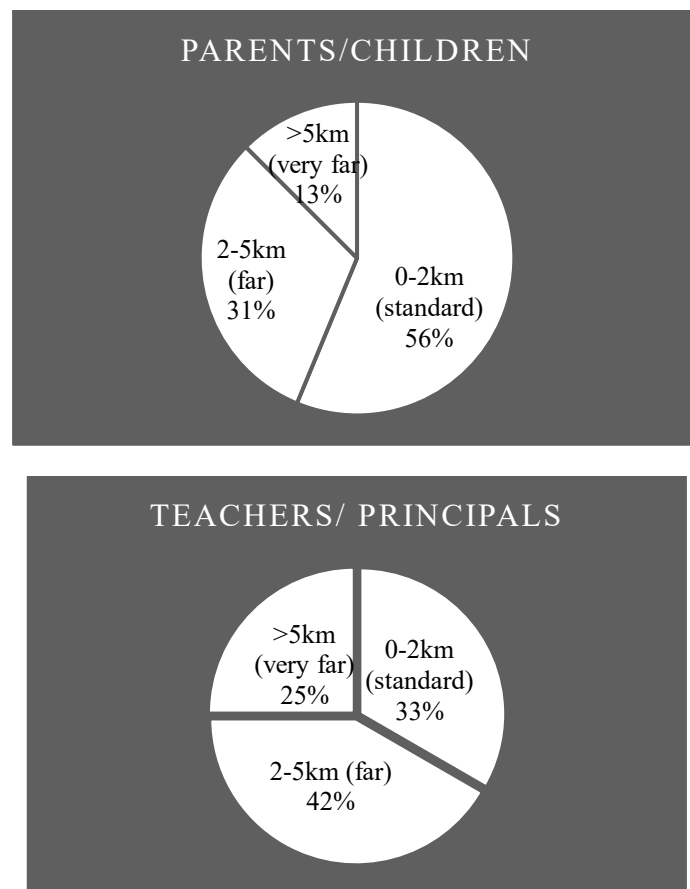
#### 4.9.1. Distance from Home to School

As a general orientation by the government, the public ECCE schools should be built in the center of a community so that all the children in that community could have the best access to school. Therefore, most of the public schools in rural and urban areas are within 2 kilometers (km) from all the children/parents' house. However, there is no such regulations for private schools and also private schools are within parents' choice, so the distances between children's home to private schools are varied, mostly between



2km and 5km far. Especially, in the case of high-class private school, since the school normally provides private school bus, the parents may choose to send their children farther if they decide that the school is a good choice. In high-class private school, the children’s houses are normally farther than normal and may be up to more than 12 kilometers far.

**Figure 4-5: Distance from Home to ECCE School**



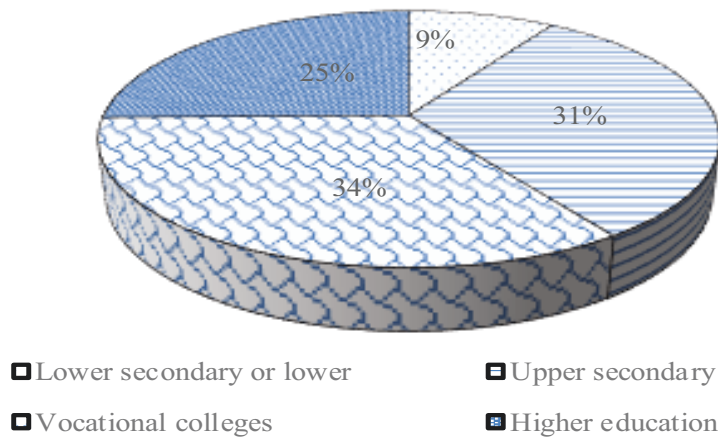
Source: Created by the author

#### 4.9.2. Participants’ Educational Background

Firstly, collected data show that parents’ educational background ranges from lower secondary to higher education (university or higher) (Figure 4.6). This is due to the fact that lower secondary education has almost been universalized in Viet Nam since 2015

(MOET, 2016). Parents' educational background is an important for the author in interpreting the research questions during the interview.

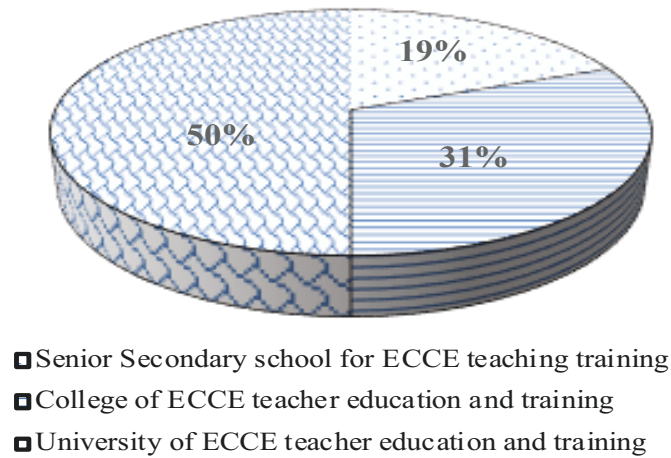
**Figure 4-6: Parents' Educational Background**



Source: Created by the author

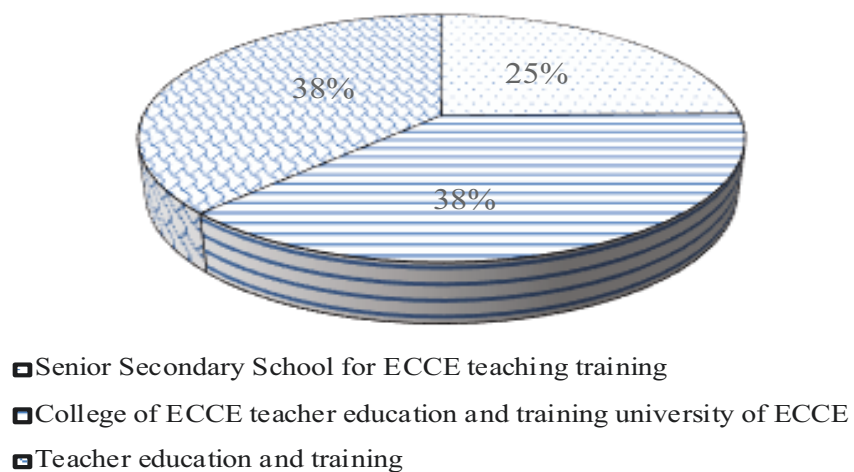
According to the requirement by the Ministry of Education and Training, all pre-school teachers need to acquire at least senior secondary school for ECCE pedagogical education (called standard). All the 32 interviewed teachers have standard or above standard ECCE pedagogical degree. In details, 25 percent of them finished senior secondary school level for ECCE teacher training (standard), 38 percent has a college degree for ECCE pedagogical education and training, and 38 percent possesses a bachelor degree in ECCE pedagogical education and training (above standard). Figure 4.7 presents the details of interviewed teachers' educational background.

**Figure 4-7: ECCE Teachers' Educational Background**



Source: Created by the author

**Figure 4-8: ECCE School Principals' Education Background**



Source: Created by the author

In case the principal of the selected school cannot participate in the interview, vice-principal is interviewed instead. In fact, there were two principals unavailable for the interview - one principal in Ba Ria-Vung Tau and one principal in Ha Noi. Thus, among 16 schools visited, 14 principals and 2 vice-principals were interviewed. All the

principal/vice principals have 3 to 15 years of experience in their current professional position. Among 16 informants, 19% finishes senior secondary school level for ECCE teacher training – all in rural area, 31% has college degree and 50% possesses a bachelor degree (above standard).

#### 4.9.3. Description of School Infrastructure and Quality Indicators of Sampled Schools

In the Charter of ECCE School issued by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), it is regulated that the minimum area used for each child in the ECCE school is 12m<sup>2</sup> per child in rural area and 8m<sup>2</sup> per child in urban and mountainous area. In fact, among the visited schools, more than half of the schools do not have enough space for children as regulated by the MOET; and basically, pre-schools in urban areas meet this infrastructural requirement better than pre-schools in rural areas. Table 4.16 provides detailed description on infrastructure and quality indicator (children-teacher ratio) of the sampled pre-schools.

**Table 4-16: Descriptive Information of the School Infrastructure**

	Public School		Private School	
	Rural	Urban	Normal	High-Class
Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	500-1000 m <sup>2</sup>	1000-10,000 m <sup>2</sup>	420-1500 m <sup>2</sup>	1000-1500 m <sup>2</sup>
Playing Ground	Fixed facilities such as cement-constructed slides and plain, flat ground	Almost same as rural school but larger, bigger and more well-constructed.	Small playing ground but quite well-equipped with safe sand and playing tools for the children	Huge, large playing ground with well-equipped facilities and playing tools such as mini facsimile kitchen, ball house, facsimile

				garden and animals, etc.
Lunch Service	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Classroom facilities	Table & desks, black board, few picture books, drawings, (color) pencils	Table & desks, black board, <u>more</u> picture books, drawings, (color) pencils, <u>varied toys</u> , <u>private boxes</u>	Table & desks, <u>white board</u> , picture books & <u>English books</u> , drawings, (color) pencils, varied toys, private boxes, <u>limited piano</u>	Table & desks, white board, picture books & English books, drawings, (color) pencils, varied toys, private boxes, <u>varied learning tools and material for language and mathematic study</u> , <u>sufficient piano and other music equipment</u> .
Extra Facilities	No	Dining Hall	School bus (limited), extra-learning room (art & music)	School bus, Swimming pool, Dining hall, Multi-functional room for learning music, art and physical movement.
Number of Classrooms	3-8	18-23	6-9	6-10
Number of teachers	4-16	35-55	12-18	9-12
Number of 3-5 years-old children	60-250	525-800	78-126	45-80
Children-teacher ratio	15-18	15-19	5-8	5-7

Source: Created by the author

#### **4.11. Data Analysis**

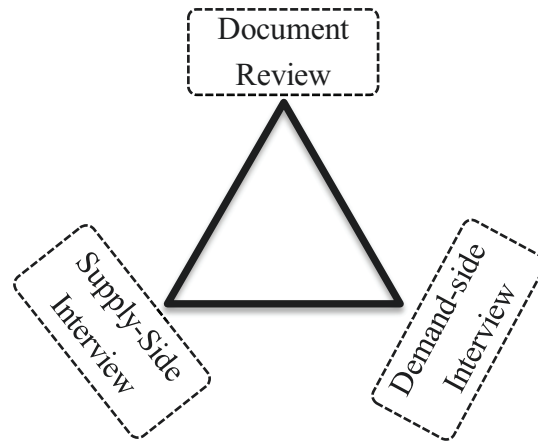
In order to analyze the qualitative data collected from the interviews, this study employed the induction method so that themes can be extracted and concepts are generated. Based on that, the data were organized into coherent patterns through the development of categories in order to demonstrate the phenomenon under the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In presenting the results, direct quotes of the participants' own words will be used to authenticate the findings and help convey the respondents' experience vividly. In addition, the strategy of using visual data displays in qualitative analysis has been highly recommended recently because it both facilitate an easy reading of the summary data and provide visible contrast views that are crucial in qualitative results (Gucciardi and Gordon, 2008).

#### **4.12. Validity and Reliability**

Corbin and Strauss (1990) have discussed different strategies to undertake a valid and reliable qualitative research. One of the most popular strategies is *triangulation*: triangulation of data sources to avoid information bias and triangulation of the data collection methods to cross check the perplex of collected data.

##### **Triangulation of Data Sources**

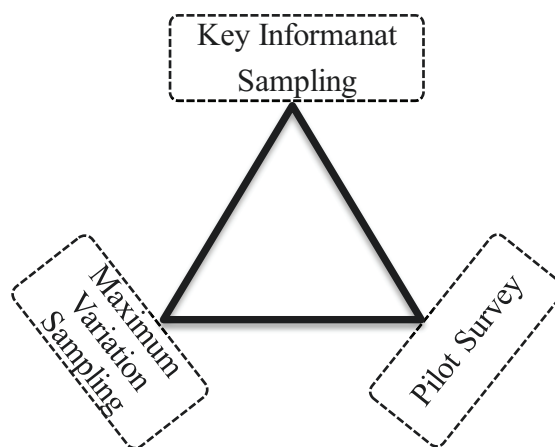
The triangulation of data sources in this research consists of three components: Document review; Supply-side Interview (Government Stakeholders and School Stakeholders); and Demand-side Interview (Parents).



Source: Created by the author

### **Triangulation of Data Collection Methods**

The Triangulation of data collection methods include the Key Informant Sampling Method, the Maximum Variation Sampling Method and the Pilot Survey. The pilot survey is to make sure the interview questions are suitable for the family involvement and ECCE contexts in targeted country. Concerning the key informant method, in order to avoid the bias of key informants, the author of this research has applied this method to multi-leveled authorization to create a triangulation of key informants: central-provincial-and district levels.



Source: Created by the author

#### **4.13. Ethical Consideration**

During the data collection, the qualitative researcher has to deal with people as individuals, so ethical consideration is crucial that any researcher has to be aware of. Basically, there are four principles concerning ethical issues in doing qualitative research: first, participants are respected, especially their privacy rights; second, the research is for the good sake of participants; third, researcher(s) or the research process itself does no harm to the participants; and last, the participants are protected by justice.

Thus, in recognition of these four principles, the author of this research has considered carefully the context, the aim of research and how sensitive the topic might be. The interview questionnaire was designed with questions that do not do any harm to the participants and do not cause them fear of the response consequences. This is very important especially for qualitative researchers because it may relate to personal experiences that people are hesitated to reveal. Therefore, when the participants expressed that they are not comfortable to be recorded during the interview, I was willing to take handwriting notes instead.

In addition, there are two significant ethical issues that should be considered in any research to assure participants' cooperation during the interview are *consent* and *confidentiality*. Therefore, informed consent was obtained from central to local government officials and from school principals to teachers and parents – details on informed consent obtaining process have been explained evidently in the data collection procedure section of this chapter. As for confidentiality, even if some personal identity was collected at the field, it will never be revealed in any forms of public report by anonymization during data analysis.



#### **4.14. Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented in details the scope of this study, which covers family involvement in early childhood education for children aged 3 to 5; the theoretical framework and the conceptual framework based on Hoover Dempsey and Sandler's parental involvement theory. Hypotheses of the study in corresponding to the research questions were also presented in this chapter. The research design and data collection based on canons of qualitative research to conduct this research was also presented in details. Another important aspect of qualitative research that is descriptive information of samples has also provided in details in this chapter. Last but not least, validity, reliability and ethical consideration of the study were also presented clearly and carefully in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study to answer the research questions through the research methodology described in chapter 4. Since this is a qualitative study, the presentation of the research results focus on the logical order of the story line as well as the themes and categories arise from data analysis; however, it still assures to answer all the research questions. Based on the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 4, this study will *firstly* attempt to justify the parental role construction in the context of Viet Nam. Then, parents' expectation of formal ECCE for children's development will be justified to recognize their motivations to send children to ECCE school. *Secondly*, findings on perceptions of different stakeholders including government stakeholders, school stakeholders, and parents of family involvement (FI) will be presented to provide different angles of viewpoints, which will help to later explain the practice of family involvement in early childhood education (ECE). Then, findings on current practices of family involvement in ECE will be presented through six defined categories within rural-urban and public-private school settings. Last but not least, extended family involvement in ECE will be presented .

### 5.2. Parental Role Construction

#### 5.2.1. Practitioners' Perception of Parental Role

When asked, "Who do you think is the most important person(s) to children's development?", all the principals agree that the mother, father and first teachers are the most influential persons for children's development. According to the principals, the

grandparents' role in children's development is similar to other members in the community. This finding partly agrees with the findings of Phares' (1997) study that children's behavioral and/or emotional problems can be informed by different human sources. In Phares' study, there are three dimensions of problems examined: internal, external and adaptive behaviors. According to Phares (1997), mother, father and teacher show strength in different dimensions of the problems, but they all have a role in child's characteristic development. However, responses of interviewed teachers are quite different. Only 45% of the asked teachers think that teachers are a most important person to the development of their children. 70% of the teachers perceive the mother as a most important person to development of children, while father is perceived as a most important person by 60% of interviewed teachers. In teachers' opinion, other family and community members have very small influence on children development. Parents' responses are similar to principals' responses in perception of the importance of the mother, grandparents and community, but more similar to teachers' responses regarding the father's and teachers' roles (Table 5.1).

**Table 5-1: Practitioners' Perception on Parental Role**

<b>Informants</b>	Mother	Father	Teachers	Grandparent(s)	Community
<b>Principal (16)</b>	100%	100%	100%	30%	30%
<b>Teacher (32)</b>	70%	60%	45%	10%	10%
<b>Parent (32)</b>	90%	70%	45%	25%	15%

Source: Created by the author

### **5.2.2. Parents' Expectation of ECCE Schools**

Most of the interviewed parents say that the ECCE program is important for their children's development. By sending their children to school they expect the children to develop skills and knowledge that they cannot obtain at home. The interview question

addressing this issue was, “What do parents expect kindergartens to provide their children?” Table 5.2 summarizes parents’ responses.

**Table 5-2: Parents’ Expectations of Kindergartens**

No.	What ECCE schools can provide children	Parents’ Response (N=32)
1.	Cognitive development	90%
2.	Communication skills	92%
3.	Vocabulary growth	90%
4.	Expressive language	92%
5.	Comprehension skills	82%
6.	Positive engagement with peers, adults and learning	82%
7.	Better nutrition	20%
8.	Physical exercise	75%
9.	Trained living routine (fixed sleeping time, eating time, playing time, etc.)	75%
10.	Parents have no expectation	6%

Source: Created by the author

Table 5.2 presents an overall response rate of all participating parents in each item of expectation from 1 to 10. As seen in the table, the majority of parents expect children to obtain cognitive development, communication skills, expressive language, vocabulary growth, comprehension skills, positive engagement with peers, adults and learning. These development indexes are also children’s outcomes related to the process of family involvement to cooperate with schools in child development presented by Weiss et al. (2006). There are some differences in children outcomes as expected by Vietnamese parents that are not discussed by studies in developed countries. These are:

- Many parents expect children to gain more guided exercise at pre-schools for their physical development. These parents, especially in private schools, believe that the trained teachers at pre-schools can guide their children to practice beneficial exercise. And, in addition to having less outside space for play,

grandparents taking care of children during the day may not allow children to play outside out of fear that it is dangerous. School playgrounds can offer a safe place to run, climb and play.

- Many parents find it hard to train their children to a fixed living routine, such as regular eating and sleeping times, which is believed to be good for children's development. They believe that teachers are better at doing this, so they expect their children to acquire better eating and sleeping habits when they join a pre-school.
- Some parents also expect children to be provided with better nutrition at school than at home. Parents with lower economic background find it hard to provide their children with nutritious meals. In some ECCE schools, milk is distributed freely for children as an incentive for parents to send their children to class. The local government of Ba Ria-Vung Tau province initiated this campaign, and the model has been duplicated in other provinces.

### **5.3. Perception of Family Involvement in ECE by Different Stakeholders (Research Question 1)**

#### **5.3.1. Consulting with the Central and Local Government**

Firstly, head of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Department of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), Dr. Nguyen Ba Minh, was interviewed concerning the management of ECCE and ECCE policy dissemination and implementation nationwide. In response to the importance of family involvement in early childhood education, he says, "Family involvement is very important and we have policies to increase parents' awareness and participation in early childhood education."

During the interview, Dr. Minh also provided a list of policies relating to family involvement in early childhood development. According to Mr. Minh, the MOET is the “standing functional unit for management of all levels of education, including ECCE”; thus, all policy dissemination starts from the MOET to provinces, then to districts and schools. From the viewpoint of the ministry, all school stakeholders should know about these policies and support the implementation of the policies. These policy documents have been disseminated and implemented nationwide, including:

- Decision 161/2002 by the Prime Minister to increase financial investment for ECCE development;
- Decision 149/2006 by the Prime Minister to officially define pre-school/ECCE as the first level of the national education system;
- Decree 69/2008 by the Central Government, with the amendment decree 59 in 2014, on socialization of education to diversify the funding for education, encouraging various parties to bear expenses for education, including families;
- Decision 239/2010 by the Prime Minister to approve the proposal on universalization of pre-schooling for 5-year-old children;
- Document no. 6841/2015 by the Ministry of Education and Training and the Special Education Centre on fostering a reading culture among citizens, emphasizing the role of schools in leading the campaign, improving reading at school, encouraging parents to read to children at home, especially for young children, schools should guide parents on how to read to children; and
- The New Child Law 2016, making universalization of pre-schooling for 5-year-old children as law.

In searching for government stakeholders’ perceptions and/or expectations of family involvement, the author conducted the interview to 4 ministerial officials, 8 provincial officials and 16 district officials. The questions of policy and implementation

have also been addressed by local government stakeholders. Based on a review of these policy documents and discussion with government stakeholders, the author of this research has categorized all the activities or elements that have been defined and/or mentioned as part of family involvement in early childhood development (ECD) as following:

- Sending children to ECCE schools (Education Law);
- Paying fees, as part of the Socialization of Education – the poor are subsidized by the government (Decree 69);
- Encourage wealthy families to pay more than the normal to share the financial burden with the government (Decree 69 – Socialization of Education);
- Improve parenting at home through reading for young children (Ministry of Education and Training);
- 100% of children at age 5 need to go to pre-primary schools (New Child Law);
- Parents put priority for taking care of children and facilitating their learning (Education Law); and
- Parents cooperate with teachers and schools to ensure good ECCE quality for children (Education Law).

However, the real situation of dissemination and implementation of policies may vary throughout provinces because the MOET is “responsible for general management of the whole system” as explained by the head of the ECCE Department in the MOET.

It is found that policies relating to family involvement in school activities are more difficult to be realized in rural areas than in urban areas. The reasons are because parents in rural areas conventionally think that they have no responsibility during the eight hours in which children are at school. The policy of reading or learning with children at home is not promoted in rural areas as much as in urban areas because

parents in urban areas are normally more knowledgeable and more proactive in children's education.

### **5.3.2. Perception of Family Involvement by School Stakeholders**

In searching for school stakeholders' perceptions and/or expectations of family involvement in early childhood education, the author of this study interviewed 16 principals and 32 teachers of 16 schools. Results show that 100% of principals and 90% of teachers affirm that family involvement is very important in early childhood education. A school report on family involvement in early childhood education in Ba Ria-Vung Tau province states that, "Even when parents have sent children to a very good pre-school with high-qualified teachers, parents' role still cannot be ignored because *parents are the children's first teachers*."

It is important that parents pay attention to their children's learning and spending time at school and cooperate with teachers and the school to foster the holistic development of children" – report provided by the principal of a private pre-school in Ba Ria-Vung Tau province (PC16). In general, principals in urban areas report that parents' awareness of ECCE have improved in the last few years, so family involvement is becoming better as well.

It is recorded that 65% of teachers are satisfied with family involvement in their kindergarten, citing that parents cooperate well with teachers and the school in meeting the demands for raising and educating children at school and at home. Some teachers (15% of interviewed teachers) are not satisfied with family involvement in their kindergarten, explaining that family involvement may not be suitable and sometimes negative when the parents and teachers have different educating methods or when parents misunderstand the teachers' job. For example, a principal said that:



“Sometimes the parents do not understand what is good and what is not good for their children, so their requests to school might be unreasonable”

(PC15)

And some teachers responded that:

“... some parents are too sensitive. Once when I punished a child to face the wall, the parent made a phone call to the principal with very strong re-action ...”

(T2)

Or

“... some parents give opinions at the wrong place and/or wrong time. Some of the opinions are out-dated and prejudiced.”

(T22)

It is found that 85.7% interviewed and surveyed teachers mentioned positive side of family involvement in ECD; whilst 42.6% complains on negative effects of family involvement. One teacher states that “*I think family involvement is always positive in early childhood development*”. As seen in Table 5.3, teachers recognize more positivity in FI in ECD than negativity, which means that they expect family to involve more in ECD.

**Table 5-3: Justification of Teachers on Positive and Negative Sides of Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education**

Positive	Negative
By organizing practical training for children, parents can on the one hand help sharing the tasks of teachers and on the other hand have chance to observe their child performance at school. In addition, they can see how their children eat, sleep and play at school.	However, if parents appear in sight of children during class hours, it will cause trouble for teachers because children will not follow what teachers instruct.
Show parents' care of their own children. Strengthen cooperation between school and family in caring and educating children; thanks to that they can understand more about their children's characteristics and development.	There are parents who pay very little care of their children and put all the responsibilities of caring and educating children to school.
Parents' participation can help teachers a lot; and thanks to parents' partnership to schools, they can understand more of schools' difficulties.	However, some parents are too sensitive in educating children and can have too strong reaction if they do not agree with teachers' caring and educating method.
Make financial contribution to school, help schools organize more creative activities for children.	Some parents do not agree with school's policy and restrain school from implementing some policy.
Parents have participated in socialization of education to help improve ECCE with schools.	
Can improve information exchange between school and family	Some parents say bad things about teachers.
- Give right opinions at the right time; help parents raise their opinions on children's nutrition at school.	However, some parents give opinions at the wrong place and/or wrong time. Some of the opinions are out-dated and prejudiced.

Source: Created by the author

### 5.3.3. Parents' Perception of Family Involvement

In total, 32 parents including 28 mothers and 4 fathers were interviewed to study the parents' perception. It is noticeable that all parents agree that family involvement is very important to children. Many parents agree with teachers in saying that "parents are children's first teachers" and have a lot of influence on children's education and development. Some parents state clearly that they are the persons who understand their child the best and some parents even express that they should be the facilitator to cooperate with teachers to understand their children and educate them better. The following statements are some examples from parents' interviews to show their opinions:

"Parents are the closest to the children and understand them the best."

(Coincidentally, many parents share this similar answer)

"Parents play the linkage role between school and children"

(P30)

"Parents play an important role in shaping the children's characteristics, so parents should partner with school to orient children's development and collaborate in educating children".

(P19)

"I think parents and school should collaborate closely so that educating children at home and at school are not too different. Parents should not put all the responsibilities to the school, but should spend time with their own children every day. Parents' lifestyle and behaviors have great influence on children".

(P10)

“If parents’ perspective on educating children matches with school’s principles and if parents communicate closely with school, then sending children to school will be a success”.

(P22)

Based on parents’ responses, it is seen that most of parents are quite active in getting involved in educating children and they are willing to support and collaborate with schools in improving the effectiveness of early childhood education. By saying that “parents play the linkage role between school and children”, this mother wants to imply that she wants to help teachers to understand her child better and can cooperate with teachers in educating the child.

Although different parents have different ways of saying, all the quotes above show that other parents agree with this mother (P30). Once, the stakeholders have agreed on the importance of family involvement, the next step is to define the specific pathways or activities through which family involvement is commenced. Table 5.4 below will provide a quick summary on family involvement activities as perceived by different stakeholders.

#### **5.3.4. Family Involvement Activities as Perceived by Interviewed Stakeholders**

Table 5.4 below summarizes the responses of the government stakeholders including district, provincial and ministerial officers, the school stakeholders including principals and teachers on their expectation of family involvement in early childhood education as well as parents’ perception of their own family involvement in early childhood education.

**Table 5-4: Expectation and Perception of Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education by Different Stakeholders**

<b>Family Involvement Activities in Class/School</b>	<b>Officials (N=28)</b>	<b>Principals (N=16)</b>	<b>Teachers (N=32)</b>	<b>Parents (N=32)</b>
Send children to kindergarten	79%	75%	67%	69%
Pay schooling fee and other kinds of fees	79%	57%	75%	60%
Take part in the PTA	68%	57%	58%	38%
Attend the parents' meetings	89%	57%	92%	75%
Talk to teachers on children's activities and studying at school (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.)	75%	94%	92%	94%
Exchange information through School-Family exchange notebook	64%	94%	75%	66%
Participate in school or class's trip with their children	68%	75%	75%	73%
Volunteer in classroom's activities	82%	38%	75%	66%
Monitor child's activities and teacher's teaching at school	61%	57%	45%	40%
Plan/monitor school development/budget plan	68%	19%	50%	30%
Meet with other parents to plan children's events	68%	38%	83%	55%
Learning with children at home (reading, playing, etc.)	72%	68%	65%	55%

Source: Created by the author based on Epstein (1995), Fantuzzo et al. (2004) and Hoover-Dempsey, Walker and Sandler (2005)

In total, there are twelve activities selected by the majority of participants - Table 5.4 illustrates in details the percentage of each group of stakeholders to perceive each of these activities as their definition of family involvement. The twelve activities are:

- Sending children to kindergarten;
- Paying schooling fee and other kinds of fees at school;

- Taking part in the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) (so-called Parental Representative Committee in Viet Nam);
- Attending the parents' meeting at school;
- Talking to teachers on children's activities and studying at school (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.);
- Exchanging information through School-Family exchange notebook;
- Participating in school or class's trip with their children;
- Volunteering in classroom's activities;
- Monitoring child's activities and teacher's teaching at school;
- Planning/monitoring school development/budget plan;
- Meeting with other parents to plan children's events;
- Learning with children at home (reading, playing, etc.).

As seen in Table 5.4, the government stakeholders, school stakeholders and parents are likely to share high percentage of common perception on eight activities out of twelve activities mentioned. These eight activities are: sending children to kindergarten, paying schooling fee and other kinds of fees at school; taking part in the PTA, attending the parents' meeting at school, talking to teachers on children's activities and studying at school, exchanging information through School-Family exchange notebook, participating in school or class's trip with their children, and learning with children at home. While most of officials, teachers and parents share similar opinion that "volunteer in classroom's activities" is an activity of family involvement, only 6 out 16 principals think that it is although this activity is listed in Epstein's model of family involvement. One principal explains that:

"Since parents are very busy at work, we cannot expect them to get involved more in school activities. Solely the fact that they are willing to send their children to kindergarten is already a happy thing for us"

This principal is the principal of a public ECCE school in Ba Ria City, Ba Ria-Vung Tau province. She is 54 years old and had more than 30 years working experience in ECCE sector, with more than 15 years' experience as a principal of three different ECCE schools in Ba Ria City. Maybe it is the reason why she has got used to the fact that parents cannot spend much time for school or classroom activities because when she started her job more than 30 years ago, Viet Nam has just started its "Doi Moi" Policy and the whole society was transforming from a state-planned economy to a market-oriented economy, resulting in more people started new business and more people started working in private companies. In other words, the whole society was becoming very "busy".

Other activities that receive less ratio of stakeholders' perception include: monitoring child's activities and teacher's teaching at school, planning/monitoring school development/budget plan, meeting with other parents to plan children's events. This maybe partly explained by the fact that in Vietnamese culture, teachers used to be said to be the "noblest job" and parents pay respect and somehow keep distance to teachers and schools, so they never think of themselves as persons who monitor teachers' activities or school's budget. Although this way of thinking has started to change among urban parents who have more accessed to Western culture, rural parents have not changed that much.

### **5.3.5. Principals' Expectation of Family Involvement**

Principals' responses on family involvement at management level indicate some major differences between family involvement in rural and family involvement in urban areas. In rural areas, ECCE classes/schools are distributed into each village to ensure the location is close to children's living places.

**Table 5-5: Difference between Rural School’s Expectation and Urban School’s Expectation of Family Involvement**

	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>
School Management Board (SMC)	There is no school management board (SMC) at rural village ECCE classes.	All interviewed schools have an SMC. The schools’ SMC and PTA have annual meeting once a year to report concerns from the previous year and inform and/or asking for feedback of coming year’s plan.
Parent-teacher association (PTA)	Normally, there is no PTA.	There is always a PTA in each ECCE school.
Expectation of family involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Register children to ECCE school;</li> <li>- Bring them to class as often as possible;</li> <li>- Pay fees that schools require;</li> <li>- Involvement in other activities such as parenting at home, home-school relation and information exchange: the more the better, but schools do not expect too much from parents’ volunteer or conferencing with school.</li> <li>- Only one school mentions parents’ volunteer to clean and decorate classroom. Most of other schools’ reports indicate that parents just bring children to class and put all responsibility to school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperate with teachers in teaching (reading, numbering, behaviors) and training children’s daily routines;</li> <li>- Contribute financial resources (except from required fees) to school;</li> <li>- Participate in PTA;</li> <li>- PTA members to supervise school’s financial plan with SMC);</li> <li>- Parenting at home is very important;</li> <li>- Home-school relationship is necessary and required.</li> </ul>

Source: Created by the author



Normally, the number of classes in these villages is too small to form a School Management Committee (SMC), so each commune (a collection of villages) has an ECCE SMC, and the name of the ECCE classes are all under the name of the commune as commune ECCE school. In urban areas, because of the big number of children enrolled, the pre-school is normally much bigger, so there is always an SMC. This significant difference will cause other differences in family involvement between rural and urban areas, which are displayed in Table 5.5: rural parents of the two provinces hardly get involved in school management and action plan. They even do not have the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA); therefore, their cooperation with other parents at school or class activities is unseen.

#### **5.4. Current Practices of Family Involvement in ECD (Research Question 2)**

##### **5.4.1. Pathways to Practice Family Involvement in Early Childhood Education**

In Epstein's typology of Parental/Family Involvement, six types of involvement are listed: parenting, decision making, communicating, volunteering at school, helping children at home and collaborating with the community. However, according to Epstein's (1987) definition of the first involvement type 'Parenting', the most basic involvement of parents is providing children's needs for food, clothing, shelter, health and safety, which, in the context of Viet Nam, is taken for granted. Moreover, Parenting in Epstein's definition implies that once the children are in school, parents provide school supplies and space and time for schoolwork at home. In addition, Epstein's definition of the fifth type 'helping children at home' implies the fact that parents help or assist their children complete the homework assigned by their teachers, which is definitely not pre-school level. Therefore, Epstein's definition of parenting, on the one

hand, is more applicable to higher levels of education than to ECCE; and, on the other hand, can be translated or combined to the item ‘helping children at home’.

Next, Epstein’s definition of the second type ‘Decision making’ as a process of partnership, shared views and actions toward shared goals which happens at school such as involving in parent-teacher association (PTA) decision making, which will be included in school-based involvement in this study. Thus, based on these justifications of Epstein’s typology and the specific context of the targeted country in this study, the author has categorized the six pathways through which parents practice the involvement in early childhood education in Viet Nam as following:

- 1) Sending Children to Kindergarten
- 2) School-Choice Decision Making
- 3) Paying School Fees
- 4) Helping the Children at Home
  - *Learning with children at home*
  - *Playing with children at home*
  - *Engaging with children in out-door activities*
- 5) Engaging Involvement at School (School-based involvement)
  - *Involvement in Class Activities*
  - *Communicating and Collaborating with Teachers*
  - *Involvement in Parents Association at School*
- 6) Collaborating with the Community

‘Sending children to kindergarten’ as explained by the government stakeholders is considered as family involvement in Viet Nam because in many households, especially in extended families in rural areas, parents think that the grandparents can take care of the children at home so it is not necessary to send children to school. To this extent, if the parents decide to send children to school, then they have contribute to the government’s commitment of increasing enrollment rate of kindergarten children.

‘School-choice decision making’ is also considered as a type of family involvement in the context that the government is encouraging parents with better economic condition to send children to private pre-schools<sup>13</sup> to share the financial burden of the government so that the government can invest more on universalization of pre-school education, ensuring the equity and invest more on improving quality of early childhood care and education. In addition, by doing school-choice decision making, parents show more interest and attention to their children’s education.

The next item in this study that is different from Epstein’s model is the category of ‘Paying school fees’. This item in the context of Viet Nam is also considered as family involvement because it does not only show parents’ commitment to early childhood education but also an action of financial contribution to national early childhood education. Especially, in Viet Nam, the tuition fee and lunch fee for children are different by geographic and economic regions. Specifically, the government subsidizes schooling for children in mountainous areas and poor communities.

The next section will analyze the details of each involvement type defined above. Within this detailed analysis, the compare and contrast to illustrate differences of family involvement in early childhood education between rural and urban areas and between public and private pre-schools will also be figured out.

#### **5.4.2. Sending Children to Kindergarten**

As seen in Table 5.4, less than 80% of government/school stakeholders and less than 70% of parents consider “sending children to ECCE school” as a form of family involvement in ECD. However, the enrollment rate of kindergarten children nationwide has doubled in year 2015 compared to year 2000, and reached 92% in 2016-17 compared to 45% in 2000-01 (Figure 5.1). Especially, the enrollment rates in the four

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<sup>13</sup> As mentioned earlier, government spending on education is only for public schools, not for private school (Budget Law)

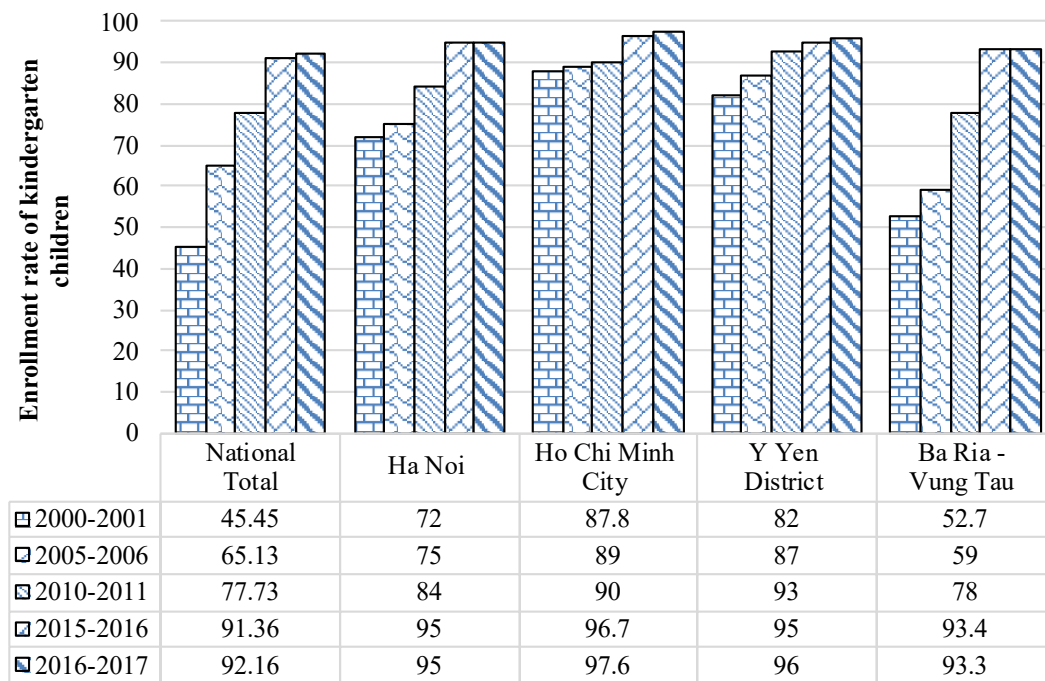
sampled provinces are all higher than the national average with Ho Chi Minh City at the top, reaching nearly 98%. When parents are asked *Why* this situation can happen, they reveal various reasons. The first reason is that, “it is just because it’s time” (P21, P22), which means that they have observed that when the children reach the age of going to kindergarten, the parents just let them go. Thus, this can be seen as a *social norm*.

Secondly, “because it is necessary for my child’s development” (P26) – both rural and urban parents have similar answers to this parent, and “because it is better for my child’s characteristic development; if he/she stays at home with the grandparent(s), he/she will be easily spoiled” (P16) – some other urban parents have the similar responses.

Another typical response was that “because we were asked/persuaded to do so” (P28) – rural parents, which refers to the fact that the civic staffs or the teachers themselves have visited families with the kindergarten-aged children to persuade the parents to send children to ECCE schools. These responses show the differences in parents’ awareness of ECCE on early childhood development.

Enrollment rate of 5-year-old children is extremely high and has increased sharply since 2010. Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City have almost reached 100% and the national average is 98% in 2016-2017 (Figure 5.2). Nam Dinh Province did not provide provincial data on this; however, the enrollment rate of Y Yen district – a rural district of Nam Dinh Province – is extremely high (100%). The reasons for this high enrollment rate were found through the interviews with government stakeholders of all levels (Table 5.5).

**Figure 5-1: Enrollment Rate of Kindergarten Children in Sampled Provinces, 2000-2017**

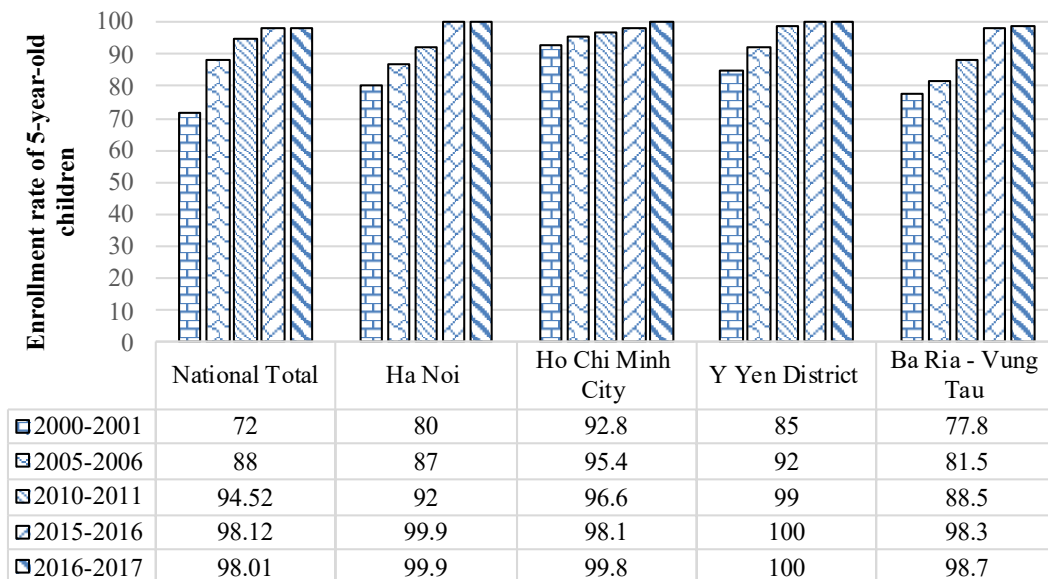


Source: Created by the author based on data collected at field study

Note: Data of Nam Dinh province was not available, but only Y Yen district (a rural district of Nam Dinh) provided the data.

Table 5.6 below will provide different stakeholders' explanation on the reason why enrollment rate 5-year-old children are so high. Basically, there are three main reasons: i) because of government's policy and commitment to universalize pre-school education for 5-year-old children to ensure school readiness; ii) because of government and international donors' financial spending for the universalization of pre-school education for 5-year-old children; and iii) because many parents are aware of the importance of pre-school for children's future learning and development.

**Figure 5-2: Enrollment Rate of 5-year-old Children in Sampled Provinces, 2000-2017**



Source: Created by the author based on data collected at field study

Note: Data of Nam Dinh province was not available, but only Y Yen district (a rural district of Nam Dinh) provided the data.

**Table 5-6: Reasons Why Enrollment Rate for 5-year-old Children are So High**

Ministerial Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thanks to the government’s policy on universalization of pre-primary education for 5-year-old children (M1, M2);</li> <li>- With support of the school readiness program for 5-year-old children by the World Bank (100 million dollars) (M3, M4).</li> </ul>
Provincial Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thanks to government’s policy on universalization of pre-primary education for 5-year-old children (D5, D6, D7, D8);</li> </ul>
District Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “In order to implement the policy on universalization of kindergarten for 5-year-old children by the government, we have to assign the district civic staff to go to each household with not-enrolled 5-year-old children to persuade the parents to send their children to ECCE school” (B9, B14);</li> <li>- “We have also done campaign to raise parents’ awareness on the importance of ECCE to children’s development through local media such as radio, TV, or newspapers” (B1, B11).</li> </ul>
Principals/ Teachers/ Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Some of our teachers have visited children’s families to persuade parents to bring them to class” (PC6, PC9, PC11);</li> <li>- “Because the school provides the children with milk, so I feel happy to send my child to class” (P27, P28, P29, P30);</li> <li>- Because sending children to school is good their development (many parents).</li> </ul>

Source: Created by the author

### 5.4.3. School Choice Decision-Making

Data collection for this section was done through a question with multiple choice answers and open for parents’ additional comments. Therefore, parents may choose more than one reason for their school choice. Through the analysis of 32 parents’ response, it is found that school choice decision making relies mainly on parents’ own criteria for schools. These criteria include: *distance from home to school, distance from mother/father’s working place to child’s school, reasonable tuition fees, and school*

*quality*. In addition, there are roughly 22 percent of parents reporting that they have only one option. These parents are mostly from rural villages in Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau province. Thus, this section will provide more details on four categories of criteria with different concerns in school choice decision-making between rural and urban parents as well as between parents of children enrolling in public and private pre-schools.

*Distance from home to school:* It is found that 70% of parents choose the current school because of the short distance from home to school. The main reason why distance from home to school is important is because it is easy for parents or grandparents to go to pick up children at school. This option is also chosen by the parents who are living in the rural villages where there is one option of pre-school for them.

*Distance from mother/father's working place to child's school:* the parents who provided this reason are those who are living and working full-time in the cities (urban/sub-urban), especially parents who are not receiving support from grandparents or other family member. Therefore, they choose the school location so that they can save time in the morning taking children to school and going to work and in the afternoon on the way home from work they can pick up the children on time. Some parents say that this is very convenient for them to cooperate better with the child's school because they can get access to school almost any time in need, and in case they have to work late, they can go to pick up their children first, then go back for work again. For example, one parent say:

“I chose this school for my 3 year-old son and my 5 year-old daughter because it is just 3 minutes walking from my company. When the teacher call and say my son gets sick at school, I can go to pick him up immediately. Sometimes, when my house-helper cannot go to pick them up, I can disrupt my work and spend some time to pick my children, then come back to work again.”



(P5)

*Reasonable tuition fees:* 30 percent of the parents choose the current school because of the reasonable tuition and other fees. These are mostly parents who are sending their children to private schools and they also belong to the medium-income group.

*School quality:* Some parents present other reasons such as their concern about school facilities, teacher and school quality, which implies that they have updated knowledge of children development and they pay attention to the pre-school education quality. These parents are those living in central districts of the two central cities: Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City. For example, they claim:

“because of the large playground”

(P18)

“because teachers’ perspective and school’s orientation suit my family’s desire”

(P6)

“because the fees equal the quality”

(P16)

*Different Concerns:* It is found that the concern of parents in school choice decision-making is different by geographical and wealth background. For example, while rural parents in Nam Dinh and Ba Ria – Vung Tau have concern on whether to send children to kindergarten or not – due to the fact that there is no school choice for them; middle-income urban and sub-urban parents of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city have concern on whether to send children to private or public kindergartens. At a different level, high-income urban parents in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh city attempt to

investigate which type of methodology the school is applying in teaching and raising the children, i.e. Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf (Rudolf Steiner), etc. before deciding which school to send their children.

#### **5.4.4. Paying School Fees**

##### **5.4.4.1. Schooling Fees of Public ECCE Schools**

As seen in Table 5.4, roughly 70% of the interviewed participants agree that paying school fees is one of the appearances of family involvement in ECCE for the young children's development. Therefore, this part will present results on parents' paying school fees for children at public and private pre-schools in both rural and urban areas.

As Table 5.7 shows, there is a difference in officers' reports on schooling fees and parents' responses on the actual amount of their financial contribution to formal schooling fees in ECCE. According to the district officials, the total schooling fees for public ECCE ranges from 140 US dollars to 339 US dollars per year depending on the geographical region (rural and urban); the average amount is 267 US dollars per year for the eight selected districts. However, parents' response gives a range from 65 to 339 US dollars with a higher average amount at 285 US dollars. This difference in district officers' report and parents' report reflects two facts: i) real payment at school level may be higher than regulation by the government; for example, some schools may provide afternoon snacks and collect a fee for this, which is not included in government's standard fees; and ii) there are some amenity items listed by the government officers but in fact, they are not in practice at school level; for example, in Y Yen district, district officers listed lunch fee but in fact, schools do not provide lunch for children – families need to pick them up home for lunch then take them back to class again in the afternoon – so they do not collect lunch fee, which results in the fact that parents' real payment is lower than district officers' report.

**Table 5-7: Primary Data on Schooling Fees in Selected Public ECCE Schools**

Location		Ha Noi Capital		Ho Chi Minh City		Nam Dinh Province		Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province	
		Thanh Tri	Hoan Kiem	Can Gio	District 7	Y Yen	Nam Dinh City	Tan Thanh	Ba Ria City
Informants	Fee/ District Type	Rural District	Urban District	Rural District	Urban District	Rural District	Urban District	Rural District	Urban District
District Officers	Tuition Fee	50,000	110,000	100,000	110,000	80,000	105,000	45,000	105,000
	Lunch & snacks/per day	17,000	18,000	24,500	25,000	11,000	15,000	25,000	25,000
	Clean drinking water	10,000	12,000	5000	0	0	0	0	0
	Boarding Fee	80,000	120,000	80,000	120,000	0	100,000	0	0
	Nutrition Staff Fee	0	0	35,000	0	0	0	0	0
	Facility Fee for Boarding Service	0	0	21,000	0		0	0	13,500
	Others	0	0	0	0	0	60,000	0	24,000
	Monthly total (VND)	514,000	638,000	780,000	780,000	322,000	595,000	595,000	692,500
	Annual total (VND)	5140000	6380000	7800000	7800000	3220000	5950000	5950000	6925000
	Annual total (USD)	223	277	339	339	140	259	259	301
Parents	Annual total (VND)	6,000,000	7,500,000	7,800,000	7,800,000	1,500,000	8,300,000	6,000,000	7,500,000
	Annual total (USD)	261	326	339	339	65	361	261	326

Source: Created by the author

Note: in Ba Ria-Vung Tau province: lunch fee including breakfast; in Y Yen district: schools do not provide lunch; in Nam Dinh City, parents report Lunch fee together with Snack = 25,000/day.

Currency rate: 1usd = 23,000vnd (Rate of August 2018)

According to the interview with principals, in urban areas, parents do not easily accept every requirement of financial contribution from schools. They need to be explained, in detail, the fees they have to contribute or to pay to schools. For example, tuition fees are collected based on local government's order, so school stakeholders do not have to explain how it will be spent; but other fees such as lunch, uniform, etc. are

needed to be explained clearly on how they will be used. However, once the parents are convinced, they will cause no difficulty for teachers in collecting the fees and they mostly do it with great punctuation. On the contrary, parents in rural areas have hardly asked for details of fees they have to pay, they just pay attention to the total amount they have to contribute to the school and do not show objection.

“They do not discuss or negotiate, they just accept the requirement at first”

(PC11).

However, in implementation, the teachers have difficulty in collecting the money from some of the parents, especially parents of the poor household. This is mainly because the families’ limited financial conditions and poor family financial management that cause delays in paying fees to schools.

#### **5.4.4.2. Public ECCE Schools vs. Private ECCE Schools**

In most of public school, parents find that the school fees are quite reasonable and affordable for the majority, so there is no complaint. This is not difficult to understand because all of public schools in Viet Nam are sponsored by the government, even teachers’ salary also come from the government’s budget, so tuition fee is just to share a small percent of school expenses.

In private schools, the situation is different. Since the government do not support private schools financially, all the school construction, facilities, teacher salary and operation expenses rely on school owner’s budget and schooling fees collecting from parents. Therefore, parents raise more opinions on tuition fees in private pre-schools. In general, parents have to pay more than their expectation in order to enroll their children to pre-schools that match their needs. The needs may vary from school location, children keeping time to school quality and fame. For example, below is an

opinion from a parent in a normal private school in Ho Chi Minh City and one opinion from a parent in a normal private school in Hanoi:

❖ Private school in Ho Chi Minh city:

“The tuition fee is **a little bit high** for us because both my husband and I are hourly-paid workers but we have no other choice than to send our kid to this private school because the public school closes earlier (with almost the same fees) and both me and my husband cannot pick her up in time. At this private school, the kids can stay until 6pm so my husband can pick her up after finishing his job”.

(P13)

❖ Private school in Ha Noi:

“It is higher than we expect and we have to try to economize our other expenses to pay for my kid to learn here because I don’t like the way teachers manage the students at public schools”

(P8)

#### **5.4.4.3. Normal Private vs. High-class Private**

Table 5.8 and Table 5.9 presents the details on different types of fees at normal private pre-schools and high-class private schools. In normal private schools, the tuition fees and other fees are collected monthly. Most of parents in these schools are average-incomed people, so this method of payment is suitable for them since they do not have a big amount of money available at one time.

**Table 5-8: Primary Data on Schooling Fees in Selected Normal Private ECCE Schools**

Location	Ha Noi Capital		Ho Chi Minh City		Nam Dinh Province		Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province	
	Thanh Tri	Hoan Kiem	Can Gio	District 7	Y Yen	Nam Dinh City	Tan Thanh	Ba Ria city
Fee/ District Type	Rural District	Urban District	Rural District	Urban District	Rural District	Urban District	Rural District	Urban District
Entrance Fee (Once at the beginning)	0	1,400,000	0	0		0		0
Monthly Tuition Fee	1,500,000	2,510,000	1,200,000	1,686,000		2,200,000		1,400,000
Breakfast + Lunch + Snacks (per day)	18,000	45,000	15,000	0		0		26,000
Uniform (Once a year)	0	200,000	0	0		0		0
Saturday Class (one class) (optional)	0	125,000	0	0		0		0
Bus (Optional)	0	1,000,000	0	0		0		0
English Class (8 classes/month) (optional)	0		0	300,000		0 (Bilingual Program)		0
Extra curriculum classes (optional)	0		0	0		0		240,000
Others								50,000
Monthly total (VND) *	1896000	3516667	1530000	1,686,000		2,200,000		2022000
Annual total (VND) *	22752000	42200000	18360000	20232000		26400000		24264000
Annual total (USD) *	<b>989</b>	<b>1835</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>880</b>		<b>1148</b>		<b>1055</b>
Monthly total (VND)**	1896000	5016667	1530000	1986000		2200000		2,262,000
Annual total (VND)**	22752000	60200000	18360000	23832000		26400000		27144000
Annual total (USD)**	<b>989</b>	<b>2617</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>1036</b>		<b>1148</b>		<b>1180</b>

Source: Created by the author

Note: \*: Excluding optional fees; \*\*: Including optional fees

Currency rate: 1usd = 23,000vnd (Rate of August 2018)

**Table 5-9: Primary Data on Schooling Fees in Selected High-Class Private ECCE Schools**

Location	Ha Noi	Ho Chi Minh City
Fee/ District Type	Urban	Urban
Registration/ Enrollment Fee (One time)	8,500,000	15,000,000
School Facilities (once a year)	7,800,000	
Deposit Fee		20,000,000
Monthly Fee (Tuition + Meals + Uniform)	15,000,000	18,250,000
Extra class (optional)/one class		250,000
Others		
Annual total (VND) *	190633333	230666667
Annual total (USD) *	<b>8288</b>	<b>10029</b>

Source: Created by the author

Note: \*: Excluding optional fees. In high-class or international private ECCE schools, monthly payment is not accepted. Only quarterly (three months) or annual payment is available. If parents do annual payment, they will get 5-7% discount.

Currency rate: 1usd = 23,000vnd (Rate of August 2018)

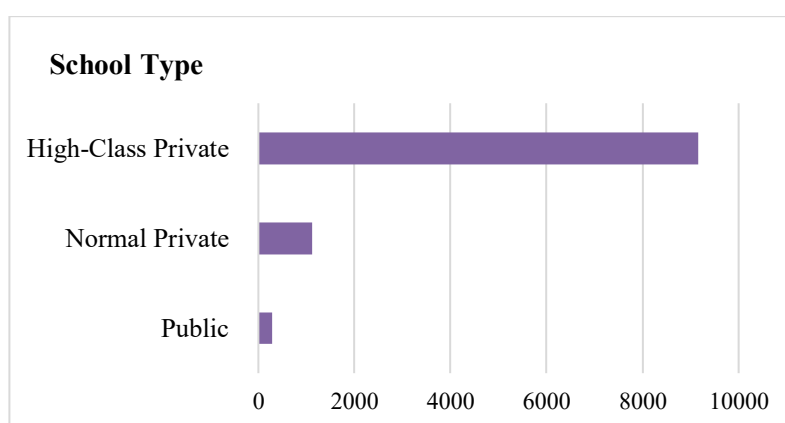
However, at high-class private pre-schools, with total fees higher from five to ten times, parents have to pay quarterly or annual amount, which means they are very high-incomed people or at least they are rich (compared to average-incomed people in Viet Nam). The total annual fees at normal private schools is around 1,000 US dollars, while that at high-class private schools is from 8,000 to 10,000 US dollars. In addition, among six normal private pre-schools in the sample, there is only one school collects the entrance fee (so-called enrollment fee), while this fee is applied in all high-class

private schools. The entrance fee at the normal private school is roughly 61 US dollars, compared with a range from 370 US dollars to 740 US dollars at high-class private schools.

Another noticeable difference between these two types of private schools is that: in normal private schools, the normal schooling time last from 7am to 5pm and the extra-classes such as art and music are all included in monthly tuition fees, but in high-class private schools, formal schooling time ends around 3pm and if parents want children to participate in extra classes such as music, art or second foreign language that are organized after 3pm, they have to pay extra fees (Table 5.9).

Figure 5.3 illustrates visibly the big gap of schooling fees among three categories of pre-schools: public, normal private and high-class private. The difference between public and normal private pre-schools are not too big and the reasons have been mentioned in previous parts. However, the difference between normal private and high-class private is really big; and the main reasons for these big differences are: program and curriculum, teaching staff, teaching method, language use, and school's facilities. The details of these differences are presented in Table 5.10.

**Figure 5-3: Average Annual School Fees in Four Selected Provinces**



Source: The author's calculation based on primary data collected from visited schools

Unit: US dollars



**Table 5-10: Differences between Normal and High-class Private Pre-schools Resulting in Big Gap of Schooling Fees**

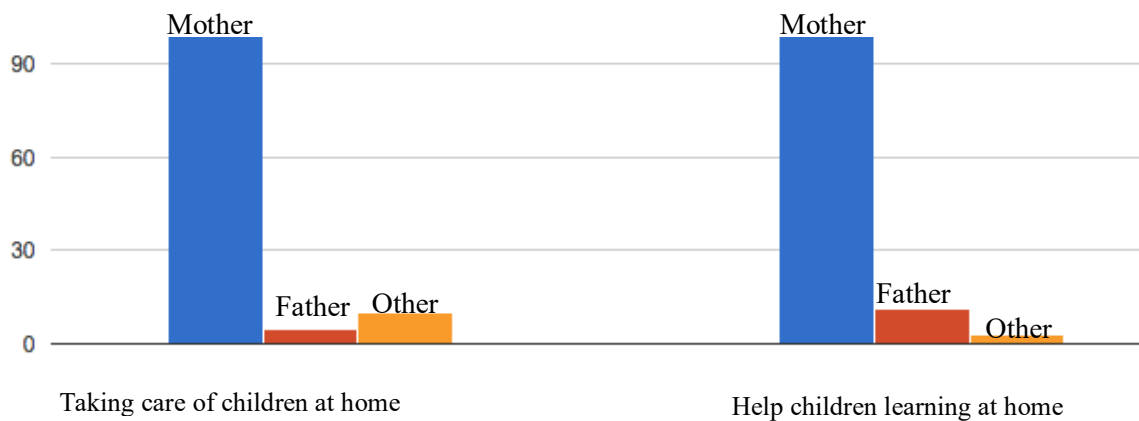
	<b>Normal Private Pre-schools</b>	<b>High-class Private Pre-schools</b>
Curriculum	Vietnamese curriculum based on standard of the MOET with some additional activities and classes, especially English class;	International curriculum varied by schools;
Teaching Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vietnamese language;</li> <li>• English is just an additional subject with less than 1 hour a week;</li> </ul>	There are two options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% English;</li> <li>• Half English and half Vietnamese.</li> </ul>
Official language	Vietnamese;	English;
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent teachers: Vietnamese;</li> <li>• Part-time teachers: foreigners to teach English;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main teachers: foreigners;</li> <li>• Teaching assistant: Vietnamese;</li> </ul>
Administrative Staffs	All Vietnamese;	Half Vietnamese, half foreigners;
Principal	Vietnamese;	Foreigner;
Teaching method	Traditional as guided by the MOET;	International and varied by school: Montessori, Waldorf (Steiner), Reggio Emilia, etc.
Teaching materials	Vietnamese;	English;
Facilities	Classroom, small playground, eating room, multi-functional room;	Classroom, large playground, eating room, multi-functional room, swimming pool, etc.

Source: Created by the author

#### 5.4.5. Helping Children at Home (Home-based Involvement)

Among interviewed parents, there are 5 parents (16%) having two children at age 3 to 5, the other parents have only one child in the age of 3 to 5; and, the percentage of parents who have one 3-year-old child, the percentage of parents who have one 4-year-old child, and the percentage of parents who have one 5-year-old child are almost equal. As Figure 5.4 reveals in both rural and urban areas, the person who takes care of children the most at home in more than 90 percent of the families is *mothers*. Less than 5 percent of fathers take care of children at home, and about 10 percent of fathers help children learning at home. Besides, it is found in both rural and urban, other relatives such as grandparents or siblings also take care of the children at home (less than 10 percent) and sometimes help children learning as well.

**Figure 5-4: Ratio of Participation in Helping Children at Home by Different Participants, Rural and Urban**



Source: Created by the author

**Table 5-11: Parents' Spending Time Learning with Children at Home**

	Rural				Urban			
	<i>Never</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Always</i>
Reading/ Storytelling	15%	40%	25%	20%	2%	13%	35%	50%
Numbering	2%	18%	50%	30%	0	21%	43%	36%
Creative activities	5%	15%	35%	45%	5%	27%	33%	35%
Playing with Children	0%	10%	10%	80%	11%	40%	40%	9%

Source: Created by the author

Table 5.11 shows the frequency of parents' spending time learning with children at home, including reading, numbering, doing creative activities and bringing learning materials from class to study at home. The questions are designed as multiple choice with answer as *never*, *sometimes* (less than 1 hour per week), *usually* (1-2 hours per week) and *always* (more than 2 hours per week). It is revealed that in both rural and urban areas, parents do not spend much time doing numbering and creative activities with their small children.

Rural parents spend more time playing with children than urban parents. This can be explained by the fact that most of urban parents are office workers, so they spend most of their day time in the office; whereas, rural parents are normally farmers working in seasons or manufacturers working at home so their time is more flexible. The biggest difference between rural and urban parents lies in the activity of reading and storytelling. Therefore, details on this category will be explained in a separated part below.

### *Reading and Storytelling by Parents/Grandparents at Home*

Concerning the reading or story telling activities, it is shown in the Table 5.11 that in rural areas, parents do almost no reading for or with children because the parents themselves rarely read books and the reading culture has not been developed in the rural areas yet. In addition, it is observed that in the villages, there are no bookshops or bookstores, so the access to books is limited, preventing people's curiosity from reading. If village people want to buy books, they have to go to the town, which is not a popular trend because village people tend to stay around the village most of the time.

Moreover, policy dissemination may contribute a reason to this when this study finds that 70% of asked rural parents say they do not know about the MOET's policy on fostering reading culture among (parents read to children). Therefore, most of the story telling are by memory from grandparents and parents. In urban areas, on the other hand, 85 percent of parents do reading to children; however, the frequency is varied among parents. Half of interviewed parents in cities report that they keep the reading habit for their children, the others do read but not very often or just sometimes. For example, a mother explains her lack of reading for her son as below:

“I am fully aware of the importance of reading for children and I really want to do it with my son, but, to be honest, I have to work all day. I leave home very early in the morning and come back home around 5pm, then cook the dinner, having a shower, having dinner, etc. My day almost ends around 8pm or 9pm. By that time, I am really tired and my son is also going to bed so my reading to my son is very sometimes.”

(P7)

In addition, some parents complain that the quality of books for children is becoming low recently, which affects their reading motivation and reading frequency to their children. The quality problems of books include: un-checked content, irrelevant

and/or incomplete content, typos, and translation quality. Author of this study could also recognize this problem by taking a tour around the bookshops in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City. For example, a parent complains:

“I often go to the bookstores at weekend if I have time to find good books for my child, but it is very difficult to find an interesting book or a book that I think will be good for my child. ”

(P2)

#### **5.4.6. Engaging in Out-door Activities**

Parents are aware that reasonable outdoor activities are good for their children, not only for their health and physical development but for their outdoor skills as well. Basically, rural children have more outdoor time than their urban friends because doors in the village are left open during the daytime and village people know each other so they can go to the neighbours' house freely. In the cities, people close their doors all the time, so outdoor activities for urban children are quite different from outdoor activities for rural children.

For urban children, outdoor activities include outdoor activities organized by teachers during school time and parents taking them out at weekend, normally to the parks or on a short trip. Meanwhile, outdoor activities for rural children include outdoor activities organized by teachers during school time and the activities they do outside of their homes every day. In rural villages, there is no park, just some village have some common ground for children to play but these spaces have become smaller and smaller due to the un-planned land use for economic activities.

Short trips or sightseeing tours used to be luxurious activities just for city children has recently become more popular to village children; however, still not many

rural parents can afford frequent family trips. Therefore, there is still a big gap in frequency of trips between rural families and urban families.

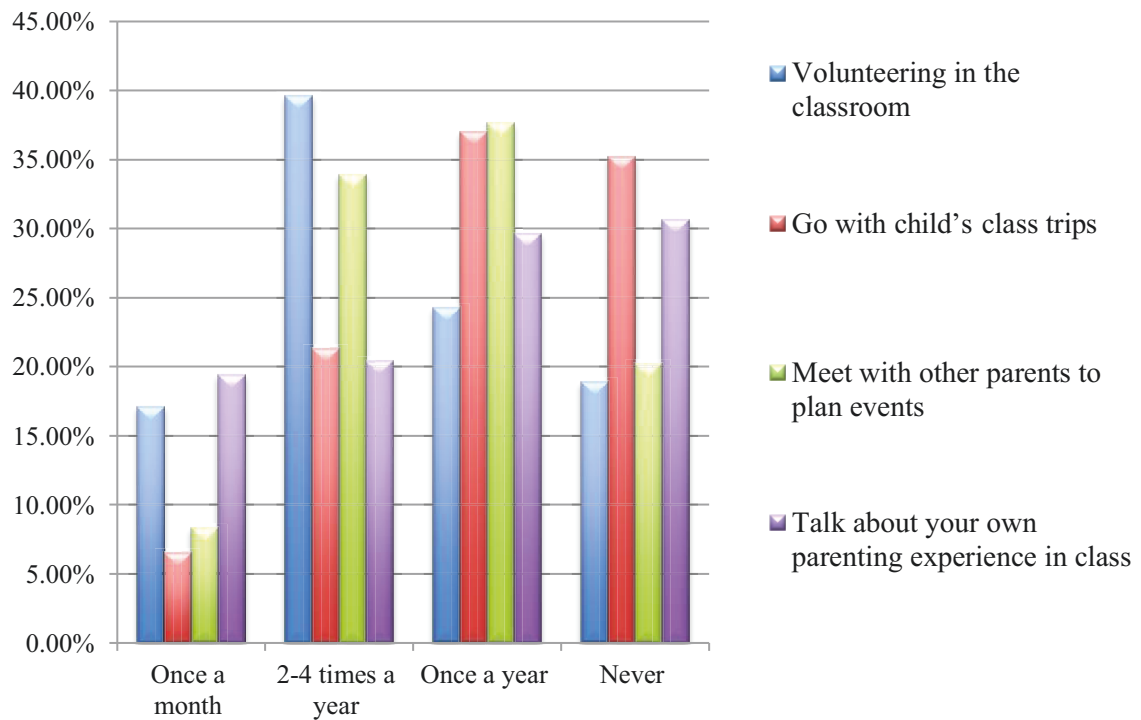
#### **5.4.7. School-based Involvement**

##### **5.4.7.1. Involvement in Class Activities**

It is found that in rural villages, parents hardly participate in a class activity at the kindergartens. The main reason for this is that teachers themselves do not create activities that can get the involvement of the parents. It is often seen that ECCE teachers in rural villages are less active in updating knowledge and design creative activities for the children. The main things they do are to take care of the children, teach them to read the alphabet and numbers from 1 to 10, teach them to sing some children songs and read some stories or do storytelling for them. Except for the parents' meeting, there is almost no workshop for parents to share experience and knowledge on child rearing and education.

In urban areas, parental involvement in class activities is easier to be found. These activities may include: volunteering in the classroom (i.e. classroom decoration or school cleaning), go with child's class trips, meet with other parents to plan events, and talking about parental experience in class. As illustrated in Figure 5.5, most of the parents participate in at least one of these four activities. The percentage of parents who never participate in each activity accounts for about 25%. Volunteering in classroom is the activity with highest percentage of parents to involve (40%). However, most of involved parents once or twice a year, less than 20 percent of parents report their participation in one of four activities very month.

**Figure 5-5: Kindergarten-Based Involvement in Urban Areas**



Source: Created by the author

#### 5.4.7.2. Communicating with Teachers

Nowadays, there are a lot of methods through which parents can get communicated with teachers. Firstly, for parents that have least contact with teachers, *periodical school meetings* may be a chance for them to get more information about school's policy and their own child's progress in class. These meetings are often 3 to 4 times a year in private schools and once to twice a year in public schools. In rural areas, parent meetings mostly occur once a year, at the beginning of the school year, and normally with the purpose for schools to inform parents about payment of fees and/or new school policy.

Secondly, for parents, especially in urban and sub-urban areas, communication can be on a daily basis to update information about the child via *direct talk* (when the parent pick up the child at school, teacher and parent can have a very quick talk),

*notebook* (to exchange information between school and family), *email*, *phone call*, *Viber*, and *Facebook*.

If combining rural and urban parents together, half of them reports that they talk directly with teachers every week. 37.5% does this once and twice a month, the other 12.5% does once or twice a year (mostly in rural areas) and there is only 1 case reporting that they never talk with child's teachers. 88 percent of the parents responded that they keep contact with teachers via different means such as telephone, email or text message, with different frequency: 28.4% every week, 45% every month, and 14.7% once or twice a year. The other 12 percent of parents does not keep contact with teachers via telephone or email. The child's home-&-class diary or notebook to exchange information about children between home and school, which is encouraged by the MOET, seems to be less preferred, with just 20.6% of parents do this weekly, 29% do monthly, 32.7% do yearly and 17.8% of them never do.

In addition, some private schools often have workshops to share specific skills and knowledge of rearing and educating young children, so parents can also increase communication with teachers through these workshops.

The ultimate purpose of the communication is *information sharing* between teachers and parents so that they can collaborate on educating the children. Parents report that their communication with teachers is mostly concerning child's difficulties and achievement in both learning and other daily activities or health condition. For example, talking about the child's home-&-class diary or notebook, there are some representative comments from parents as following:

“I read the notebook that the teacher gives feedback on my child everyday so that I know if my child eats, sleeps, plays well at school”.

(P32)



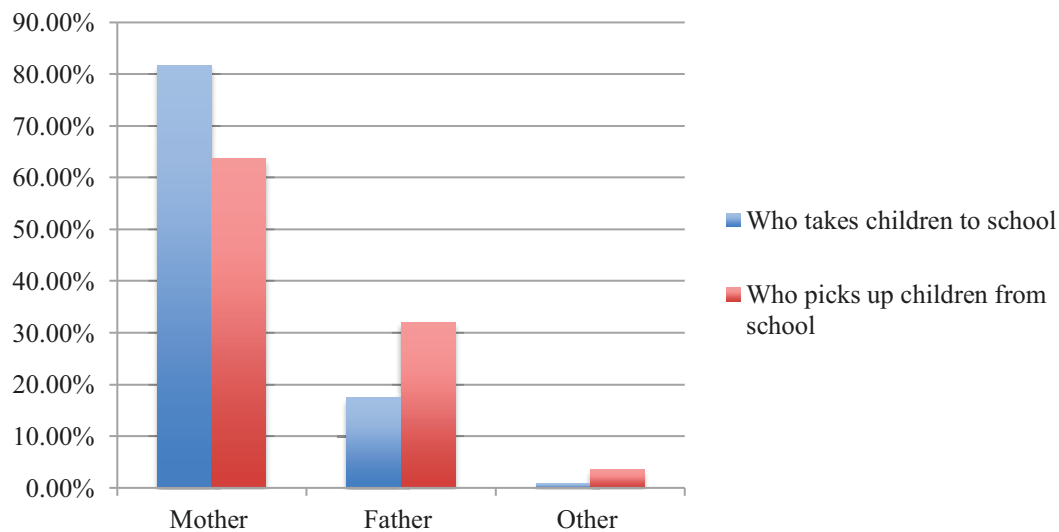
“... it is very important to know if my child is developing normally or not based on teachers’ comments on his behaviors at school”.

(P8)

“When I delivered my 2<sup>nd</sup> child, teacher wrote in the notebook that my 1<sup>st</sup> child (4 year-old) did not engage in class activities, no playing with other kids, no talking to teachers. ... we found out that at home we did not let him touch the new baby so he might feel abandoned... so my husband and I tried to show more love to him at home and let he play with his new-born sister. Then, he became active again like before.”

(P17)

**Figure 5-6: Who Takes Child(ren) to School and Who Picks Them up Home, Rural and Urban**



Source: Created by the author

In most of the cases (87%), mother is the key person in communicating with teachers. This can be explained by the fact that mother is the closest person to child, not only in term of taking care at home but data also show that mother is the person

who often take children to and from school the most - although father also helps sometimes (Figure 5.6).

#### **5.4.7.3. Involvement in Parent Association (PTA)**

As mentioned in the table, in rural villages, there is often no PTA at kindergarten level. In urban schools, the most active parents (top 5%) often participate in the PTA. Most of them report their job as reflecting other parents' opinions on school/class' regulation or activities. PTA at public school is more popular than at private school because at private school the children-teacher ratio is smaller, so parents can talk directly to teachers or principals more easily and more frequently. In general, PTA is the link between teachers and all other parents so that they can understand each other to collaborate well on educating children. However, there is also some contrasting comments on being a PTA member. In qualitative research, contrasting comment is one that conveys a divergent view to the representative comments. For example, below is a contrasting comment of a parent who is a PTA member. She wants to express her opinion on the side effect of Vietnamese culture on family involvement in early childhood education. Here is her comment:

“I am a PTA member, but I have never raised my voice. I have to consider carefully before raising an opinion because the parents' common awareness of early childhood education is still limited. My family really concerns about child holistic development but other parents generally care about their children's eating and sleeping habit only. Besides, the culture of giving constructive critical comments in Viet Nam is limited. When there is a problem, people often focus on blaming others' faults more than finding a solution. Therefore, (let them) participating in PTA might not be a good idea”.

#### **5.4.8. Collaborating with the Community**

Collaborating with the community as defined by Epstein (1995) involves “identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and children’s learning and development.” In his definition, the word ‘community’ means not only the neighborhood where the family and school is located but also any neighborhood that creates influence on children education and school program.

In the case of Viet Nam, it is found that the word ‘community’ implies the neighborhood where the family is located in most of the cases. When being asked about collaboration with neighbors, the majority of interviewees talk about it as an inevitable manifestation that happens naturally. This can be said to be a heritage of the agricultural culture and the used-to-be collective economy where people have to rely vastly on the community. In some cases when the community is not the neighborhood where the family is located, that community often implies the parents’ friends and/or relatives who are not living nearby.

The most popular activities reported as collaboration with the community include: taking along the children from home to school and picking them up at the end of the class hour; keeping the children in one’s eyes for their safety; taking care of the neighbors’ children when being asked for; feeding them if their parents are not around during the meal time; and in case of city families where both father and mother are working full-time, they take turn to spend time with their own children and their neighbors’ or friends’ children during the weekend. Below are some representative quotes from the parents:

“My neighbor and I often take turn to send the children to school and pick them up home so that we can both save time”.

(P21)

P21 is a father in Y Yen district, Nam Dinh province. He is a carpenter and most of his neighbors are also carpenters so they have a very close relationship with each other. They all know each other and the neighbors’ children very well. Similar responses to this response are found in all the studied provinces. The two more examples below belongs to a mother in Ha Noi and a mother in Ho Chi Minh City, and these two representative quotes illustrate the situation in many cities:

“My next-door neighbor often pick my two daughters from the kindergarten together with her one granddaughter and one grandson. Sometimes when I return home late for dinner, she also feeds them.”

(P9 – a mother in Ha Noi)

“It’s very normal that we send our children to friends’ or neighbors’ house during the weekend so that the children can play together and we can also have more time to do our own things. We all take turn to host each other’s children”.

(P15 – a mother in Ho Chi Minh City)

## **5.5. Extended Family Involvement (Research Question 3)**

### **5.5.1. Involved and Involving Members**

Different from most of the studies in the literature which were conducted mostly in developed countries, it is found that extended family involvement is very typical in Viet

Nam. The most popular type of extended family in Viet Nam is the core family (husband-wife-children) living with the husband's parent(s) or husband's family (parents and/or unmarried brother or sister and/or brother and sister's family). Hence, the majority of extended families are paternal extended families. Maternal extended families do exist but account for a very small percentage and considered as rare or peculiar. The maternal grandmothers often take care of the new-born baby and the postnatal mother for several first months after the child is born. However, for children age 3 to 5 as the scope of this study, paternal grandparents have stronger influence in most of the cases. Therefore, the extended family in this study is defined as below:

**Extended family = Core family + Child's Paternal Family**

The Child's Paternal Family in many cases involves the father's grandparents. However, there are also many cases when Child's Paternal Family include the father's siblings and/or the father's siblings' families. Hence, beyond parents, paternal grandparent(s) involve the most, then paternal aunts and uncles. In case the other siblings are grown up enough, they also get involved in taking care of and teaching their younger siblings. Since most of the grandparents involve actively, this study address them as *involving members*; meanwhile, siblings are often requested by the parents to get involved and other relatives such as aunts or uncles may get involved intentionally or unintentionally, so they are called *involved members*.

### **5.5.2. Extended Family Involvement Activities**

Results of the interviews reveal that extended family members, especially grandmother and grandfather, involve or get involved in varied activities and in varied situation; such as:

- Picking up children from school in case parents are still at work;

- Feeding the children;
- Taking bath or shower for the children;
- Looking after the children when parents are out or busy with work;
- Storytelling;
- Teaching children to sing simple songs;
- Teaching them some games such as chess; and
- Numbering with children in their free time.

The above list does not imply that one grandparent do all those activities. It is the list of activities getting the involvement of grandparents as reported by different parents in different families. For example, as shown in Figure 5.6, less than 10 percent of interviewed parents report to have the grandparent or other extended family member pick the children up from school. Also, not all the interviewees of this study are living with an extended family; specifically, 41 percent of interviewed parents reported to be living with an extended family.

This section of the study focuses on the interview results of this 41 percent of sampled parents. It is interestingly found that, to the issue of extended family involvement, there is not much difference between rural and urban areas, but there exists difference between families in the north (Ho Chi Minh city and Ba Ria-Vung Tau province) and families in the south (Ha Noi capital and Nam Dinh province).

The biggest difference is grandparents and/or other extended family members in the south involve less in child rearing and education than those in the north, which results in the second difference that is grandparents and/or other extended family members in the south physically *support less* but also create *less conflict* among family members than in the north. This can be partly explained by the different historical background of the two regions: the north region is influenced more by the impacts of the Chinese imperialism legacies and the south is influenced by the American influence during the war time 1954-1975 and its later proceedings. Details on these support and conflict will be presented in section 5.5.3 below.

### 5.5.3. Parents' Reflection on Extended Family Involvement

In total, 8 mothers and 4 fathers were interviewed for their reflection on extended family involvement. In general, all the fathers prefer raising the child in an extended family because: *on the one hand*, they find that they can receive a lot of help from their parents in taking care of the child and spending time with them so the fathers can have time for their own job or interest; *on the other hand*, by living with the grandparents, the parents can also take care of the elderly when they are sick and make them happy with kids around. Concerning grandparents' involvement in educating children, following are some examples of the fathers' responses:

“My parents can help me and my wife a lot in rearing and teaching our children, for example, they help pick them up from school and teach them how to behave in a good manner.”

(P21)

”Thanks to my parents I still can have time for my own hobby even my kid is still small. In addition, my son really loves his grandpa's storytelling.”

(P8)

“I feel very pleased that my parents can spend a lot of time with my child, playing with him and teaching him a lot of things.”

(P17)

Some mothers do agree with fathers on some support they can receive from the child's grandparents and grandparents can help in rearing and educating the child. For example:

“My parents in-law are retired teachers, so they teach my child a lot of good things. Especially when I have an emergency work or stay late at work, if my husband also cannot help me take care of our kid, my grandparents-in-law can.”

(P5)

However, mothers, especially mothers in the north, raise more issues of conflicts than positive comments. Mostly, these conflicts come from their different ideology, resulting in different ways of educating kids at home, especially personality education and different kinds of behaviors they think they should teach the kids. Some mothers also feel uncomfortable when they cannot teach their child as they expect because the grandmothers/fathers teach them differently. Some representative comments are:

“I cannot educate my kid the way I want. When I ask my child to do something, my mother-in-law or father-in-law may tell him that he doesn’t need to do so.”

(23)

“I am afraid that my parents in-law, especially my mother in-law, will spoil my child because they always response to all of his requests even the unreasonable ones.”

(P15)<sup>14</sup>

“My mother just cares about my child’s eating to get on weight and look chubby, so she has forced the child to eat a lot, which I do not expect because it can cause my child to be afraid of eating and may develop bad manners.”

(P24)

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<sup>14</sup> It is noticeable that this mother is from Ha Noi but has moved to Ho Chi Minh City for two years (at the time of interview) to be independent from her parents-in-law to reduce their intervention in educating her child.



There is also one idea from a father raising his concern about his parents that have provided too much fondness for his child, but the fathers tend to mention more about the conflict between the child's mother and grandmother in rearing and educating the child than the mere issues of education. Below is an example:

“My wife and my mother often do not agree with each other on how to rear and educate our children, which may cause tension in the family sometimes.”

(P8)

## 5.6. Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the results of the study based on the theoretical framework and in the order of the research questions. There are four most significant results of this study. The first significant result of this study in applying Epstein's typology of parental involvement in ECE to the Vietnamese context is that it finds *paying schooling fees* to be a pathway of family involvement in ECE because “it implies parents' commitment.” The second significant result is that rural and urban parental involvement is different in terms of *concerns, perspectives, financial contribution, types of parenting at home and parenting at school*. Thirdly, *parent-teacher communication* in high-class private pre-schools (so-called international pre-schools) is reported to *focus on difficulties due to language and culture issues*.

Finally, parental involvement in extended families is observed to be due to the traditional custom that married couples have to live with the husband's family and be supervised by the husband's parents. Consequently, involvement in the extended family is seen differently by mothers and fathers, both positively and negatively. Many interviewed mothers expressed that intervention of the child's paternal grandmother makes it difficult for parents to educate their child consistently in the way that they

believe to be good for the child. Additionally, this study finds that there are some gap between the policy and practice, especially the policy on developing reading culture in school and at home launched by the MOET.

## CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### 6.1. Introduction

This chapter *first* discusses the implications of the results presented in Chapter 5 with regard to the hypotheses<sup>15</sup> presented in Chapter 4 under the light of the theoretical framework to be interpreted into the context of education policies and social-cultural characteristics of family involvement in Viet Nam that was presented in Chapter 3. Specifically, this chapter interprets the parental involvement theory of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) in to the context of Vietnamese culture and government's related policies on family involvement with regard to Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory. In other words, it discusses how the theory that suggests the parental role construction and parents' perception of involvement decide the ways through which parents involve in early childhood education be interpreted in the designed framework. *Second*, this chapter will discuss some emerging issues from the study that was difficult to list to any specific category of the results. *Third*, limitation of the study will be explained and *finally*, the conclusion of this study will be presented.

### 6.2. Discussion

#### 6.2.1. Parental Role Construction

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) proposed that parents' decision to be involved in children's education is one path of the parental role construction for involvement. Other theorists, researchers and practitioners have either suggested that parents' ideas about

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<sup>15</sup> It is noted that qualitative research is not to test hypotheses but to provide contextual insights about the assumptions. Therefore, this chapter discusses the hypotheses and the results based on the theoretical framework, not testing the hypotheses.

their roles in children education are crucial to understanding their motivation and decision to involve (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1995, 1997; and Lareau, 1989). To understand the current the situation in Viet Nam, we need to go back time a little.

First, during the war time of 1945-1975, nursery and kindergarten classes in Viet Nam functioned as a safe place for children away from bombs and other dangerous incidents. In addition, parents of this time were busy with defending the country, so kindergartens also functioned as a solution to assure parents focus on their military tasks without worrying about their children. Then, during the Economic Renovation (Doi Moi 1986) and more than a decade after that, all the sources in the society were mobilized to develop the socialism-oriented market economy. Therefore, ECCE schools acted mostly as a place where children were taken care of and taught simple things so that their parents, especially their mothers could work full-time (Dang & Wendy, 2014), which means parental involvement in children's education was not noticed.

Thus, the issue of family involvement in early childhood education just started to emerge in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century when, in the setting of Education for All (EFA), the government started to launch policies to pledge more state budget on education including ECCE and asked parents to get involved through the socialization of education and some other policies. Yet parents of the period 1986-2000 focused more on primary and higher levels of education than ECCE. They wanted to compensate for their lost time and opportunities in the wars, so they worked hard to obtain the best opportunities for academic success of their children in the hope that their children would have a better future than themselves.

Therefore, parents of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been better equipped with knowledge and technology than their previous generation, and they are also aware of their missed opportunities in their early childhood. Thus, nowadays, parents have recognized the importance of early childhood education better and better. With the commitment to Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030, (Goal 4, Target 4.2: quality ECCE for all),

the Vietnamese government has also made more and more commitment to ECCE quality for all, so cooperation between ECCE schools and families have also been strengthened and family involvement has been facilitated.

Early childhood education helps children to obtain social competence, cognitive development, communication skills, and becoming acquainted with the learning environment to prepare for primary education (Weiss et al., 2006), and family involvement in children's education can create positive effects on children's learning outcomes in the future (Henrich & Gadaire, 2008; Weiss, Caspe, & Lopez, 2006). Hence, on the one hand, parents are asked to involve in education by the government policies; on the other hand, they themselves are also active to participate because they have constructed their own role and decided to get involved. This inference can be confirmed through schools' reports on family involvement in early childhood education provided by sampled schools that were mentioned in Chapter 5 of this study. To sum up, the statement of an parent presented in the results of this study "Parents are the children's first teachers" illustrates the parental role construction to the fullest meaning.

### **6.2.2. Perception of Family Involvement in ECE by Different Stakeholders**

Hypothesis 1-1, namely, government stakeholders expect families to share the financial responsibility in early childhood education (socialization of education) and support ECCE schools because they believe parents is a key stakeholders in increasing access to ECCE and improving quality of the services (Uemura, 1999 and Bray, 2000), matches results in Chapter 5 that justified *paying school fees* as a way of family involvement together with other *school-based involvement*. In addition, it is found that policies relating to family involvement in school activities are more difficult to be realized in rural areas than in urban areas because parents in rural areas conventionally think that they have no responsibility for the children during the school hours.

*Culturally*, this may be explained by the fact that rural people, especially people living in small villages, have much less connection with the outside world compared to their urban counterparts. As an agricultural tradition, village people tend to stay around in the village and outside people have few reasons to come as well because of no commercial or business activity (except for some few manufacturing villages); just very recently, there started to be internet connection to rural villages. In addition, almost all of centres for economic development are in the big cities, so infrastructure and facilities supporting progress and development are very limited in rural areas.

Concerning Hypothesis 1-2: School stakeholders expect parents to involve by supporting schools' policies and activities in implementing ECCE services as well as helping children at home to help shaping their characteristics and strengthen their cognitive development (Dixon & Humble, 2017), results presented totally agree with this hypothesis with further insight understanding implying that collaboration between schools and families need to be based on mutual understanding. This inference is based on teachers' and principals' complaints about unexpected reaction of parents; for example, they complain that parents get angry with teachers when they punish their children or about the fact that many parents concern too much about feeding the children. However, that these kinds of things happen is not only the fault of the parents, although it is true that teachers may perceive parents to be less knowledgeable about child development, curriculum, and teaching (Winder and Corter, 2016). If the parents do not understand correctly or fully about methods of educating children, it should be the teachers' responsibility to be able to explain for parents. Especially, in the current context of education crisis<sup>16</sup> in Viet Nam, teachers need to improve themselves a lot as well.

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<sup>16</sup> Education in Viet Nam has been systemized at the national level for a very long time and the method used is very conventional – the teacher-centered system. However, in the last few decades, people started to have more access to different education systems and education methods in the world, so they looked back to the country's system and found a lot of shortcomings, which have caused a lot of debates and controversies among educators, researchers, scholars and the society.

In relation to Hypothesis 1-3 about parents' perception of family involvement, this study finds that it is not because of the gap of educational background among parents, parents' wealth quintiles or the limitation of internet and computer use in the rural areas that cause the difference in parents' perception of family involvement among the regions, but it is because of the lack of *schools' leadership role* in initiating parental involvement and guiding them on how to involve.

### **6.2.3. Pathways to Practice Family Involvement**

One of the legacies of the socialist era in Viet Nam is high equality in education, which is, on the one hand, a very good thing. However, it also causes side effects, one of which is that parents rely too much on the government and schools. Therefore, in order to make a change, the government has launched the policy for socialization of education, which is to mobilize available sources from society and families into education. Therefore, a significant finding of this study in interpreting Epstein's typology of parental involvement in ECE in Viet Nam is that it finds *paying schooling fees* a practice of family involvement in ECE (relevant to Hypothesis 2-1).

This inference is backed by the finding that paying schools fees implies parents' commitment. Especially, one important content of the socialization of education policy is that it encourages richer/better-incomed parents to pay more for education by sending children to private schools where the government does not provide financial support. In addition, the government spends a big amount of money to promote education in mountainous and poor areas. Thus, to this extent, parents, especially city parents, can help share the financial burden so that the government can focus more on the expansion of education access and the improvement of education quality.

#### **6.2.4. Involvement of Parents in Public-Private and Rural-Urban Pre-school Settings: Different Concerns and Different Levels of Parental Participation**

Parental involvement of public and private as well as rural and urban school settings are different in terms of *concerns, perspectives, financial contribution, types of parenting at home and parenting at school*. For example, in relation to home-based involvement, while parents in big cities and parents with high income tend to spend more money on their children, families in rural areas are likely to spend more time with their children. If urban children go to more extra classes such as English, swimming, or art, rural children engage in more social communication such as playing with their siblings, being taken care of by their grandparents, learning to count or learning to sing a song with their relatives. These differences may be among the causes of mental health problem among children in the city because children may be too stressed with too many classes or too little time spending with their parents, so their mental needs are insufficient. A study by Weiss et al (2012) conducted a mental health needs assessment in six cities of Viet Nam found that children's mental health problem has become a serious problem.

Significantly, concerning the school-based involvement, this study finds that it is not only because of the gap of educational background among parents, parents' wealth quintiles or the limitation of internet and computer use in the rural areas that cause the difference in parents' perception of family involvement among the regions, but it is more importantly because of the lack of *rural schools' leadership* in initiating parental involvement and guiding them on how to be more involved. Therefore, even with almost the same parental role construction and rather similar perceptions, the actual practice of family involvement differs dramatically in rural and urban school settings. Goldring & Phillips (2006) argue that parents may perceive that parent involvement and parent communication are more easily facilitated and valued in private schools.



### **6.2.5. Parent-Teacher Communication in High-Class Private Schools: A Cultural Conflict**

Due to a long history of being colonized and struggling with wars in the past, Vietnamese grandparents and parents want to compensate for their lost time and opportunities in the wars, so they have worked hard to obtain the best opportunities for academic success of their children in the hope that their children would have a better future than themselves. They want their children to be able to receive the education provided by the most developed countries in the world, and for their children to be able to compete with international partners in the future. Further, they expect them to learn the curriculum in English from the beginning to shorten the gap and save time in the future. Even though they have to pay up to ten times more than normal Vietnamese private schools and fees can be twenty times higher than public pre-schools, parents still try to afford sending their children to study at the most expensive private schools. However, since the management committee and teaching staff in these schools are almost all foreigners from US, UK, Australia, etc., parent-teacher communication can be problematic.

### **6.2.6. Pros and Cons of Extended Family Involvement**

Family involvement in extended families is observed to be due to the traditional custom that married couples have to live with the husband's family and be supervised by the husband's parents, especially in the north region. This finding is new compared to Perry's findings (2009) that both paternal and maternal extended family involve comparatively equally. Consequently, involvement in the Vietnamese extended family is seen differently by mothers and fathers, both positively and negatively. McAdoo and

Younge (2008) also found that there are often co-parenting arrangements that involve extended family members and have fluid boundaries in gender roles as they relate to child rearing responsibilities. However, it is significant that this study have provided more insights on explaining the Vietnamese context on why there are differences between mother and father's perspectives; and what the differences are.

For instance, many mothers experience difficulties in reaching consensus on how to educate children inside the family and how to intervene or participate in their learning at school. This is because of the sensitive relationship between the child's mother and her mother-in-law, a legacy of the Confusian culture adopted from the thousand years of Chinese imperialism. The conventional trend of this relationship is that the mother-in-law gives herself the right to make decisions and it is seen as not suitable for the daughter-in-law to defend her opinions.

Thus, many interviewed mothers expressed that intervention of the child's paternal grandmother makes it difficult for parents to educate their child consistently in the way that they believe to be good for the child. Interestingly, this phenomenon is seen more serious in the north than in the south where grandparents intervene less into parents' education of children – as presented in the findings. This may also be explained by the historical background of the south where the American troops came immediately after the French people left the country. Therefore, the society in Ho Chi Minh city or in the south is more influenced by the Western culture when the north is influenced by the ancient Chinese culture.

In addition, since Viet Nam is a developing country, the rapid economic growth also comes along with the social costs, which make increase stress for families and children (Betz & Thorngren, 2006). That rapid economic growth may also challenge the families' traditional ability to socialize children into healthy and adjustable functioning adults (Korinek, 2004). Therefore, government intervention is crucial to change this situation.

### **6.2.7. Reading for Children: the Problem of Policy Dissemination and Publication Quality**

During the data collection process and data analysis, this study finds that there are some gap between the policy and practice, especially the policy on developing reading culture in school and at home launched by the MOET. Data show that 45 percent of the interviewed teachers do not know about this policy although it is reported by the district officers that policy content has been sent to all schools; and up to 70% of total parents have no knowledge of it. Some parents say they do read to the children regularly even though they do not know about the policy. Mostly, rural parents are those who hardly read books to the children. They also do not have a bookshelf at home and rarely take the children to the bookshops.

Concerning the bookstores, there is no bookstore to be found in rural villages. In urban cities, there are comparatively many book stores but quantity and quality of books are limited, especially good books for children. Based on parents' report, the author of this study did the field observation herself by going to the bookstores around the sampled schools and found that typing mistakes, run-on sentences or sentence and paragraph with vague meaning and incomplete meaning, and even incomplete stories are abundant among the books on the bookshelves there.

In addition, one of the contents of the policy of the MOET is to build one library in each school, but almost half of sampled schools do not have a library. They all have a bookcase but it is very small and the amount and variety of books is very limited.

### **6.3. Limitation of the Study**

*First*, there may exist biases in sampling size between fathers (n=4) and mothers (n=12). due to the natural limitation of participated fathers. Therefore, fathers' perception of extended family involvement in early childhood education may exist some biases.

However, this limitation also reveals a significant fact that mothers get involved in ECE much more than fathers do because the interviews were undertaken at school when parents come to pick up the children and more mothers were found there.

*Second*, migrant children are reported to have some barriers accessing public kindergarten; however, this study is limited in understanding involvement of migrant parents due to the shortage of data. Among 32 parents interviewed, one parent reported that she is an immigrant from Ha Noi to Ho Chi Minh city, and it is very difficult for her to send her son to a public pre-school due to the registered resident policy in education. Instead, there are many private pre-schools available for her to select, but the fees are quite high compared to public schools and/or family incomes.

#### **6.4. Conclusion**

Recent research has shown that early childhood education (ECE) helps children not only with cognitive development, but also with building social competence and communication skills as well as to getting familiar with the learning environment in order to make a foundation for life long education. Family involvement in ECE creates positive effects on children's future learning outcomes. Thus, Education for All (EFA) Goal 1, 2000–2015, was to expand early childhood care and education (ECCE) and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4, Target 4.2, 2015–2030, focuses on improving the quality of ECCE.

Accordingly, the government of Viet Nam has continuously adapted its policies to attain these development goals since 2002. In 2010, the Prime Minister signed Decision 239 approving the proposal on universalization of pre-primary education for 5-year-old children, 2010-2015. One of the outcomes of the socialist era in Viet Nam is a high enrollment rate; however, this also causes parents to be reliant on the government and the public education system, including ECE. Thus, in order to change the situation, the government has launched the policy for extending the responsibility

for support of education since 2008 to mobilize available sources from society and families in education. In addition, the new Child Law 2016 also requests that families support the universalization of ECE and collaborate with teachers to improve ECE quality. Nevertheless, family-school and parent-teacher relationships have recently experienced controversial issues due to the lack of mutual understanding and information sharing from both sides.

Parental involvement theory (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1995) suggests that the parental role construction and perceptions of the nature of involvement will determine the level and quality of parental involvement. Thus, it is important to understand different stakeholders' perspectives on involvement in their children's schooling for the ultimate purpose of improving ECE quality. Besides, research has shown that parents' and teachers' beliefs and expectations for children's education are affected by socio-cultural and historical orientations (Lawson, 2003), and research on family involvement in different countries and cultural settings gives different results (LeVine, 2004 and O'gara, 2013). Moreover, although it has been found that extended family members have a significant role in children's development, most of studies in Asian countries focus on parenting within the immediate family, and research on extended family involvement in ECE is limited.

This study intends to fill gaps in the previous literature, with a particular focus on Viet Nam, by investigating the following research questions (RQ): (RQ1) How is family involvement in ECE perceived by different stakeholders? (RQ2) How is family involvement in ECE practiced? and (RQ3) How is family involvement in ECE perceived in extended families? The objectives of the study are to understand the perceptions of policy makers (government stakeholders) and practitioners (school stakeholders and parents) on family involvement in ECE, shedding light on the pathways through which families are involved and get involved. It compares and contrasts insights into rural-urban and public-private school settings, and explores family involvement in ECE in extended families since this is a unique characteristic of

Vietnamese families that does not tend to be found in family involvement studies in developed countries. Beside Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theory and Bronfenbrenner's theory to explain the connection among the questions, Epstein's six taxonomy of family involvement is utilized to investigate RQ2.

Together with document review of policies and reports, questionnaires for semi-structured interview were designed to collect data for this study. Since the purposive sampling technique is the most common for data collection in qualitative studies (Marshall, 1996), this research employed the maximum variation and the informant sampling techniques – both are sub-types of purposive sampling – to select participants for the interviews. The combination of these two techniques helps answer the research questions in the best manner because the key informants help provide the overall picture of the situation and the maximum variation sampling provides insights on the issue from different perspectives.

In total, 4 ministerial leaders and staff, 8 provincial officials, 16 district officials, 16 principals, 32 teachers and 32 parents of children aged 3 to 5 years were interviewed. Since this is a comparative study between rural and urban areas and between private versus public schools with some insights into extended families, the interviewed parents are limited to the parents of children who are living with both mothers and fathers and/or with their extended families. These interview participants are distributed equally in two central cities, namely, Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh (also the two biggest cities nationwide), and two medium-sized provinces, Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau, representing the north and south regions of the country. In each central city, one suburban and one urban district were selected. In each district of the two central cities, one public, one normal private, and one high-class private ECCE schools were selected. In each province of Nam Dinh and Ba Ria-Vung Tau, one public school in a rural district and one public and one private school in one urban district were selected because there are no private schools in rural districts of these provinces.

The questionnaires were designed based on Epstein's typology of family involvement with adaptation to the specific context of Viet Nam after the pilot study. For qualitative data analysis, this study employed the induction method so that themes could be extracted and concepts generated. The data was organized into coherent patterns through the development of categories in order to demonstrate the phenomena under study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The first significant result of this study in applying Epstein's typology of parental involvement in ECE to the Vietnamese context is that it finds *paying schooling fees* to be a pathway of family involvement in ECE because "it implies parents' commitment." One important content of the policy on parental involvement in education is that it encourages higher income parents to pay more for education by sending their children to private schools where the government does not provide financial support. In addition, the government spends a big amount of money to promote education in mountainous and poor areas. Thus, city parents can help share the financial burden so that the government can focus more on the expansion of access to ECE and quality improvement.

The second significant result is that rural and urban parental involvement is different in terms of *concerns, perspectives, financial contribution, types of parenting at home and parenting at school*. For example, in relation to home-based involvement, while parents in big cities and parents with high income tend to spend more money on their children, families in rural areas are likely to spend more time with their children. That is, while urban children go to extra-curriculum classes from English and math to swimming and art, rural children engage in more social communication such as playing with their siblings, being taken care of by their grandparents, and learning to count or learning to sing a song with their relatives. Significantly, concerning the school-based involvement, this study finds that it is not only because of the gap of educational background among parents, parents' wealth quintiles or the limitation of internet and computer use in the rural areas that cause the difference in parents' perception of family

involvement among the regions, but it is more importantly because of the lack of *rural schools' leadership* in initiating parental involvement and guiding them on how to be more involved. Therefore, even with almost the same parental role construction and rather similar perceptions, the actual practice of family involvement differs dramatically in rural and urban school settings. Given this finding, Taylor (1995) recommends that parenting workshops can assist in cultivating realistic expectations regarding development of their young children.

Thirdly, *parent-teacher communication* in high-class private pre-schools (so-called international pre-schools) is reported to *focus on difficulties due to language and culture issues*. Due to a long history of being colonized and struggling with wars in the past, Vietnamese grandparents and parents want to compensate for their lost time and opportunities in the wars, so they have worked hard to obtain the best opportunities for academic success of their children in the hope that their children would have a better future than themselves. They want their children to be able to receive the education provided by the most developed countries in the world, and for their children to be able to compete with international partners in the future. Further, they expect them to learn the curriculum in English from the beginning to shorten the gap and save time in the future. Even though they have to pay up to ten times more than normal Vietnamese private schools and fees can be twenty times higher than public pre-schools, parents still try to afford sending their children to study at the most expensive private schools. However, since the management committee and teaching staff in these schools are almost all foreigners, parent-teacher communication can be problematic. Consequently, educators must have an understanding of the status of parents and their attitudes toward child rearing (Hendrick, 1988 and Click, 1981).

Finally, parental involvement in extended families is observed to be due to the traditional custom that married couples have to live with the husband's family and be supervised by the husband's parents. Consequently, involvement in the extended family is seen differently by mothers and fathers, both positively and negatively. For instance,



many mothers experience difficulties in reaching consensus on how to educate children inside the family and how to intervene or participate in their learning at school. This is because of the sensitive relationship between the child's mother and her mother-in-law, a legacy of the Confucianism adopted from the thousand years of Chinese colonization (London, 2011). The conventional trend of this relationship is that the mother-in-law gives herself the right to make decisions and it is seen as not suitable for the daughter-in-law to defend her opinions. Thus, many interviewed mothers expressed that intervention of the child's paternal grandmother makes it difficult for parents to educate their child consistently in the way that they believe to be good for the child. For example, when the young mother teaches the child the behavioral manners such as the way of reasoning or critical argumenting (Western style), the grandmother teaches the child to obey adults without any reasoning, which means all that adults say or do are right, children are not taught to have their own opinions. These two ways of educating children create conflicts between the child's mother and grandmother. This is considered as one of the remained legacies of the impacts of Confucianism's educational philosophies (Dang, 2009). Although some mothers reported that they have applied positive listening and negotiation skills to get agreement with their mother-in-law through peacefully direct talks on how they should educate their young children, many other mothers complain that they feel stuck when dealing with this problem. Mass media such as TV or radio programs have recently launched some issues on this problem to explain more about generation gaps and how to deal with it, so it is expected that this matter will gradually change.

Additionally, this study finds that there are some gap between the policy and practice, especially the policy on developing reading culture in school and at home launched by the MOET. For example, during the data collection, about 40% of the teachers reported that they do not know about this policy and 70% of parents "have never heard" about this policy. In addition, many schools do not have a library to improve reading sources for teachers and children, which implies a lack of monitoring

in policy implementation – one of the policy contents is to build a library in each school. Many parents also report that they are not informed by schools about implementing this policy; for example, they are not trained by teachers (through school workshops) on how to read for children at home, etc.

In short, the parental involvement theory by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) and the ecological system theory by Bronfenbrenner can explain the family involvement in Viet Nam in terms of history and culture, as discussed in the significant findings on how the history and influence of Confucianism and Western culture have affected parenting and family involvement. However, these two theories could not explain the influence of government policies on the practice of parental involvement in early childhood education: paying school fee (different from Epstein's typology of involvement) and the lack of school's leadership role that makes rural family involvement less active than the involvement in urban areas. In conclusion, family involvement in ECE in Viet Nam is not only determined by parental role construction and the perceptions of family involvement, but it is also guided and shaped by the government policy and school policy; in other words, parents get involved not only because they decide to get involved but also because they are requested to.

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## ANNEX

### ANNEX I: Interview Manual

#### Interview Manual For Government Stakeholders:

1. Interview is set to occur in the office, during office hours;
2. Introduce interviewer to interviewee (by an assigned Coordinator);
3. Make sure only related persons are around (i.e. statistic staff);
4. Explain the interview as following:
  - i. Self-introduction of interviewer;
  - ii. The objective of this study is to learn about family involvement in early childhood education in Viet Nam;
  - iii. This is a part of the PhD dissertation and the result of the interview is used only by the interviewer for the sole purpose of her study;
  - iv. Your name will not be publicized;
  - v. Your opinion will not be reported to anyone for the purpose of evaluating your work performance;
  - vi. If you feel uncomfortable to answer a question, please feel free to let me know;
  - vii. If you have any questions, please kindly let me know;
  - viii. If you allow, I would like to take recording of this interview. If you feel uncomfortable, I will not record and take handwriting notes instead;
  - ix. Turn on the recorder if permitted;
  - x. Proceed to the interview (total time: 30-60 minutes).

## **Interview Manual For Principals and Teachers:**

1. Interview is set to occur in the principal's room, during school time;
2. Introduce interviewer to interviewee (by an assigned District Coordinator);
3. Make sure that no one is around for the privacy;
4. Explain the interview as following:
  - i. Self-introduction of interviewer;
  - ii. The objective of this study is to learn about family involvement in early childhood education in Viet Nam;
  - iii. This is a part of the PhD dissertation and the result of the interview is used only by the interviewer for the sole purpose of her study;
  - iv. Your name and your school name will not be publicized;
  - v. Your opinion will not be reported to anyone for the purpose of evaluating your work performance or your school's performance;
  - vi. If you feel uncomfortable to answer a question, please feel free to let me know;
  - vii. If you have any questions, please kindly let me know;
  - viii. If you allow, I would like to take recording of this interview. If you feel uncomfortable, I will not record and take handwriting notes instead;
  - ix. Turn on the recorder if permitted;
  - x. Proceed to the interview (total time: 30-60 minutes).

## **Interview Manual For Parents:**

1. Interview is set to occur at school, during pick-up time of children;
2. Introduce interviewer to interviewee (by an assigned teacher);
3. Make sure that no one is around for the privacy;
4. Explain the interview as following:
  - i. Self-introduction of interviewer;
  - ii. The objective of this study is to learn about family involvement in early childhood education in Viet Nam;
  - iii. This is a part of the PhD dissertation and the result of the interview is used only by the interviewer for the sole purpose of her study;
  - iv. Your name and your school name will not be publicized;
  - v. Your opinion will not be reported to your child's teachers or principal;
  - vi. If you feel uncomfortable to answer a question, please feel free to let me know;
  - vii. If you have any questions, please kindly let me know;
  - viii. If you allow, I would like to take recording of this interview. If you feel uncomfortable, I will not record and take handwriting notes instead;
  - ix. Turn on the recorder if permitted;
  - x. Proceed to the interview (total time: 30-60 minutes).

## ANNEX II: Definition of Participants and Anonymization

Participants	Definition	Anonymization
MOET Official	The interviewed official who are working at Department of ECCE or Finance and Planning at the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET).	M1, M2, M3, M4
DOET Official	The interviewed official who are in charge of ECCE or Finance and Planning at the Department of Education and Training (DOET) of the selected provinces.	D1, D2, ..., D8
BOET Official	The interviewed official who are in charge of ECCE or Finance and Planning at the Bureau of Education and Training (BOET) of the selected district belong to the selected provinces.	B1, B2, ..., B16
Principal	The interviewed principal of the selected school in the selected district.	PC1, PC2, ..., PC16
Teacher	The interviewed teachers of the selected school in the selected district.	T1, T2, ..., T32
Parent	The mother/father of the child/children enrolled in the selected school.	P1, P2, ..., P32

### Table of Anonymization Details

MOET Official	M1, M2, M3, M4	
DOET Official	Ha Noi	D1, D2
	Ho Chi Minh City	D3, D4
	Nam Dinh	D5, D6
	Ba Ria – Vung Tau	D7, D8



<b>Ha Noi Capital</b>					
<b>Thanh Tri District (Rural District)</b>			<b>Hoan Kiem District (Urban District)</b>		
School	Public	Private	Public	Private I	Private II
Principal	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5
Teacher	T1, T2	T3, T4	T5, T6	T7, T8	T9, T10
Parents	P1, P2	P3, P4	P5, P6	P7, P8	P9, P10
BOET Official	B1, B2		B3, B4		
<b>Ho Chi Minh City</b>					
<b>Can Gio District (Rural District)</b>			<b>District 7 (Urban District)</b>		
School	Public	Private	Public	Private I	Private II
Principal	PC6	PC7	PC8	PC9	PC10
Teacher	T11, T12	T13, T14	T15, T16	T17, T18	T19, T20
Parents	P11, P12	P13, P14	P15, P16	P17, P18	P19, P20
BOET Official	B5, B6		B7, B8		
<b>Nam Dinh Province</b>					
<b>Y Yen District (Rural District)</b>			<b>Nam Dinh City (Urban District)</b>		
School	Public	Private	Public	Private I	Private II
Principal	PC11	-	PC12	PC13	-
Teacher	T21, T22	-	T23, T24	T25, T26	-
Parents	P21, P22	-	P23, P24	P25, P26	-
BOET Official	B9, B10		B11, B12		
<b>Ba Ria -Vung Tau Province</b>					
<b>Tan Thanh District (Rural District)</b>			<b>Ba Ria City (Urban District)</b>		
School	Public	Private	Public	Private I	Private II
Principal	PC14	-	PC15	PC16	-
Teacher	T27, T28	-	T29, T30	T31, T32	-
Parents	P27, P28	-	P29, P30	P31, P32	-
BOET Official	B13, B14		B15, B16		

### ANNEX III: Descriptive Information of Interviewed Parents

No.	Parent	Gender	Age	Occupation	Area	District/City	Province/ Central City	Child's School Type
1	P1	Female	30	Sales	Sub-urban	Thanh Tri	Ha Noi	Public
2	P2	Female	32	Teacher	Sub-urban	Thanh Tri	Ha Noi	Public
3	P3	Female	28	IT Programmer	Sub-urban	Thanh Tri	Ha Noi	Private
4	P4	Female	30	House-wife	Sub-urban	Thanh Tri	Ha Noi	Private
5	P5	Female	30	Teacher	Urban	Hoan Kiem	Ha Noi	Public
6	P6	Female	32	Business owner	Urban	Hoan Kiem	Ha Noi	Public
7	P7	Female	29	Officer	Urban	Hoan Kiem	Ha Noi	Private
8	P8	Male	29	Designer	Urban	Hoan Kiem	Ha Noi	Private
9	P9	Female	29	Nurse	Urban	Hoan Kiem	Ha Noi	Private
10	P10	Female	34	Pharmacist	Urban	Hoan Kiem	Ha Noi	Private
11	P11	Female	33	Farmer	Rural	Can Gio	Ho Chi Minh City	Public
12	P12	Female	27	Teacher	Rural	Can Gio	Ho Chi Minh City	Public
13	P13	Female	26	House helper	Rural	Can Gio	Ho Chi Minh City	Private
14	P14	Female	30	Sales	Rural	Can Gio	Ho Chi Minh City	Private
15	P15	Female	38	Accountant	Urban	District 7	Ho Chi Minh City	Public
16	P16	Female	28	Project officer	Urban	District 7	Ho Chi Minh City	Public
17	P17	Male	30	Civil engineer	Urban	District 7	Ho Chi Minh City	Private
18	P18	Female	32	Marketing manager	Urban	District 7	Ho Chi Minh City	Private
19	P19	Female	31	Officer	Urban	District 7	Ho Chi Minh City	Private
20	P20	Female	33	House-wife	Urban	District 7	Ho Chi Minh City	Private
21	P21	Male	30	Teacher	Rural	Y Yen	Nam Dinh	Public
22	P22	Female	25	Home business	Rural	Y Yen	Nam Dinh	Public
23	P23	Female	28	Police	Urban	Nam Dinh	Nam Dinh	Public
24	P24	Female	28	Home business	Urban	Nam Dinh	Nam Dinh	Public
25	P25	Female	28	Teacher	Urban	Nam Dinh	Nam Dinh	Private
26	P26	Female	29	Teacher	Urban	Nam Dinh	Nam Dinh	Private
27	P27	Female	33	Fisher	Rural	Tan Thanh	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	Public
28	P28	Female	32	Worker	Rural	Tan Thanh	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	Public
29	P29	Male	32	Officer	Urban	Ba Ria	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	Public
30	P30	Female	30	Officer	Urban	Ba Ria	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	Public
31	P31	Female	32	Sales	Urban	Ba Ria	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	Private
32	P32	Female	31	Nurse	Urban	Ba Ria	Ba Ria-Vung Tau	Private

## **ANNEX IV: QUESTIONNAIRES**

The questionnaire survey includes:

- 1) Questionnaire for Family members;
- 2) Questionnaire for Teachers;
- 3) Questionnaire for Principals;
- 4) Questionnaire for MOET Officials;
- 5) Questionnaire for Provincial Officials; and
- 6) Questionnaire for District Officials

## **Family Involvement for Early Childhood Development: The Case of Viet Nam**

Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen

Doctoral student, Kobe University

### **Questionnaire For Parents/ Family Member**

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

In partially fulfilling my Ph.D. study, I am carrying out a survey to gather information on perceptions of family involvement in early childhood development in Viet Nam. You are identified as one of the targeted respondents for the survey. I would like to ask you to answer my questions below as accurately and honestly as you possibly can. The success of the study depends heavily on the way you answer the questions and how many of the questions you answer. There is no right or wrong answer to each statement and your responses will be treated with **STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY**. It is hoped that the results of the study can be used to enhance the quality of ECCE in Viet Nam and to prepare for our children a better future.

#### **A. Background information**

1. Date:
2. Interviewee:
3. Sex: Male Female
4. Age:
5. Occupation:
6. Ethnicity:
7. Education:
8. Residence: How far is your residence from the ECCE school? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Name of your children's ECCE school:

10. Type of ECCE school:      Private / Public
11. Location of ECCE school:      Rural/ Urban /Semi-urban / Disadvantaged areas
12. Number of children enrolled in ECCE school:    \_\_\_ Girl    \_\_\_ Boy

**B. Perception**

1. Who do you think is the most important people for your children’s development?
- a. Father
  - b. Mother
  - c. Grandparents
  - d. Teacher
  - e. People in the community/neighborhood
  - f. Others: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you think sending children to kindergarten is important?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
3. Why do you send your children to the kindergarten?
- .....
- .....
4. What do you expect your children to gain from kindergarten?
- a. For better cognitive development
  - b. For better communication skills
  - c. For better vocabulary growth
  - d. For better expressive language
  - e. For better comprehension skills
  - f. For positive engagement with peers, adults and learning
  - g. For better nutrition
  - h. For more physical exercise

- i. For trained living routine (fixed sleeping time, eating time, playing time, etc.)
  - j. Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why did you choose this kindergarten to enroll your children?  
 .....  
 .....
6. Have you ever thought of withdraw your child from this kindergarten? Why?  
 - Yes, because \_\_\_\_\_  
 - No, because \_\_\_\_\_
7. How do you feel about the kindergarten?  
 a. Very satisfied b. Satisfied c. Moderate d. Disappointed e. Very disappointed
8. Do you think parents should contribute to kindergartens in some ways?  
 a. Yes b. No
9. How do you think family member(s) can be involved?  
 a. Send children to kindergarten  
 b. Pay schooling fee and other kinds of fees  
 c. Take part in the PTA  
 d. Attend the parents' meetings  
 e. Talk to teachers on children's activities and studying at school (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.)  
 f. Exchange information through School-Family exchange notebook  
 g. Participate in school or class's trip with their children  
 h. Volunteer in classroom's activities  
 i. Monitor child's activities and teacher's teaching at school  
 j. Plan/monitor school development/budget  
 k. Meet with other parents to plan children's events  
 l. Other:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

10. How much do you pay for one child to go to ECCE School?

	<b>Per month</b>	<b>Per year</b>
Tuition Fees		
Lunch Fees		
Uniforms		
Learning tools/materials		
Others		
<b>Total</b>		

**C. Policy to encourage reading with/for children by Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)**

1. Do you know about this policy of the MOET issued in 2015?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
2. Does your child’s kindergarten organize workshops to instruct parents on reading at home? (This is one of the guidelines in the policy)
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
3. Have you ever attended those workshops?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
4. Do you find those workshops helpful?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
5. How do you think about this reading policy by the government?
  - a. Good and appropriate
  - b. b. Not appropriate
  - c. Other

.....  
 .....







.....			
.....			
	Yes	No	Why?
20. Do you find these workshops helpful?			

***Home-school conferencing (Communicating)***

	Mother	Father	Others (Specify)
21. Who is the person who connects with child's kindergarten in your family?			
	Yes	No	If yes, how often?
22. Do you talk with child's teacher about learning difficulties and accomplishments?			
23. Do you communicate with child's teacher through other ways (phone, message, email, etc.)?			
24. What other kinds of matter do you often communicate with your child's teacher?	.....		
	.....		

***Decision making & involvement in school governance***

	Yes	No
25. Do you have options to choose ECCE school for your child(ren)?		
26. Based on what criteria do you choose this school for your child(ren)?	.....	
	.....	
27. Who make the decision of school choice?	.....	
	.....	
28. Have you heard of a SMC at your child's kindergarten?		
29. Is there a SMC at your child's kindergarten?		

30. Is there a PTA at your child's kindergarten?		
31. Are you a member of the PTA?		
32. How do you contribute to the PTA?	..... ..... .....	
33. Are you or the PTA involved in the management and decision making of the SMC?		
34. If yes, what matters have you/the PTA been involved?	..... ..... .....	

**Others**

1. Does your children's kindergarten organize extra-classes (called extra-activities clubs) such as English, Art, Music, Sports, etc.? If yes, please go to question 2. If no, you can finish after answering this question.
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
2. What classes are they?

.....

.....
3. Do you register your children for those classes? If yes, please continue question 4, if No, go to question 5.
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
4. How many hours per week do you make your child to spend for those clubs?
  - a. Less than 1 hour
  - b. 1-2 hours
  - c. 2-5 hours
  - d. More than 5 hours
5. Do you send your children to extra-classes at non-school centers? If yes, please go to question 6. If No, you can stop after answering this question.
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

6. How many hours per week do you make your child to spend for those classes?
- a. Less than 1 hour      b. 1-2 hours      c. 2-5 hours      d. More than 5 hours

*Thank you very much for your time and kind cooperation!*

# Vai Trò Và Sự Phối Hợp Của Gia Đình Đối Với Sự Phát Triển Giáo Dục Mầm Non

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## Bảng hỏi cho Phụ huynh

**Chào anh/chị,**

Nhằm góp phần hoàn thành chương trình nghiên cứu sinh của tôi tại đại học Kobe, tôi cần tiến hành thu thập số liệu phục vụ nghiên cứu. Cụ thể, bảng hỏi của tôi được thiết kế nhằm hiểu rõ hơn về: i) nhận thức của phụ huynh về vai trò của gia đình đối với giáo dục mầm non và ii) tình hình tham gia và kết hợp của phụ huynh với nhà trường trong các hoạt động giáo dục mầm non (dành cho lứa tuổi mẫu giáo – 3, 4, 5 tuổi). Kính mong anh/chị giúp đỡ cho nghiên cứu bằng cách trả lời chân thực và chính xác hết mức có thể đối với những câu hỏi dưới đây. Thành công của nghiên cứu phụ thuộc rất nhiều vào cách anh/chị trả lời câu hỏi. Không có sự đánh giá đúng/sai đối với tất cả các câu trả lời; và tôi đảm bảo tất cả thông tin cá nhân cũng như câu trả lời của anh/chị được giữ **TUYỆT ĐỐI BÍ MẬT** – sẽ không có một bên thứ 3 nào tiếp cận được với các thông tin cá nhân của các anh/chị. Nội dung các câu trả lời chỉ được dùng để phục vụ mục đích nghiên cứu khoa học. Tôi rất mong kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ góp phần vào việc nâng cao chất lượng giáo dục mầm non ở Việt Nam.

### **A. Thông tin cơ bản**

1. Ngày/tháng/năm:
2. Người trả lời:
3. Giới tính:            Nam      Nữ
4. Tuổi:
5. Nghề nghiệp:
6. Tôn giáo:
7. Học vấn:
8. Địa bàn cư trú (xã/phường\_quận/huyện\_tỉnh-thành phố):
9. Con anh/chị (3-5 tuổi) có đi mẫu giáo không?:
10. Khoảng cách từ nhà đến trường/lớp mẫu giáo của con \_\_\_\_\_
11. Tên trường của con:
12. Số trẻ trong gia đình đang đi mẫu giáo:    \_\_\_ Gái    \_\_\_ Trai

### Ghi chú:

1. Sau đây xin được gọi tắt trường mẫu giáo là **trường** kể cả trường hợp lớp mẫu giáo của con chưa phải là trường; và đi mẫu giáo sẽ được gọi tắt là **đi lớp**.
2. Trong trường hợp con của anh/chị không đi lớp, các anh/chị có thể bỏ qua các câu hỏi liên quan đến thông tin về trường/lớp và tập trung vào trả lời các câu hỏi liên quan đến giáo dục con tại nhà.

## B. Nhận thức của phụ huynh

1. Theo anh/chị, ai là người quan trọng nhất đối với sự phát triển của con?
  - a. Bố
  - b. Mẹ
  - c. Ông/bà
  - d. Cô giáo
  - e. Người trong làng/khu phố
  - f. Khác: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Theo anh/chị, việc gửi con đi lớp có quan trọng không?
3. Vì sao anh/chị gửi con đến lớp? (Nếu không xin trả lời “K” và giải thích vì sao)
4. Anh/chị mong muốn con đạt được những gì từ việc đi lớp?
  - a. Phát triển nhận thức
  - b. Phát triển kỹ năng giao tiếp
  - c. Phát triển vốn từ vựng
  - d. Phát triển khả năng biểu đạt ngôn ngữ
  - e. Phát triển kỹ năng hiểu
  - f. Tăng cường giao tiếp với bạn cùng trang lứa, giáo viên và môi trường học tập
  - g. Chế độ dinh dưỡng tốt hơn
  - h. Phát triển hoạt động thể chất
  - i. Rèn nếp ăn ngủ, sinh hoạt đúng giờ
  - j. Mong muốn khác: .....
5. Tại sao anh/chị chọn trường mẫu giáo này cho con?
6. Có khi nào anh/chị có ý định cho con thôi học ở trường chưa? Lý do là gì?
  - Có, bởi vì \_\_\_\_\_
  - Không, bởi vì \_\_\_\_\_
7. Anh/chị cảm thấy thế nào về trường của con?
  - a. Rất hài lòng
  - b. Hài lòng
  - c. Bình thường
  - d. Thất vọng
  - e. Rất thất vọng
8. Theo anh/chị, phụ huynh có nên đóng góp vào sự phát triển và chất lượng giáo dục của nhà trường theo một cách nào đó không?
  - a. Có
  - b. Không
9. Theo anh/chị, phụ huynh có thể tham gia/đồng hành/hợp tác cùng nhà trường trong việc giáo dục và chăm sóc con bằng những hình thức nào? (Anh/chị có thể chọn nhiều hơn một đáp án nếu thấy phù hợp)
  - m. Gửi con tới trường
  - n. Đóng học phí (và các khoản phí khác) cho nhà trường

- o. Tham gia vào ban đại diện cha mẹ học sinh
- p. Tham gia vào các buổi họp phụ huynh
- q. Trao đổi với cô giáo về tình hình học tập và sinh hoạt của con (qua điện thoại, email, gặp trực tiếp lúc đưa đón con, v.v.)
- r. Viết sổ liên lạc giữa nhà trường và phụ huynh
- s. Tham gia vào các buổi dã ngoại cùng con do nhà trường tổ chức
- t. Tình nguyện tham gia vào các hoạt động trong lớp học của trẻ
- u. Trao đổi với các phụ huynh khác về kế hoạch tổ chức sự kiện/ hoạt động hỗ trợ cho trẻ
- v. Khác: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Các mức phí anh/chị phải đóng cho con đi học mầm non như thế nào?

	Theo tháng	Theo năm
Học phí		
Ăn trưa		
Đồng phục		
Đồ dùng học tập		
Phí khác		
<b>Tổng cộng</b>		

### C. Chính sách khuyến khích đọc cùng con của Bộ Giáo dục - Đào tạo

1. Năm 2015, Bộ GD-ĐT có công văn mới về phát triển văn hoá đọc, trong đó có nội dung khuyến khích cha mẹ đọc sách cùng con. Anh/chị có biết về chủ trương này của Bộ không?
2. Trường của con anh/chị có tổ chức các buổi hướng dẫn/chia sẻ kinh nghiệm giúp bố mẹ đọc sách cùng con ở nhà không?
  - a. Có
  - b. Không
3. Anh/chị có tham gia vào các buổi đó không?
  - a. Có
  - b. Không
4. Anh/chị có thấy các buổi đó thú vị và bổ ích không?

- a. Có
- b. Không

5. Anh/chị nghĩ thế nào về chủ trương này của Bộ?
- a. Tốt và phù hợp
  - b. Không phù hợp
  - c. Ý kiến khác: .....
6. Thói quen đọc sách cùng con của anh/chị có thay đổi gì kể từ khi có chủ trương này?

**D. Sự tham gia của phụ huynh**

**Ở nhà (Chăm sóc, dạy dỗ và hỗ trợ con học ở nhà)**

	<i>Mẹ</i>	<i>Bố</i>	<i>Người khác (Ai?)</i>
1. Trong gia đình, ai là người phụ trách việc chăm sóc trẻ ở nhà?			
2. Ai là người chăm lo việc học tập ở nhà của trẻ?			
	<i>Có</i>	<i>Không</i>	<i>Nếu có thì mức độ thường xuyên đến đâu? Thời lượng cụ thể?</i>
3. Anh/chị có đọc sách cho con/cùng con ở nhà không?			
4. Anh/chị có dành thời gian tập đọc với con ở nhà không?			
5. Anh/chị có dành thời gian thiết kế các hoạt động sáng tạo cùng con ở nhà không?			
6. Anh/chị có mang các tài liệu học tập ở trường về nhà để dạy thêm cho con không (sách, đĩa, v.v)?			
7. Anh/chị có dẫn con đi chơi ở các địa điểm công cộng không (vườn thú, bảo tàng, thư viện, nhà sách, v.v)?			
8. Anh/chị có nhận sự hỗ trợ/can thiệp từ các thành viên khác trong gia đình như ông/bà, chú/bác, anh/chị, v.v. vào việc chăm sóc và giáo dục (CSGD) trẻ không?			
a. Có			
b. Không			
9. Nếu (8) là có thì các hình thức/hoạt động can thiệp/hỗ trợ đó là gì?			
.....			
.....			
10. Có tồn tại những bất đồng ý kiến về CSGD trẻ giữa anh/chị và các thành viên kể trên không?			
.....			
.....			
11. Nếu (10) là có thì những vấn đề đó là gì?			
.....			
.....			



### ***Ở trường***

	<i>Mẹ</i>	<i>Bố</i>	<i>Người khác (Ai?)</i>
12. Ai là người đưa đón con đến lớp hàng ngày?			
	<i>Có</i>	<i>Không</i>	<i>Nếu có thì bao lâu một lần?</i>
13. Anh/chị có tình nguyện tham gia vào hoạt động nào ở trường/lớp của con không?			
14. Anh/chị có đi dã ngoại cùng lớp của con không?			
15. Anh/chị có họp với các phụ huynh khác để lên kế hoạch tổ chức sự kiện cho các con không?			
16. Anh/chị có chia sẻ kinh nghiệm làm cha/mẹ của mình ở trường/lớp của con không?			
17. Trường của con anh/chị có tổ chức các buổi đối thoại/hướng dẫn kỹ năng cho phụ huynh không ?			
18. Anh/chị có tham gia vào các buổi đối thoại/ hội thảo đó không?			
19. Chủ đề của các buổi đối thoại/hội thảo đó thường là gì? ..... .....			
	<i>Có</i>	<i>Không</i>	<i>Tại sao?</i>
20. Anh/chị có thấy các buổi đối thoại/hội thảo đó có ích không?			

### ***Trao đổi giữa nhà trường và phụ huynh***

	<i>Mẹ</i>	<i>Bố</i>	<i>Người khác (Ai?)</i>
21. Ai trong gia đình là người chịu trách nhiệm giữ liên lạc với nhà trường?			
	<i>Có</i>	<i>Không</i>	<i>Nếu có thì mức độ thường xuyên thế nào?</i>
22. Anh/chị có trao đổi trực tiếp với giáo viên về tình hình học tập/sinh hoạt của con không?			
23. Anh/chị có trao đổi với giáo viên của con qua những hình thức khác không? (ví dụ: email, điện thoại, sổ liên lạc, v.v)			
24. Ngoài ra, còn những vấn đề nào khác anh/chị thường trao đổi với giáo viên/nhà trường? ..... .....			

### ***Quá trình ra quyết định và tham gia vào việc quản lý của nhà trường***

25. Anh/chị có nhiều sự lựa chọn về trường mẫu giáo cho con không?		
26. Việc chọn trường mẫu giáo cho con được quyết định dựa vào những yếu tố nào?		
27. Ai là người ra quyết định trong việc chọn trường cho con?		
	<i>Có</i>	<i>Không</i>
28. Anh/chị có biết về Ban giám hiệu (BGH) trường mầm non không?		
29. Trường của con anh/chị có BGH không?		
30. Trường của con anh/chị có Ban đại diện cha mẹ trẻ không?		
31. Anh/chị có phải là một thành viên của Ban đại diện cha mẹ không?		
32. Anh/chị đóng góp thế nào vào công việc của Ban đại diện cha mẹ? ..... ..... .....		
33. Anh/chị hoặc Ban đại diện cha mẹ phụ huynh có tham gia vào các công việc quản lý của trường không (ví dụ: về chính sách, tổ chức, tài chính của trường, v.v.)?		
34. Nếu có, xin hãy nêu cụ thể các nội dung mà bản thân anh/chị hoặc Ban đại diện cha mẹ có thể tham gia vào công tác quản lý cùng nhà trường? ..... .....		

### E. Ngoại khoá

1. Trường của con anh/chị có tổ chức các lớp học hay câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá như Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v. hay không? Nếu có, mời trả lời tiếp câu 2, nếu không anh/chị đã hoàn thành bảng hỏi sau câu này.
  - a. Có
  - b. Không

2. Nếu có thì cụ thể là những môn nào (Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v.)?

.....

3. Anh/chị có cho con tham gia các lớp đó không?
- a. Có
  - b. Không
4. Nếu có thì mỗi tuần là bao nhiêu thời lượng?
- a. Ít hơn 1 giờ
  - b. 1-2 giờ
  - c. 2-5 giờ
  - d. Nhiều hơn 5 giờ
5. Anh/chị có gửi con theo học thêm ở các trung tâm ngoài không?
- a. Có
  - b. Không
6. Nếu có thì mỗi tuần bao nhiêu thời lượng?
- a. Ít hơn 1 giờ
  - b. 1-2 giờ
  - c. 2-5 giờ
  - d. Nhiều hơn 5 giờ

*Chân thành cảm ơn anh/chị đã dành thời gian hoàn thành bảng câu hỏi này!  
Chúc anh/chị luôn là người cha/ người mẹ tuyệt vời của con mình!  
Chúc các con luôn có được những cơ hội và điều kiện tốt nhất để phát triển hết tiềm  
năng của mình!  
Câu trả lời của anh/chị đã được ghi nhận với sự biết ơn sâu sắc!*

Tác giả nghiên cứu,  
Nguyễn Thị Thanh Huyền

## **Family Involvement for Early Childhood Development: The Case of Viet Nam**

Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen

Doctoral student, Kobe University

### **Questionnaire For ECCE Teachers**

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

In partially fulfilling my Ph.D. study, I am carrying out a survey to gather information on perceptions of family involvement in early childhood development in Viet Nam. You are identified as one of the targeted respondents for the survey. I would like to ask you to answer my questions below as accurately and honestly as you possibly can. The success of the study depends heavily on the way you answer the questions and how many of the questions you answer. There is no right or wrong answer to each statement and your responses will be treated with **STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY**. It is hoped that the results of the study can be used to enhance the quality of ECCE in Viet Nam and to prepare for our children a better future.

#### **A. Background information**

1. Date:
2. Interviewee:
3. Sex:            Male / Female
4. Age:
5. Ethnicity:
6. Education/Qualification:
7. Residence: How far is your residence from the kindergarten? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Name of ECCE school:
9. Type of ECCE school:        Public /Private

10. Location of ECCE school: Rural / Urban / Sub-urban / Disadvantaged areas

11. Years of working experience: 1 year or less/ 1-5 years/ more than 5 years

**B. Children’s Development**

1. Who do you think is the most important people for children’s development?

- a. Father
- b. Mother
- c. Grandmother/father
- d. Teachers
- e. Neighbors
- f. Others:\_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you expect the children to gain from kindergarten?

.....  
.....  
.....

**C. Policy to encourage reading with/for children by Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)**

1. Does your kindergarten organize workshops to instruct parents on reading at home?

- a. Yes
- b. No

2. If yes, how are you involved in the workshops?

.....

3. Do you read for children in the classroom?

- a. Yes
- b. No

4. How do you think about this policy?

.....

## D. Family Involvement

1. Do you think parents should contribute to kindergartens in some ways?

a. Yes

b. No

2. If answered (1) yes, please tick the appropriate boxes below:

	2.1. What kind of participation do you think parents should do?	2.2. In reality in your school, in what ways do parents support the school?
a. Send children to kindergarten		
b. Pay schooling fee and other kinds of fees		
c. Take part in the PTA		
d. Attend the parents' meetings		
e. Talk to teachers on children's activities and studying at school (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.)		
f. Exchange information through School-Family exchange notebook		
g. Participate in school or class's trip with their children		
h. Volunteer in classroom's activities		
i. Monitor child's activities and teacher's teaching at school		
j. Plan/ monitor school development and/or school budget		
k. Meet with other parents to plan children's events		
l. Others (Please write)		

3. How do you think of family involvement in your kindergarten?

a. Very satisfied

b. Satisfied

c. Moderate

d. Dissatisfied

e. Very dissatisfied

4. What are the positive and negative effects of family involvement?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**E. Relation with Parents/ Family**

1. Are you happy with parents of your kindergarten's children? Why?

Yes, because \_\_\_\_\_

No, because \_\_\_\_\_

2. How often do you talk to parents?

a. Never

b. Rarely

c. Sometimes

d. Often (Every week)

e. Always (Every day)

3. Do you often receive requests or complaints about teachers from parents?

a. Yes

b. No

4. If answered (3) Yes, what kind of requests or complaints?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. Do you have contact with other family members of the children other than their parents?

a. Yes

b. No

6. If answered (5) Yes, which kind of contact do you have with those members?

.....





# Vai Trò Và Sự Phối Hợp Của Gia Đình Đối Với Sự Phát Triển Giáo Dục Mầm Non

Nguyễn Thị Thanh Huyền

Nghiên cứu sinh, Đại học Kobe, Nhật Bản

## Bảng hỏi cho Giáo viên

### **Chào anh/chị,**

Nhằm góp phần hoàn thành chương trình nghiên cứu sinh của tôi tại đại học Kobe, tôi cần tiến hành thu thập số liệu phục vụ nghiên cứu. Cụ thể, bảng hỏi của tôi được thiết kế nhằm hiểu rõ hơn về: i) nhận thức của phụ huynh về vai trò của gia đình đối với giáo dục mầm non và ii) tình hình tham gia và kết hợp của phụ huynh với nhà trường trong các hoạt động giáo dục mầm non (dành cho lứa tuổi mẫu giáo – 3, 4, 5 tuổi). Kính mong anh/chị giúp đỡ cho nghiên cứu bằng cách trả lời chân thực và chính xác hết mức có thể đối với những câu hỏi dưới đây. Thành công của nghiên cứu phụ thuộc rất nhiều vào cách anh/chị trả lời câu hỏi. Không có sự đánh giá đúng/sai đối với tất cả các câu trả lời; và tôi đảm bảo tất cả thông tin cá nhân cũng như câu trả lời của anh/chị được giữ TUYỆT ĐỐI BÍ MẬT – sẽ không có một bên thứ 3 nào tiếp cận được với các thông tin cá nhân của các anh/chị. Nội dung các câu trả lời chỉ được dùng để phục vụ mục đích nghiên cứu khoa học. Tôi rất mong kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ góp phần vào việc nâng cao chất lượng giáo dục mầm non ở Việt Nam.

### **A. Thông tin cơ bản**

1. Ngày tháng năm:
2. Người trả lời:
3. Giới tính:        Nam     Nữ
4. Tuổi:
5. Dân tộc:

6. Trình độ học vấn:
7. Địa bàn cư trú (xã/phường\_quận/huyện\_tỉnh-thành phố):
8. Tên trường đang công tác:
9. Loại hình trường: Công lập/ Tư thục / Bán công
10. Trường thuộc địa bàn nào: Thành phố Ngoại ô Nông thôn Vùng khó khăn
11. Số năm công tác:  <1 năm  1-5 năm  >5 năm

Ghi chú:

1. Sau đây xin được gọi tắt trường mẫu giáo là **trường** kể cả trường hợp lớp mẫu giáo của con chưa phải là trường; và đi mẫu giáo sẽ được gọi tắt là **đi lớp**.

**B. Sự phát triển của trẻ**

1. Theo anh/chị, ai là người quan trọng nhất đối với sự phát triển của trẻ?
  - a. Bố
  - b. Mẹ
  - c. Ông/bà
  - d. Cô giáo
  - e. Người trong làng/khu phố
  - f. Khác: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Anh/chị mong muốn trẻ đạt được những gì từ việc đi lớp?

**C. Chính sách khuyến khích văn hoá đọc của Bộ Giáo dục - Đào tạo**

1. Trường của con anh/chị có tổ chức các buổi hướng dẫn/chia sẻ kinh nghiệm giúp bố mẹ đọc sách cùng con ở nhà không?
2. Nếu có thì anh/chị có vai trò gì trong các buổi đó?

3. Anh/chị có đọc sách cho các con ở trên lớp không?
  
4. Anh/chị nghĩ thế nào về chủ trương này của Bộ?

#### **D. Sự tham gia của phụ huynh**

1. Theo anh/chị, phụ huynh có nên đóng góp vào sự phát triển và chất lượng giáo dục của nhà trường theo một cách nào đó không?
  - a. Có
  - b. Không
2. Nếu có, theo anh/chị, phụ huynh có thể tham gia /hợp tác cùng nhà trường trong việc giáo dục và chăm sóc con bằng những hình thức nào? (Có thể chọn nhiều hơn một đáp án bằng cách khoanh tròn vào các đáp án được chọn)
  - a. Gửi con tới trường
  - b. Đóng học phí (và các khoản phí khác) cho nhà trường
  - c. Tham gia vào ban đại diện cha mẹ học sinh
  - d. Tham gia vào các buổi họp phụ huynh
  - e. Trao đổi với cô giáo về tình hình học tập và sinh hoạt của con (qua điện thoại, email, gặp trực tiếp lúc đưa đón con, v.v.)
  - f. Viết sổ liên lạc giữa nhà trường và phụ huynh
  - g. Tham gia vào các buổi dã ngoại cùng con do nhà trường tổ chức
  - h. Tình nguyện tham gia vào các hoạt động trong lớp học của trẻ
  - i. Giám sát các hoạt động của con ở trường và việc dạy của cô giáo
  - j. Lập kế hoạch cùng nhà trường/ giám sát sự phát triển và/hoặc việc chi ngân sách của nhà trường
  - k. Trao đổi với các phụ huynh khác về kế hoạch tổ chức sự kiện/ hoạt động hỗ trợ cho trẻ

1. Khác: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Trong số các hình thức tham gia được liệt kê ở trên, phụ huynh ở trường anh/chị đã làm được những việc nào trong số đó? (Chỉ cần viết tên các lựa chọn, ví dụ: a, b, c, e, f):  
.....
4. Anh/chị cảm thấy thế nào về sự tham gia của phụ huynh ở trường mình?
  - a. Rất hài lòng    b. Hài lòng    c. Bình thường    d. Không hài lòng    e. Rất không hài lòng
5. Các tác dụng tích cực và không tích cực của việc tham gia của phụ huynh là gì?  
.....

#### **E. Quan hệ với phụ huynh**

1. Anh chị có hài lòng với phụ huynh của mình không? Tại sao?  
 Có \_\_\_\_\_  
 Không \_\_\_\_\_
2. Anh chị có thường xuyên trao đổi với phụ huynh không?
  - a. Không bao giờ                      b. Hiếm khi                      c. Thi thoảng
  - d. Thường xuyên (hàng tuần)                      e. Luôn luôn (hàng ngày)
3. Anh chị có thường xuyên nhận được yêu cầu hoặc phản ánh từ phía phụ huynh không?
  - a. Không                                      b. Có
4. Nếu có, nội dung thường là gì?  
.....
5. Anh/chị có liên hệ với các thành viên khác trong gia đình ngoài bố mẹ của trẻ không?
  - a. Có                                              b. Không
6. Nếu có thì thường là những hình thức liên hệ nào?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

7. Anh/ chị mong muốn phụ huynh phối hợp với nhà trường trong những nội dung nào và dưới những hình thức nào để nâng cao chất lượng chăm sóc và giáo dục trẻ?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**F. Câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá**

1. Trường của anh/chị có tổ chức các lớp học hay câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá như Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v. hay không? Nếu có, mời trả lời tiếp câu 2, nếu không anh/chị đã hoàn thành bảng hỏi sau câu này.

- c. Có
- d. Không

2. Nếu có thì cụ thể là những môn nào (Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v.)?

.....

3. Thời lượng cho mỗi môn học là bao lâu mỗi tuần?

a. 30-45 phút      b. 1-2 giờ      c. Khác \_\_\_\_\_

***Chân thành cảm ơn anh/chị đã dành thời gian hoàn thành bảng câu hỏi này!***

## **Family Involvement for Early Childhood Development: The Case of Viet Nam**

Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen

Doctoral student, Kobe University

### **Questionnaire For Principals/Vice-principals**

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

In partially fulfilling my Ph.D. study, I am carrying out a survey to gather information on perceptions of family involvement in early childhood development in Viet Nam. You are identified as one of the targeted respondents for the survey. I would like to ask you to answer my questions below as accurately and honestly as you possibly can. The success of the study depends heavily on the way you answer the questions and how many of the questions you answer. There is no right or wrong answer to each statement and your responses will be treated with **STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY**. It is hoped that the results of the study can be used to enhance the quality of ECCE in Viet Nam and to prepare for our children a better future.

#### **A. Background information**

1. Date:
2. Interviewee:
3. Sex:            Male   /   Female
4. Age:
5. Ethnicity:
6. Education/Qualification:
7. Name of ECCE school:
8. Type of ECCE school:                    Public   /   Private
9. Location of ECCE school:   Rural   /   Urban   /   Sub-urban   / Disadvantaged areas

- 10. Years of working experience:
- 11. Years of being a principal/vice-principal:

**B. Children’s Development**

- 1. Who do you think is the most important people for children’s development?  
Why?

.....  
.....

- 2. What do you expect the children to gain from kindergarten?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**C. Government Policy on encouraging teachers/ parents to read with/for children**

- 1. If Yes to 1, how did you know about the policy?

.....

- 2. How do you evaluate this policy?

- Good and well implemented
- Good but not well implemented
- Has problems but well implemented
- Has problems and not well implemented

- 3. How does your kindergarten take the lead in guiding parents to implement this policy (to improve reading for children at home)?

.....  
.....





	2.1. What kind of participation do you think parents should do?	2.2. In reality in your school, in what ways do parents support the school?
a. Send children to kindergarten		
b. Pay schooling fee and other kinds of fees		
c. Take part in the PTA		
d. Attend the parents' meetings		
e. Talk to teachers on children's activities and studying at school (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.)		
f. Exchange information through School-Family exchange notebook		
g. Participate in school or class's trip with their children		
h. Volunteer in classroom's activities		
i. Monitor child's activities and teacher's teaching at school		
j. Plan/ monitor school development and/or school budget		
k. Meet with other parents to plan children's events		
l. Others (Please write)		

3. How do you think of family involvement in your kindergarten?

a. Very satisfied b. Satisfied c. Moderate d. Dissatisfied e. Very dissatisfied

4. What are the positive and negative effects of family involvement?

.....  
 .....

5. How do you think ECCE schools can take the leading role in promoting FI?



- a. Yes
- b. No

2. What classes are they?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. How many hours per week are set for each extra-activity?

- a. 30-45 minutes
- b. 1-2 hours
- c. Other \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you very much for your time and kind cooperation!***

## **Vai Trò Và Sự Phối Hợp Của Gia Đình Đối Với Sự Phát Triển Giáo Dục Mầm Non**

Nguyễn Thị Thanh Huyền

Nghiên cứu sinh, Đại học Kobe, Nhật Bản

### **Bảng hỏi cho Hiệu trưởng**

**Chào anh/chị,**

Nhằm góp phần hoàn thành chương trình nghiên cứu sinh của tôi tại đại học Kobe, tôi cần tiến hành thu thập số liệu phục vụ nghiên cứu. Cụ thể, bảng hỏi của tôi được thiết kế nhằm hiểu rõ hơn về: i) nhận thức của phụ huynh về vai trò của gia đình đối với giáo dục mầm non và ii) tình hình tham gia và kết hợp của phụ huynh với nhà trường trong các hoạt động giáo dục mầm non (dành cho lứa tuổi mẫu giáo – 3, 4, 5 tuổi). Kính mong anh/chị giúp đỡ cho nghiên cứu bằng cách trả lời chân thực và chính xác hết mức có thể đối với những câu hỏi dưới đây. Thành công của nghiên cứu phụ thuộc rất nhiều vào cách anh/chị trả lời câu hỏi. Không có sự đánh giá đúng/sai đối với tất cả các câu trả lời; và tôi đảm bảo tất cả thông tin cá nhân cũng như câu trả lời của anh/chị được giữ **TUYỆT ĐỐI BÍ MẬT** – sẽ không có một bên thứ 3 nào tiếp cận được với các thông tin cá nhân của các anh/chị. Nội dung các câu trả lời chỉ được dùng để phục vụ mục đích nghiên cứu khoa học. Tôi rất mong kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ góp phần vào việc nâng cao chất lượng giáo dục mầm non ở Việt Nam.

#### **A. Thông tin cơ bản**

1. Ngày tháng năm:
2. Người trả lời:
3. Giới tính:            Nam     Nữ
4. Tuổi:
5. Dân tộc:

6. Trình độ học vấn:
7. Tên trường đang công tác:
8. Loại hình trường: Công lập/ Tư thục / Bán công
9. Trường thuộc địa bàn nào: Thành phố Ngoại ô Nông thôn Vùng khó khăn
10. Số năm công tác:  <1 năm  1-5 năm  >5 năm
11. Số năm làm hiệu trưởng:  <1 năm  1-5 năm  >5 năm

Ghi chú:

1. Sau đây xin được gọi tắt trường mẫu giáo là **trường** kể cả trường hợp lớp mẫu giáo của con chưa phải là trường; và đi mẫu giáo sẽ được gọi tắt là **đi lớp**.

**B. Sự phát triển của trẻ**

1. Theo anh/chị, ai là người quan trọng nhất đối với sự phát triển của trẻ?
 

a. Bố	d. Cô giáo	f. Khác: _____
b. Mẹ	e. Người trong	
c. Ông/bà	làng/khu phố	
  
2. Anh/chị mong muốn trẻ đạt được những gì từ việc đi lớp?

**C. Chính sách khuyến khích văn hoá đọc của Bộ Giáo dục - Đào tạo**

1. Anh/chị biết đến chính sách này như thế nào?
  
2. Anh/chị đánh giá thế nào về chủ trương này của Bộ?

- a. Chính sách tốt và được thực hiện tốt
  - b. Chính sách tốt nhưng không được thực hiện tốt
  - c. Chính sách có vấn đề nhưng vẫn được thực hiện tốt
  - d. Chính sách có vấn đề và không được thực hiện tốt
3. Trường anh/chị có vai trò thế nào trong việc hướng dẫn phụ huynh thực hiện chủ trương này?
4. Anh/chị có muốn giải thích gì thêm về các câu trả lời trên của mình?

**D. Ban giám hiệu nhà trường**

1. Trường anh/chị có ban giám hiệu (BGH) không? Nếu có, mời trả lời tiếp câu 2, nếu không, xin chuyển sang mục E.
- h. Có
  - i. Không
2. Thành viên BGH gồm những ai?  
 .....
3. Chức năng, nhiệm vụ của BGH là gì?  
 .....
4. Họp BGH diễn ra bao lâu một lần?
- a. 1 tuần 1 lần
  - b. 1 tháng 1 lần
  - c. 1 học kì 1 lần
  - d. 1 năm 1 lần
  - e. Không bao giờ
5. Nội dung chính của các cuộc họp này là gì?  
 .....  
 .....

### E. Sự tham gia của phụ huynh

1. Theo anh/chị, phụ huynh có nên đóng góp vào sự phát triển và chất lượng giáo dục của nhà trường theo một cách nào đó không?
  - a. Có
  - b. Không
2. Nếu có, theo anh/chị, phụ huynh có thể tham gia /hợp tác cùng nhà trường trong việc giáo dục và chăm sóc con bằng những hình thức nào? (Có thể chọn nhiều hơn một đáp án bằng cách khoanh tròn vào các đáp án được chọn)
  - a. Gửi con tới trường
  - b. Đóng học phí (và các khoản phí khác) cho nhà trường
  - c. Tham gia vào ban đại diện cha mẹ học sinh
  - d. Tham gia vào các buổi họp phụ huynh
  - e. Trao đổi với cô giáo về tình hình học tập và sinh hoạt của con (qua điện thoại, email, gặp trực tiếp lúc đưa đón con, v.v.)
  - f. Viết sổ liên lạc giữa nhà trường và phụ huynh
  - g. Tham gia vào các buổi dã ngoại cùng con do nhà trường tổ chức
  - h. Tình nguyện tham gia vào các hoạt động trong lớp học của trẻ
  - i. Giám sát các hoạt động của con ở trường và việc dạy của cô giáo
  - j. Lập kế hoạch cùng nhà trường/ giám sát sự phát triển và/hoặc việc chi ngân sách của nhà trường
  - k. Trao đổi với các phụ huynh khác về kế hoạch tổ chức sự kiện/ hoạt động hỗ trợ cho trẻ
  - l. Khác: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Trong số các hình thức tham gia được liệt kê ở trên, phụ huynh ở trường anh/chị đã làm được những việc nào trong số đó? (Chỉ cần viết tên các lựa chọn, ví dụ: a, b, c, e, f):  
.....



4. Anh/chị cảm thấy thế nào về sự tham gia của phụ huynh ở trường mình?
  - a. Rất hài lòng
  - b. Hài lòng
  - c. Bình thường
  - d. Không hài lòng
  - e. Rất không hài lòng
  
5. Các tác dụng tích cực và không tích cực của việc tham gia của phụ huynh là gì?
 

.....

.....
  
6. Theo anh/chị, nhà trường có thể làm gì để thể hiện vai trò lãnh đạo của mình trong việc giúp phụ huynh phối hợp tốt hơn với nhà trường để cùng nuôi dạy và chăm sóc trẻ?
 

.....

.....

**E. Quan hệ với phụ huynh và giáo viên**

1. Tần xuất anh/chị có mặt ở trường?
 

.....
  
2. Tần xuất anh/chị bị giáo viên/nhân viên gọi?
 

.....
  
3. Anh/chị thường xuyên phải đối mặt với những vấn đề gì?
 

.....
  
4. Anh chị có thường xuyên nhận được yêu cầu hoặc phản ánh từ phía phụ huynh đối với giáo viên nhà trường không?
  - a. Không
  - b. Có
  
5. Nếu có, nội dung thường là gì?
 

.....
  
6. Anh/ chị có đề xuất hay ý tưởng gì nhằm góp phần nâng cao sự hợp tác giữa gia đình và nhà trường?
 

.....

## **F. Câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá**

1. Trường của anh/chị có tổ chức các lớp học hay câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá như Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v. hay không? Nếu có, mời trả lời tiếp câu 2, nếu không anh/chị đã hoàn thành bảng hỏi sau câu này.
  - a. Có
  - b. Không

2. Nếu có thì cụ thể là những môn nào (Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v.)?

.....

3. Thời lượng cho mỗi môn học là bao lâu mỗi tuần?

a. 30-45 phút      b. 1-2 giờ      c. Khác \_\_\_\_\_

***Chân thành cảm ơn anh/chị đã dành thời gian hoàn thành bảng câu hỏi này!***

## **Family Involvement for Early Childhood Development: The Case of Viet Nam**

Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen

Doctoral student, Kobe University

### **Questionnaire For Officials of Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)**

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

In partially fulfilling my Ph.D. study, I am carrying out a survey to gather information on perceptions of family involvement in early childhood development in Viet Nam. You are identified as one of the targeted respondents for the survey. I would like to ask you to answer my questions below as accurately and honestly as you possibly can. The success of the study depends heavily on the way you answer the questions and how many of the questions you answer. There is no right or wrong answer to each statement and your responses will be treated with **STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY**. It is hoped that the results of the study can be used to enhance the quality of ECCE in Viet Nam and to prepare for our children a better future.

#### **A. Background information**

1. Date:
2. Interviewee:
3. Sex:            Male / Female
4. Education:
5. Ethnicity:
6. Position of interviewee:
7. Years of Experience in current Position:

**B. Family Involvement in ECD and School Leadership Role**

1. What is the background of government policy on encouraging family involvement in ECD?  
.....  
.....
2. What kind of involvement do you think parents/families should do?
  - a. Send children to kindergarten
  - b. Pay schooling fee and other kinds of fees
  - c. Take part in the PTA
  - d. Attend the parents' meetings
  - e. Talk to teachers on children's activities and studying at school (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.)
  - f. Exchange information through School-Family exchange notebook
  - g. Participate in school or class's trip with their children
  - h. Volunteer in classroom's activities
  - i. Monitor child's activities and teacher's teaching at school
  - j. Plan/monitor school development/budget
  - k. Meet with other parents to plan children's events
  - l. Other: .....
3. As for community who do not have children going to ECCE schools, do you think they should be involved in some ways? Why?
  - a. Yes. Because .....
  - b. No. Because .....
4. In 2015, MOET launched a policy on improving reading culture, including encouraging teachers and parents to read with/for children. What is the background of this policy?  
.....  
.....

5. Does MOET have guidance for SMC action and functioning?

.....  
.....

6. Does MOET have guidance for schools to take the lead in improving FI in ECD?

.....  
.....

**C. International Donors/ NGO:**

1. How have international donors intervened in ECCE development in Viet Nam?

.....

2. How have international donors intervened in FI for ECD development in Viet Nam?

.....

**D. Extra-classes**

1. Are ECCE schools allowed to organize extra-classes such as English, Art, Music, Sports, etc. after school hours?

- a. Yes
- b. No

2. Is there any specific policy document on this?

- a. Yes
- b. No

3. If (2) yes, what are they?

.....

4. How does MOET intervene in the fact that parents are sending young children to extra-classes after school hours both at their ECCE schools and outside centers?

.....

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***Thank you very much for your time and kind cooperation!***

## **Vai Trò Và Sự Phối Hợp Của Gia Đình Đối Với Sự Phát Triển Giáo Dục Mầm Non**

Nguyễn Thị Thanh Huyền

Nghiên cứu sinh, Đại học Kobe, Nhật Bản

### **Bảng hỏi cho Lãnh đạo/Cán bộ thuộc Bộ Giáo Dục và Đào Tạo**

**Chào anh/chị,**

Nhằm góp phần hoàn thành chương trình nghiên cứu của tôi tại đại học Kobe, tôi cần tiến hành thu thập số liệu phục vụ nghiên cứu. Cụ thể, bảng hỏi của tôi được thiết kế nhằm hiểu rõ hơn về: i) nhận thức của phụ huynh về vai trò của gia đình đối với giáo dục mầm non (GDMN) và ii) thực trạng phối kết hợp của phụ huynh với nhà trường trong các hoạt động GDMN (dành cho lứa tuổi mẫu giáo – 3 đến 5 tuổi). Kính mong anh/chị giúp đỡ cho nghiên cứu bằng cách trả lời chân thực và chính xác hết mức có thể đối với những câu hỏi dưới đây. Thành công của nghiên cứu phụ thuộc rất nhiều vào cách anh/chị trả lời câu hỏi. Không có sự đánh giá đúng/sai đối với tất cả các câu trả lời; và tôi đảm bảo tất cả thông tin cá nhân cũng như câu trả lời của anh/chị được giữ TUYỆT ĐỐI BÍ MẬT – sẽ không có bên thứ 3 nào tiếp cận được với các thông tin cá nhân của các anh/chị. Nội dung các câu trả lời chỉ được dùng để phục vụ mục đích nghiên cứu khoa học. Tôi rất mong kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ góp phần vào việc nâng cao chất lượng GDMN ở Việt Nam.

#### **A. Thông tin cơ bản**

1. Ngày tháng năm:
2. Người trả lời:
3. Giới tính:            Nam/ Nữ
4. Dân tộc:
5. Tuổi:
6. Trình độ học vấn:



7. Đơn vị công tác:
8. Vị trí/ Chức vụ:

**B. Chủ trương/ Chính sách của nhà nước và vai trò của gia đình/xã hội**

1. Nhà nước có những chủ trương/ chính sách gì để khuyến khích/ đẩy mạnh sự phối kết hợp của gia đình/xã hội với giáo dục nói chung?

.....

.....

.....

2. Theo anh/chị, phụ huynh nên đóng góp vào sự phát triển và chất lượng giáo dục của nhà trường theo những hình thức nào? (Có thể chọn nhiều hơn một đáp án)

- a. Gửi con tới trường
- b. Đóng học phí (và các khoản phí khác) cho nhà trường
- c. Tham gia vào ban đại diện cha mẹ học sinh
- d. Tham gia vào các buổi họp phụ huynh
- e. Trao đổi với cô giáo về tình hình học tập và sinh hoạt của con (qua điện thoại, email, gặp trực tiếp lúc đưa đón con, v.v.)
- f. Viết sổ liên lạc giữa nhà trường và phụ huynh
- g. Tham gia vào các buổi dã ngoại cùng con do nhà trường tổ chức
- h. Tình nguyện tham gia vào các hoạt động trong lớp học của trẻ
- i. Giám sát các hoạt động của con ở trường và việc dạy của cô giáo
- j. Lập kế hoạch cùng nhà trường/ giám sát sự phát triển và/hoặc việc chi ngân sách của nhà trường
- k. Trao đổi với các phụ huynh khác về kế hoạch tổ chức sự kiện/ hoạt động hỗ trợ cho trẻ
- l. Khác: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Đối với những phụ huynh không gửi con tới trường mầm non, anh/chị có nghĩ là họ cũng có thể đóng góp cho giáo dục mầm non bằng một nào đó không? Tại sao?
  - a. Có. ....
  - b. Không. ....
4. Năm 2015, Bộ GD-ĐT có công văn về việc đổi mới thư viện và phát triển văn hoá đọc trong nhà trường, trong đó có nội dung khuyến khích cha mẹ đọc sách cho bé MN tại nhà. Lý do hoặc động cơ nào là nền tảng cho chủ trương này của Bộ?
 

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.....
5. Bộ GD-ĐT có vai trò gì trong việc giám sát và đồng hành cùng các trường mầm non?
 

.....
6. Bộ GD-ĐT có hướng dẫn các trường trong việc nâng cao sự phối kết hợp của phụ huynh với nhà trường để nâng cao chất lượng GDMN không? Nếu có thì hướng dẫn bằng những hình thức nào và với nội dung gì?
 

.....

.....

.....

**C. Các tổ chức quốc tế/ phi chính phủ (NGO)**

1. Các tổ chức quốc tế như Ngân hàng Thế giới, UNESCO, UNICEF hoặc các tổ chức Phi chính phủ (NGO) có vai trò hay đóng góp gì cho GDMN ở Việt Nam?
 

.....
2. Nếu có thì dưới những hình thức và nội dung nào?
 

.....

#### **D. Câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá**

1. Các trường mầm non có được phép tổ chức các lớp học ngoài giờ hay câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá như Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v. hay không?
  - a. Có
  - b. Không

2. Có văn bản nào cụ thể quy định về việc này không?

a. Có

b. Không

3. Nếu (2) có thì tên văn bản đó là gì?

.....

4. Bộ GD-ĐT có ý kiến gì về thực trạng nhiều bố mẹ đang gửi con nhỏ đến các trung tâm học thêm/ngoại khoá và về việc các trường mầm non mở CLB ngoại khoá?

.....

.....

***Chân thành cảm ơn anh/chị đã dành thời gian hoàn thành bảng câu hỏi này!***

## **Family Involvement for Early Childhood Development: The Case of Viet Nam**

Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen

Doctoral student, Kobe University

### **Questionnaire For Provincial Officials**

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

In partially fulfilling my Ph.D. study, I am carrying out a survey to gather information on perceptions of family involvement in early childhood development in Viet Nam. You are identified as one of the targeted respondents for the survey. I would like to ask you to answer my questions below as accurately and honestly as you possibly can. The success of the study depends heavily on the way you answer the questions and how many of the questions you answer. There is no right or wrong answer to each statement and your responses will be treated with **STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY**. It is hoped that the results of the study can be used to enhance the quality of ECCE in Viet Nam and to prepare for our children a better future.

#### **A. Background information**

1. Date:
2. Interviewee:
3. Sex:            Male / Female
4. Position of interviewee:
5. Years of Experience in current Position:
6. Education:
7. Ethnicity:
8. Province Name:

**B. Family Involvement in ECD and School Leadership Role**

1. How are ECCE policies, especially policy on FI in ECD, being implemented in your province?  
.....  
.....
2. What kind of involvement do you think parents/families should do?
  - a. Send children to kindergarten
  - b. Pay schooling fee and other kinds of fees
  - c. Take part in the PTA
  - d. Attend the parents' meetings
  - e. Talk to teachers on children's activities and studying at school (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.)
  - f. Exchange information through School-Family exchange notebook
  - g. Participate in school or class's trip with their children
  - h. Volunteer in classroom's activities
  - i. Monitor child's activities and teacher's teaching at school
  - j. Plan/monitor school development/budget
  - k. Meet with other parents to plan children's events
  - l. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
3. As for community who do not have children going to ECCE schools, do you think they should be involved in some ways? Why?
  - a. Yes. Because .....
  - b. No. Because .....
4. How does your province guide schools for SMC action and functioning?  
.....  
.....
5. How do your province guide schools to take the lead in improving FI in ECD?



3. Are there private centers for the extra classes in your province/city?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
4. How does DOET intervene in the fact that parents are sending young children to extra-classes after school hours both at their ECCE schools and outside centers?

.....  
.....

***Thank you very much for your time and kind cooperation!***



## **Vai Trò Và Sự Phối Hợp Của Gia Đình Đối Với Sự Phát Triển Giáo Dục Mầm Non**

Nguyễn Thị Thanh Huyền

Nghiên cứu sinh, Đại học Kobe, Nhật Bản

### **Bảng hỏi cho Lãnh đạo/Cán bộ Sở Giáo Dục và Đào Tạo**

**Chào anh/chị,**

Nhằm góp phần hoàn thành chương trình nghiên cứu của tôi tại đại học Kobe, tôi cần tiến hành thu thập số liệu phục vụ nghiên cứu. Cụ thể, bảng hỏi của tôi được thiết kế nhằm hiểu rõ hơn về: i) nhận thức của phụ huynh về vai trò của gia đình đối với giáo dục mầm non và ii) thực trạng phối kết hợp của phụ huynh với nhà trường trong các hoạt động giáo dục mầm non (dành cho lứa tuổi mẫu giáo – 3 đến 5 tuổi). Kính mong anh/chị giúp đỡ cho nghiên cứu bằng cách trả lời chân thực và chính xác hết mức có thể đối với những câu hỏi dưới đây. Thành công của nghiên cứu phụ thuộc rất nhiều vào cách anh/chị trả lời câu hỏi. Không có sự đánh giá đúng/sai đối với tất cả các câu trả lời; và tôi đảm bảo tất cả thông tin cá nhân cũng như câu trả lời của anh/chị được giữ TUYỆT ĐỐI BÍ MẬT – sẽ không có một bên thứ 3 nào tiếp cận được với các thông tin cá nhân của các anh/chị. Nội dung các câu trả lời chỉ được dùng để phục vụ mục đích nghiên cứu khoa học. Tôi rất mong kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ góp phần vào việc nâng cao chất lượng giáo dục mầm non ở Việt Nam.

#### **A. Thông tin cơ bản**

1. Ngày tháng năm:
2. Người trả lời:
3. Giới tính:        Nam     Nữ
4. Tuổi:
5. Trình độ học vấn:

6. Dân tộc:
7. Đơn vị công tác:
8. Vị trí/ Chức vụ:

**B. Vai trò của gia đình đối với giáo dục mầm non và sự lãnh đạo của nhà trường**

1. Có những chính sách về giáo dục mầm non nào đang được thực hiện tại tỉnh/thành phố của anh/chị?

.....

.....

.....

2. Theo anh/chị, phụ huynh nên đóng góp vào sự phát triển và chất lượng giáo dục của nhà trường theo những hình thức nào? (Có thể chọn nhiều hơn một đáp án)

- a. Gửi con tới trường
- b. Đóng học phí (và các khoản phí khác) cho nhà trường
- c. Tham gia vào ban đại diện cha mẹ học sinh
- d. Tham gia vào các buổi họp phụ huynh
- e. Trao đổi với cô giáo về tình hình học tập và sinh hoạt của con (qua điện thoại, email, gặp trực tiếp lúc đưa đón con, v.v.)
- f. Viết sổ liên lạc giữa nhà trường và phụ huynh
- g. Tham gia vào các buổi dã ngoại cùng con do nhà trường tổ chức
- h. Tình nguyện tham gia vào các hoạt động trong lớp học của trẻ
- i. Giám sát các hoạt động của con ở trường và việc dạy của cô giáo
- j. Lập kế hoạch cùng nhà trường/ giám sát sự phát triển và/hoặc việc chi ngân sách của nhà trường
- k. Trao đổi với các phụ huynh khác về kế hoạch tổ chức sự kiện/ hoạt động hỗ trợ cho trẻ

l. Khác: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Đối với những phụ huynh không gửi con tới trường mầm non, anh/chị có nghĩ là họ cũng có thể đóng góp cho giáo dục mầm non bằng một nào đó không? Tại sao?
  - a. Có. ....
  - b. Không. ....
4. Sở GD-ĐT có những chỉ đạo hướng dẫn gì cho BGH các trường mầm non trong việc lên kế hoạch và hành động?
 

.....
5. Sở GD-ĐT có hướng dẫn các trường trong việc dẫn dắt sự tham gia đóng góp của phụ huynh không?
 

.....

**C. Các tổ chức quốc tế/ phi chính phủ (NGO)**

1. Tỉnh/thành phố có nhận được đóng góp/can thiệp gì từ phía các tổ chức quốc tế/tổ chức phi chính phủ (NGO) trong việc phát triển GDMN trên địa bàn không?
 

.....
2. Nếu có thì dưới những hình thức nào?
 

.....

**D. Câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá**

1. Các trường mầm non trong địa bàn tỉnh/thành phố này có được phép tổ chức các lớp học hay câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá như Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v. sau giờ học hay không?
  - a. Có
  - b. Không

2. Có văn bản nào cụ thể quy định về điều này hay không? Nếu có thì tên văn bản đó là gì?

.....

3. Trên địa bàn tỉnh/thành phố này có tồn tại các trung tâm hoặc lớp dạy thêm tổ chức các ngoại khoá cho trẻ trong độ tuổi mầm non không?

a. Có

b. Không

4. Nếu có, Sở GD-ĐT có can thiệp gì vào các lớp học thêm/ CLB ngoại khoá trong trường hoặc các trung tâm dạy thêm ở bên ngoài nhà trường không?

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.....

***Chân thành cảm ơn anh/chị đã dành thời gian hoàn thành bảng câu hỏi này!***

## **Family Involvement for Early Childhood Development: The Case of Viet Nam**

Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen

Doctoral student, Kobe University

### **Questionnaire For District Officials**

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

In partially fulfilling my Ph.D. study, I am carrying out a survey to gather information on perceptions of family involvement in early childhood development in Viet Nam. You are identified as one of the targeted respondents for the survey. I would like to ask you to answer my questions below as accurately and honestly as you possibly can. The success of the study depends heavily on the way you answer the questions and how many of the questions you answer. There is no right or wrong answer to each statement and your responses will be treated with **STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY**. It is hoped that the results of the study can be used to enhance the quality of ECCE in Viet Nam and to prepare for our children a better future.

#### **A. Background information**

1. Date:
2. Interviewee:
3. Sex:            Male / Female
4. Position of interviewee:
5. Education:
6. Ethnicity:
7. Province name:
8. District name:

**B. Family Involvement in ECD and School Leadership Role**

1. How are ECCE policies, especially policy on FI in ECD, being implemented in your district?  
.....  
.....
2. What kind of involvement do you think parents/families should do?
  - a. Send children to kindergarten
  - b. Pay schooling fee and other kinds of fees
  - c. Take part in the PTA
  - d. Attend the parents' meetings
  - e. Talk to teachers on children's activities and studying at school (face-to-face, email, telephone, etc.)
  - f. Exchange information through School-Family exchange notebook
  - g. Participate in school or class's trip with their children
  - h. Volunteer in classroom's activities
  - i. Monitor child's activities and teacher's teaching at school
  - j. Plan/monitor school development/budget
  - k. Meet with other parents to plan children's events
  - l. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
3. As for community who do not have children going to ECCE schools, do you think they should be involved in some ways? Why?
  - a. Yes. Because .....
  - b. No. Because .....
4. How does your district guide schools for SMC action and functioning?  
.....  
.....
5. How do your district guide schools to take the lead in improving FI in ECD?

.....  
.....

**C. International Donors/ NGO:**

1. How have international donors intervened in ECCE development in your district?

.....  
.....

2. How have international donors intervened in FI for ECD development in your district?

.....  
.....

**D. Extra-classes**

1. Are ECCE schools allowed to organize extra-classes such as English, Art, Music, Sports, etc. after school hours?

- a. Yes
- b. No

2. Is there any specific policy document on this?

- a. Yes
- b. No

3. Are there private centers for extra classes in your district?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
4. How does BOET intervene in the fact that parents are sending young children to extra-classes after school hours both at their ECCE schools and outside centers?  
.....  
.....  
.....

***Thank you very much!***



# Vai Trò Và Sự Phối Hợp Của Gia Đình Đối Với Sự Phát Triển Giáo Dục Mầm Non

Nguyễn Thị Thanh Huyền

Nghiên cứu sinh, Đại học Kobe, Nhật Bản

## **Bảng hỏi cho Phòng Giáo Dục và Đào Tạo**

**Chào anh/chị,**

Nhằm góp phần hoàn thành chương trình nghiên cứu của tôi tại đại học Kobe, tôi cần tiến hành thu thập số liệu phục vụ nghiên cứu. Cụ thể, bảng hỏi của tôi được thiết kế nhằm hiểu rõ hơn về: i) nhận thức của phụ huynh về vai trò của gia đình đối với giáo dục mầm non và ii) thực trạng phối kết hợp của phụ huynh với nhà trường trong các hoạt động giáo dục mầm non (dành cho lứa tuổi mẫu giáo – 3, 4, 5 tuổi). Kính mong anh/chị giúp đỡ cho nghiên cứu bằng cách trả lời chân thực và chính xác hết mức có thể đối với những câu hỏi dưới đây. Thành công của nghiên cứu phụ thuộc rất nhiều vào cách anh/chị trả lời câu hỏi. Không có sự đánh giá đúng/sai đối với tất cả các câu trả lời; và tôi đảm bảo tất cả thông tin cá nhân cũng như câu trả lời của anh/chị được giữ TUYỆT ĐỐI BÍ MẬT – sẽ không có một bên thứ 3 nào tiếp cận được với các thông tin cá nhân của các anh/chị. Nội dung các câu trả lời chỉ được dùng để phục vụ mục đích nghiên cứu khoa học. Tôi rất mong kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ góp phần vào việc nâng cao chất lượng giáo dục mầm non ở Việt Nam.

### **A. Thông tin cơ bản**

1. Ngày tháng năm:
2. Người trả lời:
3. Giới tính:            Nam / Nữ

4. Tuổi:
5. Trình độ học vấn:
6. Dân tộc:
7. Đơn vị công tác:
8. Vị trí công tác:

**B. Vai trò của gia đình đối với giáo dục mầm non và sự lãnh đạo của nhà trường**

1. Các chính sách về giáo dục mầm non và chính sách về sự tham gia của phụ huynh đối với GDMN được thực hiện trong quận/huyện của anh/chị như thế nào?

.....  
.....

2. Các khoản chi phí cố định mà gia đình cần đóng cho nhà trường (ví dụ: Học phí, ăn trưa, v.v.) tính theo năm/ theo quý/ hoặc theo tháng là bao nhiêu?

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.....

3. Theo anh/chị, phụ huynh nên đóng góp vào sự phát triển và chất lượng giáo dục của nhà trường theo những hình thức nào? (Có thể chọn nhiều hơn một đáp án)

- a. Gửi con tới trường
- b. Đóng học phí (và các khoản phí khác) cho nhà trường
- c. Tham gia vào ban đại diện cha mẹ học sinh
- d. Tham gia vào các buổi họp phụ huynh
- e. Trao đổi với cô giáo về tình hình học tập và sinh hoạt của con (qua điện thoại, email, gặp trực tiếp lúc đưa đón con, v.v.)
- f. Viết sổ liên lạc giữa nhà trường và phụ huynh
- g. Tham gia vào các buổi dã ngoại cùng con do nhà trường tổ chức
- h. Tình nguyện tham gia vào các hoạt động trong lớp học của trẻ
- i. Giám sát các hoạt động của con ở trường và việc dạy của cô giáo

- j. Lập kế hoạch cùng nhà trường/ giám sát sự phát triển và/hoặc việc chi ngân sách của nhà trường
- k. Trao đổi với các phụ huynh khác về kế hoạch tổ chức sự kiện/ hoạt động hỗ trợ cho trẻ
- l. Khác: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Đối với những phụ huynh không gửi con tới trường mầm non, theo anh/chị lý do là gì?

.....

5. Anh/chị có nghĩ là những phụ huynh không gửi con đến trường cũng có thể đóng góp cho GDMN theo cách nào đó không? Tại sao?

a. Có. ....

b. Không. ....

**C. Các tổ chức quốc tế/ phi chính phủ (NGO)**

1. Quận/huyện có nhận được đóng góp/ can thiệp gì từ phía các tổ chức quốc tế/ NGO trong việc phát triển GDMN trên địa bàn không?

.....

2. Nếu có thì dưới những hình thức nào?

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#### **D. Câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá / lớp học thêm**

1. Các trường mầm non trong địa bàn quận/huyện của anh/chị có được phép tổ chức các lớp học hay câu lạc bộ ngoại khoá như Tiếng Anh, Nhạc, Hoạ, Thể thao, v.v. sau giờ học hay không?
  - a. Có
  - b. Không

2. Có văn bản nào cụ thể quy định về điều này không? Nếu có thì tên văn bản đó là gì?

.....

3. Trên địa bàn quận/huyện của anh/chị có tồn tại các trung tâm hoặc lớp dạy thêm tổ chức các ngoại khoá cho trẻ trong độ tuổi mầm non không?

a. Có

b. Không

4. Nếu có, Phòng GD-ĐT có can thiệp gì vào các lớp học thêm/ CLB ngoại khoá trong trường hoặc các trung tâm dạy thêm ở bên ngoài nhà trường không?

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.....

***Chân thành cảm ơn anh/chị đã dành thời gian hoàn thành bảng câu hỏi này!***