



Received: 21-03-2022

Accepted: 01-05-2022

## International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

### Professional standards, working conditions, and remuneration of the School Teachers of general education in Vietnam: The salient points of policy

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#### Abstract

This article provides an overview picture of up-to-date policies relevant to the school teachers of Vietnam. The findings reveal that they are not treated equitably in terms of salary paying and working conditions, both compared with other sectors' civil servants and required competencies as the new standards, criteria that these teaching staff should be met also, have currently been introduced by the governmental bodies. Based on the purpose of the national

education and current socio-economic context, together with findings from policy shortages, the school teachers' pay policies should be developed in two ways, which one is the current minimum wage and other competency-based incomes made by educational services they can offer, or develop a new living wage policy for these teachers in the context of Vietnam these days.

**Keywords:** General Education, School Teacher, Policy, A Living Wage, Remuneration

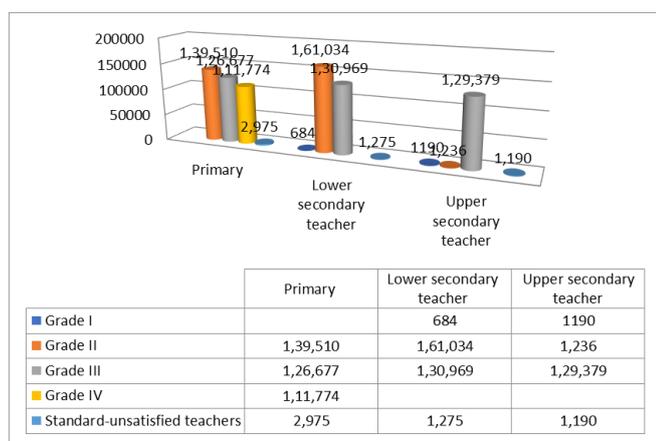
#### 1. Introduction

Teacher salary has never been buoyant and has been studied vary from country to country, that is the correlations between the teacher pay and relevant aspects to the teacher quality to meet "*A nation at risk*" (Dale Ballou, 1997) <sup>[7]</sup>, the fundamental link between teacher quality, compensation and student achievements (James H. Stronge, Christopher R. Gareis, 2006) <sup>[10]</sup>, how the framework standards will be used to school teachers' pay (UK, 2008) <sup>[15]</sup>, teacher salary and its impact on undergraduate student' thought of entering teaching career (Niblock., 2012) <sup>[12]</sup>, teaching does not offer a living wage or manage their living conditions (Daniel Moulthrop, Ninive Calegari, 2006) <sup>[8]</sup>, teacher incentives and career developments (Brandt., 1990) <sup>[5]</sup>, the performance management system must be fair to make performance-related pay effective (Peter Dolton, Steven McIntosh, 2003) <sup>[13]</sup>, low pay may result in poorly qualified teachers (Bank, 2010) <sup>[3]</sup> and teacher salary and incentives can be used to improve teacher quality (Alexander W. Wiseman, 2015) <sup>[1]</sup> and quite a few other studies.

Education, all over the world, is rapidly being integrated into each other, so does the Vietnam one that commonly associated with radically policy changes. The general school teachers in Vietnam now receive a national minimum wage and there are around tens (Binh, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup> kinds of allowances, but teaching still does not offer a living wage, whilst it is becoming a demanding job than ever by introduced constantly high standards, competency regulations. It is, therefore, necessary to see new school teacher' standards, their quantity and quality, what they have to do in terms of working conditions, the current salary and allowances before reaching some conclusions are mentioned in this article.

As the education law (Assembly, 2005) <sup>[2]</sup> of Vietnam, school teachers are persons that carry out teaching, educating at the primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools. As can be seen from the Graph 1 that by the school year of 2015-2016, the school teachers of Vietnam are divided into five main groups from grade I to grade IV and standard-unsatisfied, though the lower secondary teachers only are categorized as a grade IV. The number of teachers classified one into groups

from Grade I to grade IV graduated universities are by the most numbers of them approximately over 802.000 people, which mean these people whose college degrees and higher degrees, and about 110,000 graduated from secondary pedagogical schools only. They are adept in basic computer competency, and proficiency of a foreign language at the language framework adapted from European Union, (Cambridge University Press, 2013) [6]. From the graph it is clear that upper secondary teacher was the best staff with nearly 1200 people possessed the master degrees and PhD or Doctor Degrees, and just over 130,000 of teachers whose university degrees. Conversely, refresher training courses should be provided for about 5.500 teachers to meet the standards and these are working in the primary sector are close to threefold compared to the lower secondary teachers and upper secondary teachers.



Source: The Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam (MOET), 2016 [9]

**Graph 1:** The categories and numbers of occupational titles of public general education teachers

## 2. Methods

### The current policies on salary and incentives of the school teachers

#### Salary

1. Resolution No 204/2004/NĐ-CP, December 11, 2004, issued by the Prime Minister, regulating the salary system of the cadres, civil servants, office-holders and armed services
2. Resolution No 33/2009/NĐ-CP, April 06 2009, issued by the Prime Minister, regulating the minimum salary level.
3. The joint TTLT-BNV-BTC Circular No 03/2009, April 22, 2009, issued by Ministry of Home Affairs - the Ministry of Finance, guiding the minimum salary level from May 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 for the state organizations, political societies, social – political organizations and administrative agencies.
4. The joint TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV Circular No 21/2015, September 16, 2015, regulating the codes, professional title's standards of the public primary teachers.
5. The joint TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV Circular No 22/2015, September 16, 2015, regulating the codes, professional title's standards of the public lower secondary teachers.
6. The joint TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV Circular No 23/2015, September 16, 2015, regulating the codes, professional title's standards of the public upper secondary teachers.

#### The salary scale raising

1. The Circular No 03/2005/TT-BNV, May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, guiding the regular and earlier salary scale rising of the cadres, civil servants, office-holders.
2. The Circular No 83/2005/TT-BNV October 8, 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, guiding the changes, supplements to salary scale raising and other allowances to the cadres, civil servants, office-holders.

#### The salary changes

1. The joint TTLT-BNV-BTC Circular No 01/2005, May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs – the Ministry of Finance, guiding the changes from the old salary grade to new salary grade of the cadres, civil servants, office-holders.
2. The joint TTLT-BNV-BTC Circular No 81/2005, October 8, 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs – the Ministry of Finance, guiding the changes from the old salary grade to new salary grade of some scales of salaries of civil servants, office-holders as the new classification of people working in the sectors of irrigation, education and training, culture- information, health, and market control.
3. The joint TTLT-BNV-BTC Circular No 82/2005, August 10, 2005 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs – the Ministry of Finance with amendments and supplements to the joint Circular No 01/2005/TTLT-BNV-BTC, May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs – the Ministry of Finance, guiding the changes from the old salary grade to new salary grade of the cadres, civil servants, office-holders.
4. The Circular No 79/2005/TT-BNV August 10, 2005 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, guiding the salary changes and sorts of the cadres, civil servants, office-holders for transfer.
5. The Circular No 80/2005/TT-BNV, August 10, 2005 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, guiding the salary changes and sorts of the cadres, civil servants, office-holders who are Associates in Science/Arts suit the professionals that they have done.

#### Allowance

1. Decree No 52/2013/QĐ-TTg regulated the allowance for the seniority of teachers who have directly taught 5 years onwards (60 months); this takes effect even with the retired in the period of 2012 or being to retired between 1994 and 2011.
2. Resolution No 1580/2000/QĐ-BLĐTBXH, December 26, 2000 issued by the Minister of Ministry of Labor, War invalids and Social Affairs, regulating the provisional list of hard, hazardous and dangerous occupations and particularly hard, hazardous and dangerous occupations.
3. The joint TTLT-BNV-BTC Circular No 11/2005, May 11, 2005, issued by Ministry of Home Affairs - Ministry of Labor, War invalids and Social Affairs - the Ministry of Finance, guiding the regional allowance.
4. Resolution No 244/2005/QĐ-TTg October 06, 2005, issued by the Prime Minister, regulating the allowance to the teachers teaching at the public educational institutions.
5. Resolution No 127/2008/QĐ-TTg, September 15, 2008, issued by the Prime Minister, regulated the allowance to

- the cadres, civil servants, office-holders and armed services that have a low salary scale and difficult life.
6. Decree No 116/2010/NĐ-CP, 24 December 2010, regulating the allowance of with the carders, civil servants and office-holders in the especially economic difficult areas
  7. Decree No 54/2011/NĐ-CP, 4 July, 2011, recognizing seniority allowance of teachers.
  8. Decree No 19/2013/NĐ-CP, 23 February 2013, amended some articles of the Decree No. 61/2006/NĐ-CP, 20 June 2006 of the Government on the allowance of teachers and managers in the especially economic difficult areas and special schools.
  9. The Circular No 04/2005/TT-BNV, May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, regulating the seniority allowance that over the salary scale to the cadres, civil servants, office-holders
  10. The Circular No 05/2005/TT-BNV, May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, regulating the occupational allowance to the cadres, civil servants, office-holders
  11. The Circular No 09/2005/TT-BNV, May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, regulating the special allowance to the cadres, civil servants, office-holders and armed services
  12. The Circular No 07/2005/TT-BNV, May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, guiding the allowance to the hard, hazardous and dangerous occupations doing by the cadres, civil servants, office-holders.
  13. The joint TTLT-BNV-BLĐTBXH-BTC Circular No 10/2005 May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs - Ministry of Labor, War invalids and Social Affairs - the Ministry of Finance, guiding the allowance to attract high quality staff for education sector.
  14. The Circular No 02/2005/TT-BNV May 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, guiding the allowance to the leadership posts of the cadres, civil servants, office-holders.
  15. The joint TTLT-BGD&ĐT-BNV-BTC Circular No 01/2006, January 23, 2006 issued by the Ministry of Education and Training - Ministry of Home Affairs - the Ministry of Finance, guiding the Resolution No 244/2005/QĐ-TTg October 06 2005 issued by the Prime Minister, regulating the allowance to the teachers teaching at the public educational institutions.

### 3. Results and discussion

#### 3.1 Professional standards

##### Standard of training qualification

###### *Primary<sup>1</sup> school teachers.*

- Grade II (V.07.03.07): must have (1) pedagogical university degrees of primary education major; (2) the level 2 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No

<sup>1</sup> (Assessed 26 May 2017) The joint Circular No 21/2015/TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV (Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Internal Affairs) (issued 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015) regulating the code, criteria on the job place of the public primary education teacher, available from [http://www.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/chinhphu/hethongvanban?class\\_id=1&\\_page=11&mode=detail&document\\_id=182020](http://www.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/chinhphu/hethongvanban?class_id=1&_page=11&mode=detail&document_id=182020)

03/2014/TT-BTTTT (4) a certificate of primary teacher at the level II.

- Grade III (V.07.03.08): must have (1) pedagogical college degrees; (2) the level 2 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No 03/2014/TT-BTTTT
- Grade IV (V.07.03.09): must have (1) pedagogical secondary school diplomas; (2) the level 1 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No 03/2014/TT-BTTTT

###### *Lower<sup>2</sup> secondary teachers*

- Grade I (V.07.04.10): must have (1) pedagogical university degrees or suitable university degrees for teaching the subject to be taught; (2) the level 3 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No 03/2014/TT-BTTTT (4) and a certificate of further training for lower secondary teacher at the level I.
- Grade II (V.07.04.11): must have (1) pedagogical university degrees or pedagogical university degrees or suitable university degrees for teaching the subject to be taught; (2) the level 2 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No 03/2014/TT-BTTTT (4) and a certificate of further training for lower secondary teacher at the level II.
- Grade III (V.07.04.12): must have (1) pedagogical college degrees or pedagogical university degrees or suitable university degrees for teaching the subject to be taught; (2) the level 1 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No 03/2014/TT-BTTTT

###### *Upper<sup>3</sup> secondary teachers*

- Grade I (V.07.05.13): must have (1) pedagogical master degrees; a certificate of refresher training for those have not graduated from a pedagogical institutions; (2) the level 3 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No 03/2014/TT-BTTTT (4) and a certificate of further training for upper secondary teacher at the level I.

<sup>2</sup> (Assessed 26 May 2017) The joint circle N22/2015/ TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV, (Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Internal Affairs) (issued 16 September 2015) regulating the code, criteria on the job position of the public lower secondary education teacher. Available from [http://www.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/chinhphu/hethongvanban?class\\_id=1&\\_page=11&mode=detail&document\\_id=182018](http://www.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/chinhphu/hethongvanban?class_id=1&_page=11&mode=detail&document_id=182018).

<sup>3</sup> (Assessed 26 May 26, 2017) The Joint Circle No 23/2015/TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV (Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Internal Affairs) (issued 16 September 2015) regulating the code, criteria on the job position of the public upper secondary education teacher. Available from [http://vanban.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/chinhphu/hethongvanban?class\\_id=1&\\_page=1&mode=detail&document\\_id=181995](http://vanban.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/chinhphu/hethongvanban?class_id=1&_page=1&mode=detail&document_id=181995).

- Grade II (V.07.05.14): must have (1) pedagogical university degrees or suitable university degrees for teaching the subject to be taught, and a certificate of refresher training of upper secondary teacher for those have not graduated from a pedagogical institutions; (2) the level 2 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No 03/2014/TT-BTTTT (4) and a certificate of further training for upper secondary teacher at the level II.
- Grade III (V.07.04.15): must have (1) pedagogical university degrees or suitable university degrees for teaching the subject to be taught, and a certificate of refresher training of upper secondary teacher for those have not graduated from a pedagogical institutions; (2) the level 2 of foreign language regulated at the Circle No 01/2014/TT-BGDĐT; (3) meet the basic level of using information technology regulated at the Circle No 03/2014/TT-BTTTT (4) and a certificate of further training for upper secondary teacher at the level II.

### Standard of professional

The professional standard for primary and secondary school teachers is stipulated by Ministry of Education and Training. This standard is designed to help teachers self-evaluate their political quality, moral, lifestyle, professional capacity and used as a basis for annual assessment and ranking of teachers to serve for staff development planning, developing training plans and deployment of teachers. Professional standard is also used for other purposes such as development of training programs for teachers, research on and recommendation of policies and implementation of policies for teachers, provision of educational materials for educational management.

The policies on educational quality have been considerably improved recent years. The income of the general teachers, however, does not represent the roles of those who are in conducting the educational duties regarded in the many national policies as "the national policy", even it is not enough to manage the cost of living, and it. Conversely these policies, their influence requires teachers to make more efforts to their job.

"Relevant documents included detail standards and competencies that are necessary for .....teachers in (*Professional standards of the teacher of the lower secondary school and upper secondary school*) (enclosed with Circular No 30 /2009 /TT-BGDĐT dated 22 October 2009 by Minister of Education and Training), consists of 16 standards and 25 criteria), and teachers of kindergarten (Decision No 02/2008/QĐ-BGDĐT dated 22 January 2008 by Ministry of Education and Training regulated *Professional standards of the teacher of the kindergarten* reflected in the Article 5, Article 6 and Article 7 of this document.

The Ministry of Education and Training has jointly published the important circulars on new criteria that general school teachers must be met, those markedly are:

- The joint TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV Circular<sup>4</sup> No 21/2015 (Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Internal Affairs) (issued 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015) regulates the code, criteria on the job position of the *public*

*primary education* teacher.

- The joint TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV Circular<sup>5</sup> No 20/2015 (Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Internal Affairs) (issued 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015) regulates the code, criteria on the job position of the *public lower secondary education* teacher.
- The joint TTLT-BGDĐT-BNV Circular<sup>6</sup> No 23/2015 (Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Internal Affairs) (issued 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015) regulates the code, criteria on the job position of the *public upper secondary education* teacher...."(Thang, 2016)<sup>[14]</sup>

## 3.2 Working conditions

### 3.2.1 Working hours and distribution of duties

As the working regulation<sup>7</sup>, with 42 weeks in total, for the primary education' teachers, the secondary education' teachers (both in lower secondary education and upper secondary education) have to spend their 37 weeks on teaching and other educational activities regulated in the academic year, 3 weeks on learning and retraining for their further professional skills, and for the rest of two weeks (which one is to prepare for the new school year and the other is to summarize the academic year).

The holidays including: the summer, the lunar new year, between two semesters, more specific as follows:

- The summer holiday (regarded as annual leave) is two months, they get fully paid by month and other incentives (if any);
- The holidays of the lunar new year and between two semesters is implemented as the rules of the Minister of the Ministry of Education and Training;
- Other days off are legal holiday

With regard to the norms of teaching period of a week, the primary teacher has to teach 23 study periods, the lower secondary teacher instructs 19 classes and the upper secondary one manages 17 lessons. There is, however, some decrease for the teachers those who are teaching in the ethnic minority boarding schools, those teaching the disable pupils, and people holding concurrently other professional duties. Weekly, three lessons are reduced for head teachers in the primary education and for lower secondary and upper secondary' teachers are 4 periods.

For those recruited by labor contracts at the first time can be decreased two lessons per week, and the weekly teaching period of the people whose children are under 12 months can be reduced three lessons (teachers of lower secondary and upper secondary) and four lessons (primary teachers).

### 3.2.2 Teacher-student ratio and average class size

As the regulations of the student per class<sup>8</sup>, the primary is not over 35 pupils and both the levels of the secondary is not

<sup>5</sup>(Assessed 31 June 2016) available from [http://www.binhphuoc.gov.vn/3cms/upload/binhphuoc/File/2015/VB%20TW/22\\_2015\\_TTLT-BGDDT-BNV\\_292333.pdf](http://www.binhphuoc.gov.vn/3cms/upload/binhphuoc/File/2015/VB%20TW/22_2015_TTLT-BGDDT-BNV_292333.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>(Assessed 30 June 2016) available from [http://moj.gov.vn/vbpq/lists/vn%20bn%20php%20lut/view\\_detail.aspx?itemid=30682](http://moj.gov.vn/vbpq/lists/vn%20bn%20php%20lut/view_detail.aspx?itemid=30682)

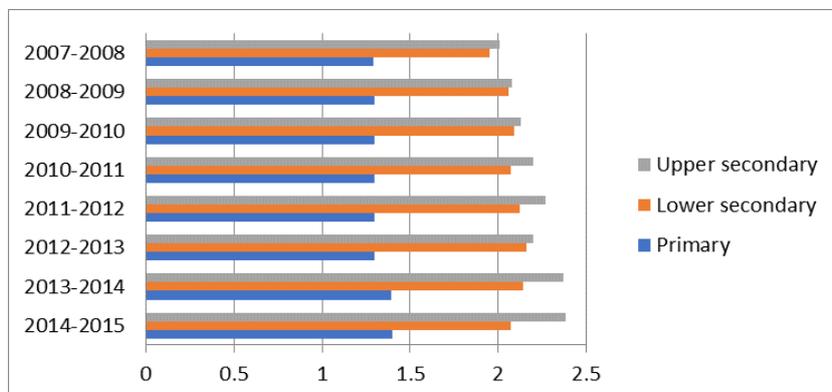
<sup>7</sup>Circular No 28/2009/TT-BGDĐT date 21<sup>st</sup> October 2009 issued the working regulations of the secondary teacher in three levels (primary education, lower secondary education and upper secondary education) is 42 weeks annually.

<sup>8</sup>Decision No04/2008-QĐ-BGDĐT, 04 February, 2008 regulating that for the primary level, the number of students of a class is limited to 30 (rural areas) and 35 (urban areas)

<sup>4</sup>(Assessed 31 June 2016) available from <http://moet.gov.vn/?page=6.9&view=987&opt=brpage>

over 45 students. And the ratios of teacher per class of the primary is 1.2 (a school works a half day- one session) or 1.5 (a school works a full day- two sessions), the rate is 1.9 for the lower secondary school and 2.25 is for upper secondary school. In fact, the ratios are different, 1.32 for the primary is higher than if it is compared to the rates

regulated to the school teaching a half day, but it is lower than full-day schools's rate. This rate of the lower secondary schools is quite high with 2.16 teachers per class, while the rate of upper secondary school seems to meet the needs with 2.2 (see the Graph 2)



Source: The Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam

Graph 2: Ratio of teacher per classroom (review)

The ratio of teacher/class is indifferent (Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences, 2016) [16] among areas of the nationwide. For the primary education, the Red River Delta has the highest rate approximately 1.5teacher/class (Department of Financial Management and Planning. MOET, 2016) [9]. The survey result of three provinces including Hanoi, Long An and Gia Lai showed 1.5; 1.52 and 1.2 respectively. With the lower secondary education, the lowest rate is Southern Delta with nearly 2 teachers/class, and the Cuu Long River Delta and Red River Delta have the same rate is 2.5 teacher/class (Department of Financial Management and Planning. MOET, 2016) [9]. For the three provinces Hanoi, Long An, and Gia Lai are 2.23; 2.0 and 2.12 respectively. With the upper education, the Cuu Long River Delta and Red River Delta experiences the highest rate about 2.5 teacher/class (Department of Financial Management and Planning. MOET, 2016) [9], and the three surveyed provinces' rates are between 2.12-2.23 teacher/class.

### 3.3 Salary and allowances

#### 3.3.1 Salary paying

The minimum wage and grades that people working in the civil service are getting implemented by the regulations of

the Decree No 204/2004/NĐ-CP issued 14 December 2004 and the Decree 47/NĐ-CP issued 24 April 2017 and other relevant Circulars. The minimum wage has increased, for example, from 730,000 VNĐ in May 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 to 1,300,000 VNĐ July 1<sup>st</sup> 2017. And the details relevant to the school teachers as follow: (see details in Table 1)

- *Pre-school teachers* include three types A1, A0 and B that classified into II, III and IV levels, the A1 has the salary grading from 2.34 to 4.98), the A0 is between 2.10 and 4.89, and the B is from 1.86 to 4.06.
- *Primary teachers* consist of three types A1, A0 and B that classified into II, III and IV levels, the salary grading of the A1 is from 2.34 to 4.98; the A0 is from 2.10 to 4.89 and the type B is between 1.86 and 4.06.
- *Lower-secondary school teachers* consist of three types type A2 (group A2.2), A1 and A0 that classified into I, II, III levels, the A2 is from 4.00 to 6.38; the A1 from 2.34 to 4.98 and the A0 is between 2.10 and 4.89.
- *Secondary school teacher* three types type A2 (group A2.1- the salary grading 4.40 to 6.78), A2 (group A2.2 - the salary grading between 4.00 and 6.38) and A1 (the salary grading from 2.34 to 4.98) that these types are classified into I, II, III levels.

Table 1: Ranks and grades of teacher's salary (in a classification scale of civil servants)

Code	School teacher	Kinds of office-holders	Grading												
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
15112	A senior upper secondary teacher	A2.2	4.00	4.34	4.68	5.02	5.36	5.70	6.04	6.38					
15113	A upper secondary teacher	A1	2.34	2.67	3.00	3.33	3.66	3.99	4.32	4.65	4.98				
15114	A primary teacher	B	1.86	2.06	2.26	2.46	2.66	2.86	3.06	3.26	3.46	3.66	3.86	4.06	
15115	A pre-school teacher	B	1.86	2.06	2.26	2.46	2.66	2.86	3.06	3.26	3.46	3.66	3.86	4.06	
15a201	A main lower secondary	A1	2.34	2.67	3.00	3.33	3.66	3.99	4.32	4.65	4.98				
15a202	A lower secondary	A0	2.10	2.41	2.72	3.03	3.34	3.65	3.96	4.27	4.58	4.89			
15a203	A senior primary teacher	A1	2.34	2.67	3.00	3.33	3.66	3.99	4.32	4.65	4.98				
15a204	A main primary teacher	A0	2.10	2.41	2.72	3.03	3.34	3.65	3.96	4.27	4.58	4.89			
15a205	A senior pre-school teacher	A1	2.34	2.67	3.00	3.33	3.66	3.99	4.32	4.65	4.98				
15a206	A main pre-school teacher	A0	2.10	2.41	2.72	3.03	3.34	3.65	3.96	4.27	4.58	4.89			
15c207	A standard-unsatisfied upper secondary teacher	A0	2.10	2.41	2.72	3.03	3.34	3.65	3.96	4.27	4.58	4.89			
15c208	A standard-unsatisfied lower secondary teacher	A0	2.10	2.41	2.72	3.03	3.34	3.65	3.96	4.27	4.58	4.89			
15c209	A standard-unsatisfied primary teacher	B	1.86	2.06	2.26	2.46	2.66	2.86	3.06	3.26	3.46	3.66	3.86	4.06	
15c210	A standard-unsatisfied pre-primary teacher	C1	1.65	1.83	2.01	2.19	2.37	2.55	2.73	2.91	3.09	3.27	3.45	3.63	

**Table 2:** The lowest and the highest grades of salary of the school teachers

Levels	Classification	1 grade	last grade	minimum	1 grade salary	last grade salary
Primary	II	2.34	4.98	1,300,000	3,042,000	6,474,000
	III	2.1	4.89	1,300,000	2,730,000	6,357,000
	IV	1.86	4.06	1,300,000	2,418,000	5,278,000
	I	4	6.38	1,300,000	5,200,000	8,294,000
Lower secondary	II	2.34	4.98	1,300,000	3,042,000	6,474,000
	III	2.1	4.89	1,300,000	2,730,000	6,357,000
	I	4.4	6.78	1,300,000	5,720,000	8,814,000
Upper secondary	II	4	6.38	1,300,000	5,200,000	8,294,000
	III	2.34	4.98	1,300,000	3,042,000	6,474,000

The payroll of teachers shows that their salary and other salary's incentives approximately from 3 million VND to 3.5 million VND. For the seniority, after 13 years, for example, is between 3 and 3.5 million VND per month, and after 25 year is about 4.1 to 4.7 million VND per month. Therefore, around 50% of teachers get salary that under the average. Based on the GDP/person is 1960 USD/year that equal to 42 million/year (data 2013) and that takes a teacher 13 years to get that the average. The allowance of with the educational sector cannot be counted to the retirement pension, causing the retirement pension is between 2.5 and 3 million/month. And the salary of new graduated teachers is neatly 2 million.

Teachers have to work (Binh, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup> from 60 to 70 hours per week that over the working time regulated 40 hours per week, and they have 10 different duties daily, their salary, however, meets the needs of the living standards is about 60 percent, especially in the urban areas that is one of the reasons why they give private lessons to get income as another way to make their livings.

As mentioned in Table 3, the average income of a teacher is lower than a worker in other sectors. A secondary school teacher's income, such as, is equal to half of the income of a banking staff or a pharmaceutical staff.

**Table 3:** The average income<sup>9</sup> of teachers in comparison to other professions in the other sectors within Vietnam

Sectors	The average income per month (million VND)	Sources
Mining, metallurgy	9.2	The Survey of Ministry of Labor – Invalids and Social Affairs - 2010
Banking	7.6	
Pharmaceuticals	7.0	
Electronics - telecommunications	5.5	
University teachers of Engineering Technology's sector	5.1	Report on "three published items" of 291 colleges and universities (Ministry of Education and Training, 2010)
Entrepreneurs operated based on the enterprise law	4.65	Report of Hanoi Department of Labor – Invalids and Social Affairs- 2011
State-owned enterprises	3.98	Report of Hanoi Department of Labor – Invalids and Social Affairs- 2011
General school teachers (primary, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)	3 ~ 3.5	(Binh, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup>

**Table 4:** Allowance for the general teachers<sup>10</sup>

Beneficiaries	Cities and delta areas	Mountainous, island, remote areas	Semi-boarding school	Boarding schools, gifted upper secondary schools, schools/classes for students with physical difficulty/handicap.	Working in extremely <sup>11</sup> socio-economic difficult regions.
Primary school teachers	35%	50%	50%	70%	70%
Lower secondary school teachers	30%	35%	50%	70%	70%
Upper secondary school teachers	30%	35%	50%	70%	70%

<sup>9</sup>(Assessed on 9 June 2017), available from <http://vnscsp.hnue.edu.vn/ban-tron-giao-duc/article/234.aspx>

<sup>10</sup>(Assessed on 9 June 2017) Decision No. 973/1997/QĐ-TTg on allowance for teachers working at public schools. Available from <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Lao-dong-Tien-luong/Quy-dinh-973-1997-QĐ-TTg-che-do-phu-cap-uu-dai-giao-vien-truc-tiep-giang-day-truong-cong-lap-44304.aspx>. and Decision No 244/2005/QĐ-TTg. Available from <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Lao-dong-Tien-luong/Quy-dinh-244-2005-QĐ-TTg-che-do-phu-cap-uu-dai-nha-giao-dang-truc-tiep-giang-day-co-so-giao-duc-cong-lap-4101.aspx>

<sup>11</sup>(Assessed on 9 June 2017) Decree No. 61/2006/NĐ-CP regulating the allowance policy on teachers and educational managers working in extremely socio-economic difficult regions. Available from <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Lao-dong-Tien-luong/Nghi-dinh-61-2006-ND-CP-chinh-sach-doi-voi-nha-giao-can-bo-quan-ly-giao-duc-cong-tac-o-truong-chuyen-biet-o-vung-co-dieu-kien-kinh-te-xa-hoi-kho-khan-12650.aspx>, And Decree No. 19/2013/NĐ-CP, available from [http://www.moj.gov.vn/vbpq/lists/vn%20bn%20php%20lut/view\\_detail.aspx?itemid=28290](http://www.moj.gov.vn/vbpq/lists/vn%20bn%20php%20lut/view_detail.aspx?itemid=28290)

### 3.3.2 Allowances

In addition to salary as civil servants, school teachers are entitled to the following allowances: Seniority allowance for long experienced teachers is equal to 5% of their current salary. From the next year onwards, added 1% per year to the seniority allowance. Encouraging allowance: Local teachers and education managers or those who are mobilized from other locations to work in extremely socio-economic difficult regions are entitled to encouraging allowance at the level equal to 70% of their current salary.

Different allowances help improve teachers' income and give to attract staff for education, at the same time, to narrow the shortage of teachers in special schools and

schools in the extremely socio-economic difficult regions. The financial incentive policies (Ministry of Education and Training, 2017) <sup>[11]</sup>, as the 42 reports from Ministries/Agencies and People's Committees of provinces and cities and field surveys conducted in two provinces (Hoa Binh, Cao Bang)

Teachers working in regions with particularly difficult socio-economic conditions shall enjoy general allowances and allowances for public employees, employees and laborers prescribed in the Government's Decree No. 61/2006 / ND- CP dated 20 June 2006, Decree No 116/2010 dated 24/12/2010 of the Government,

**Table 5:** Results of the incentive policies have implemented since 2006

No	Kinds of incentives	VND	USD (estimated)	beneficiaries
1.	study tours	722,248,000	31,058	6,762
2.	Job incentive	611,092,000	26,278	279,000
3.	Encouraging	51,304,000	2,206	349,166
4.	First moving to the difficult areas	66,706,000	2,868	21,942
5.	Seniority	31,363,000	1,349	205,802
6.	train tickets	26,974,000	1,160	31,688
7.	moving out of difficult socio-economic regions or retiring	9,814,000	422	858
8.	other studies	2,562,000	110	10,242
9.	Transportation of clean water	2,282,000	98	2,436
10.	teaching by ethnic minority languages or dialects	982000	42	670
	Total	1,525,327,000	65,591	908,566

Source: (Ministry of Education and Training, 2017) <sup>[11]</sup>

**Table 6:** For the special educational teachers

Kinds of incentives	VND	beneficiaries
1. Job incentive	363,493	87,014
2. Responsibilities	9,788	49,858
3. Study tours	10,659	7,628

2. The implementation of other policies stipulated in the Decree No. 61/2006 / ND-CP dated June 20, 2006

**Table 7:** allowances for school teachers regulated by Decree No. 19/2013 / ND-CP dated 23/02/2013 of the Government

Kinds of incentives	VND	beneficiaries
1) Encouraging	7,478	1,018
2) First arrival and moving out of difficult socio-economic regions	332,504	604

### 3.4 Achievements and shortcomings

#### Achievements

The current wage management and payment mechanism is implemented in the context of the subsidized bureaucracy is lost in the process by reducing the direct intervention by the State in terms of salary for agencies; moreover, the social security policy system forms the two main pillars of social insurance and health insurance, separating social insurance funds and health insurance from the state budget. And then the living standards of people with meritorious services, retirees and their families are greatly improved.

In general, salary policy has been effectively implemented since 2004; Regularly raising the minimum wage has contributed to increasing incomes, improving the living conditions of cadres, civil servants, employees, laborers in general and cadres, civil servants and workers in the education sector in particular. The salary system and its allowances have encouraged teachers and educational administrators to fulfill tasks, contributing more to the cause of education and training.

Efforts have been made to implement these policies, along with a number of other socio-economic development

policies, which have yielded significant achievements, contributing to a marked change in the face of the countryside, ethnic minority and mountainous areas. The material and spiritual life of ethnic minorities has been raised by pre-school, general education special position and roles in difficult areas.

- The incentive policies for teachers, educational administrators working in special difficulties areas are right, issued and actively carried out by the State and the local authorities, have encouraged, attracted and created conditions for those to work in mainly ethnic minority and mountainous areas. Its effectiveness gradually decreases the shortage of teachers which had been for years, contributing to the educational development in these areas.
- Decree No. 61/2006 / ND-CP dated June 20, 2006 has no more the limitations of the Government's Decree No. 35/2001 / ND-CP dated July 9, 2001 regulated incentive policies for teachers and educational managing staff working in special schools or in areas with particularly difficult socio-economic conditions, and these people

were only transferred by the certain authorities from better areas to.

- The Decree No. 19/2013 / ND-CP issued by the Government eliminated the limitations of policies for special schools in regions with socio-economic conditions. (Ethnic Minority Semi- Boarding Schools, Ethnic Minority Boarding Secondary Schools).

### Shortcomings

From 2004 to 2015, the government implemented the wage policy reforms, but mainly raised the minimum wage due to pressure of prices, that supplemented and expanded many allowances. Compared with the salary regime in 1993 (regarded as provisional provisions of the transition period), however, the salary policy, social insurance and the incentive scheme for people working in educational services have not considerably changed though over 90% of salaries and allowances paying of schools regularly allocated by state budget. Moreover, wages and benefits are unequal to the effective contributions by many dedicated teachers. Consequently, these then affect the quality of education.

There are some unequal (Binh, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup> issues of school teacher's salary policy. That is the payroll of primary teacher with three grades: teacher, main teacher and senior teacher, but in the lower secondary sector has no senior grade and the upper secondary field has no main grade. That is primary teacher has 12 grades, but the level among these grades is too small (equivalent to 0.2 time of the basic salary is approximately 166.000 VND), that there is no a teacher can reach the highest grade in their career. That is the senior grades, for the primary teacher is 9 grades and for the upper secondary teacher is 8 grades while for other ones are 6 grades only.

Financial allowances, are unaffordable the cost of living, heavily realised on the salary regulations. And the payment schedule is unappropriated because it is invariably carried out by the schools at the end of each semester or end of the school year. Moreover, incentives for visiting learning and refresher courses, for example, are not allocated for the real needs of each teacher but for unclear common activities.

In terms of salary scale, the Vietnamese teachers have not really been regarded as the highest level in the public administration. The civil staff of other sectors, such as, are classified into three groups including: senior – main and regular staff, but two groups only for school teachers are senior and regular. Another example is a senior teacher, who must finish their postgraduate, has the first grade of their salary is 4.0, while a main staff, whose a university degree, of other fields get their first grade is 4.4.

Allowances are relevant to the teaching in the public schools that are not used to social security and that make the teachers's retirement pension much more lower than the retirement pension of the retired in the army and police sector though they have the same period of work. Moreover, seniority and allowances of a teacher will be cut if he or she is promoted to the educational managers or school managers. These are main contradictions between the current policies and the practices that have not been solved.

Competency-based teacher assessments have proved positive and motivated for teachers keep performance well, but its results are not represent the real quality of the teaching staff, because teachers and managers are not fully aware of how effective these methods are, and lacking of

good guides with detailed and specific standards to implement. These reasons cause the teacher salary policy based on the regulations of seniority and even people teaching (40%) at the general education would not choose want to be a teacher (Binh, 2010) <sup>[4]</sup> if they had another chance.

In terms of practice, limits in the implement of the teacher salary policies in Vietnam are: (i) delay in the issuance of guidance on the implementation of policies for teachers; (ii) documentation system is missing, overlap, inconsistent and lack of details and feasibility; (iii) the implementation of teacher policies in provinces is not timely; (iv) education and teacher policies are not interesting to attract high quality staff for education sector.

More importantly, the bad influence of current salary policy is that it possibly leads some teachers turn to asking their students for private lessons to get funds that is now one of the main causes makes the school management more confused. And some others have to make extra jobs for their living that means they have to spend less time on teaching, it, then, could be resulted in the poor education quality.

### 4. Conclusions

It is impossible to exist the quality of educational system is beyond its teaching staff's quality and there is no quality teaching staff keep making dedicated contributions to the system that income is not enough to manage their life. Moreover, there is unequal pay regulated in the salary and other incentive policies to new policies on professional standards and workload that the teaching staff in the general educational sector has been required, some actions, therefore, that could be taken as follows:

Teachers should be empowered as much as possible to manage all what they have to do in the school, by doing so they will likely become creative, initiative and it can help them cut the working hours and administrative tasks and then they have more time for further learning or research.

Establish the Teacher Association whose functions to protect the rights, develop professional, socially criticise and advise teachers on the teaching policies. The payroll, salary scale and other relevant incentives of the teachers should be comprehensively studied in terms of teaching professional characteristics and carried out by competency-based performance and assessments, which based on the better standards and criterion issued by the Ministry of Education and Training and should be independently assessed and evaluated. It is not only secure that teacher income is regarded the same as other sectors, but it should be a motive to make teachers more professional and more contributing to their careers. Furthermore, many incentives should provide for pedagogical students or those who want to be a teacher.

To develop new living wage policies that should be based on (1) prices on the labor market of both in Vietnam and other countries, in the ASEAN region at least; (2) cost of living between urban and rural areas; (3) the common living conditions of the society; (4) the development tendencies of the Vietnam society and economics; (5) the cultural traditions; (6) the social pressures, political issues.

### 5. Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank Ms Mac Viet Ha and Dr. Trinh Thi Anh Hoa for helping provide with her relevant materials for this article.

## 6. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## 7. Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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