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MISMATCH BETWEEN TEACHER TRAINING AND REQUIREMENT POLICIES OF THE LABOUR MARKET IN VIETNAM

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With a booming economy, Vietnam is making significant progress, particularly in modernizing strategies to overhaul its education system, which is thought to be trailing behind those of other Southeast Asian countries. This study examines Vietnam's teacher training system as well as the country's labour market requirements policies in order to address the concerns and challenges that graduates may encounter today. In addition, a survey on Hanoi University's students who are pursuing a degree in teaching is presented to outline what teachers in-the-making really view the training process they receive. The final section of this essay suggests how soft skills, especially interpersonal skills are the key that most Vietnamese graduates lack to better the chance of finding jobs.

Keywords in English

teacher training, higher education, requirement policies, labour market, hanoi university

1. Introduction

1.1. Rationale

While Vietnam's economy is making significant progress, the labor force that fuels this success is still behind compared to its ASEAN neighbors. According to Trines (2017), each year about 1 million agricultural workers make the transfer to industry and services. The country's immediate goal is to increase access to higher education and vocational training.

The number of students enrolled in higher education increased from roughly 133,000 in 1987 to 2.12 million in 2015. However, in Vietnam, higher education graduates have a much higher unemployment rate than others. Between 70 and 80 percent of the unemployed are graduates of a junior college (3 years) or university (4-5 years) (Le, 2019). This suggests an education-labour market dilemma in this country: unemployment demands higher quality teachers and curriculum, but the teacher training process also lacks better trainers, which are so-called trainers of trainers.

1.1.1. Purpose of the study

This study investigates a mismatch between teacher training and labor market requirements, as well as what has been done so far to solve the issue. A survey of Hanoi University students currently enrolled in teacher training courses is presented to provide an overview of the situation during the epidemic as well as their expectation on the learning path.

1.2. Literature review

1.2.1 Higher education overview: A high degree of bureaucratic centralization education system

Since the first university - Quoc Tu Giam was established in the 11th century, higher education in Vietnam has made impressive progress. There are more than 400 higher education institutions in the country, including specialized colleges, teacher training colleges, public and private universities, and cooperatively run institutions that are entirely funded by tuition fees. (Clark, 2014)

According to the Higher Education Law of 2012, higher education in Vietnam is divided into the following categories:

- Colleges
- Universities, academies
- National universities, local universities
- Institutes of scientific research that are qualified for PhD training
- Universities with foreign investment

There are currently 4 levels of higher education, namely Associate degree (in colleges), Bachelor degree (in universities), Master degree and PhD degree.

- Associate degree: students with upper secondary education certificates shall study for 2 to 3 years, students with secondary vocational certificates take the same training disciplines for 1.5 to 2 years.
- Bachelor degree: students with upper secondary education certificates shall study from 4 to maximum 6 years depending on different disciplines.
- Master degree: students with Bachelor degrees shall study for 2 years.

- PhD degree: students with Bachelor degrees and Master's degrees shall study from 2 to 4 years for respectively.

The government utilizes a centrally approved quality assurance measure, which means that all of these higher education institutions (HEIs) at every level must follow and base their degrees on it. (Asian Development Bank, 2010) Previously, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) was in charge of most elements of schooling and education policy execution. However, in recent years, the government has loosened several regulations and intends to give HEIs greater autonomy. According to the Higher Education Law (2012), HEIs will have "autonomy" rights in terms of training, scientific research, organization, staff, funding, and international cooperation. HEIs can now set their own standards for extracurricular activities, courses, and admissions quotas.

Despite these developments, the World Education News Review (2017) has highlighted that the system still has a high degree of bureaucratic centralization, especially at Vietnam's privileged National Universities, which already have greater autonomy than other institutions since its founding in 1993.

Other issues confronting higher education include:

Table 1:

Year of publication	Authors	Title	Challenges	Solutions
2010	Gal Sheridan	Preparing the Higher Education Sector Development Project (HESDP): Viet Nam Higher Education Sector Analysis	i centrally appointed measure of quality ii low participation rate iii lack of qualified staff iv small postgraduate sector with limited resources (laboratories, libraries...) v limited funding in research	appropriate policies such as the HERA
2013	Lý Thị Trần, Simon Marginson, Hoàng Minh Đỗ, Quyên Thị Ngọc Đỗ, Trúc Thị Thanh Lê, Nhài Thị Nguyễn, Thảo Thị Phương Vũ, Thạch Ngọc Phạm and Hương Thị Lan Nguyễn	HIGHER EDUCATION IN VIETNAM: Flexibility, mobility and practicality in the global knowledge economy	i a lack of close relationships between institutions ii research institutes and the real world iii poor training quality and efficiency iv antiquated teaching and learning techniques v insufficient educational resources and inadequate resource management vi Institutional Autonomy and Accountability Issues	further strengthening of reforms in higher education at the national and institutional levels

2015	Nguyễn Văn Nhã, Vũ Ngọc Tú	Higher Education Reform in Vietnam : Current Situation , Challenges and Solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i the increasing demands of a growing economy iii finance iv training quality and efficiency v lack of healthy competition for HE development vi equity of access vii inappropriate training viii Vietnamese curricula fail to prepare young labourers, these workers often have to go through training for at least 6 to 12 months after being recruited (Nuffic Neso/Vietnam). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i make higher education align with the economic development of the country ii building high quality staff iii more R&D activities to improve training quality iv enhance quality assurance v combine research, training and producing vi develop international cooperation
2017	Stefan Trines	Education in Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i highly competitive entrance examinations to higher education i overcrowded universities and inadequate teacher to student ratios ii few graduates with doctoral degrees iii high degree of bureaucratic centralization iv struggling to find qualified instructors, especially those holding Ph.D. degrees v Lecturers are likely to be poorly paid 	The government has recently granted HEIs increased autonomy to determine their curricula and admissions quotas
2020	Dilip Parajuli, Dung Kieu Vo, Jamil Salmi, Nguyet Thi Anh Tran	Improving The Performance Of Higher Education In Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i unequal access ii skills gap iii old-fashion way of teaching iv low number of research output v a lack of e a single body responsible for tertiary education and research system vi low budget for research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i improve governance ii a new framework iii better quality assurance iv Increase Autonomy and Accountability v promote equity vi build research capacity vii more sustainable financing strategie

1.2.4 Teacher training in Vietnam

Ms. Nguyen Thu Thuy, acting director general of the MOET's Higher Education Department, stated in an online meeting with teacher training institutions in October 2021 that there are 56

universities that offer teacher training, including 14 pedagogy universities, 42 multidisciplinary universities with teacher training departments, 2 academies, 3 university branches, and 1 school under the management of Vietnam National University.

There are two types of teacher training in Vietnam (Nguyen et al, 2020):

- Pre-service training, often known as initial training, is a period of training in teacher-education institutes that varies in length depending on the level of education.

Pre-service teachers in Vietnam begin their education program as undergraduate students, completing four years of coursework and around ten weeks of student teaching practicum.

The coursework at education universities has three main parts:

- (i) general academic unit: includes subjects such as philosophy, foreign languages, educational psychology, and Vietnamese practice
- (ii) specialized academic unit: focuses on courses that train teachers to teach and develop students' abilities.
- (iii) pedagogical profession training: includes students' teaching experience both inside and outside of pedagogical universities.

The student-teaching practicum may be divided into two periods:

- (i) the first five-week practicum in third year
- (ii) the second five-week practicum in the final year of the course. This is the time to practice teaching in high school and micro teaching practice at pedagogical universities.

- In-Service Teacher Training is a period of training for current teachers to update them based on professional standards and to reinforce educational quality. According to the MOET's regulation (No. 17/2019/TT-BGDĐT, 2019), each teacher must complete 120 class hours (equal to 45 minutes) of in-service training per year.

Students at Hanoi University can choose between becoming an interpreter or a teacher after completing two years of general training (language skills, philosophy, foreign languages, educational psychology, and Vietnamese practice, among other things). If a student chooses the pedagogy learning path, they will spend the next two years taking specialized academic courses such as Introduction to Teaching, Teaching Methodology, Psychology in Language Learning and Teaching, Syllabus and Curriculum Design, Language Testing and Assessment,

and so on. Students will have an internship period throughout their last year to prepare for future work. (Hanoi University, 2020)

1.2.4 Teacher Requirement policies

Graduates must complete specific qualifications in order to become teachers at any level. The following table summarizes the most frequent teacher requirement policies in Vietnam, according to MOET's resolutions:

Table 2:

Type	Training System	Qualification Requirement	Universities that offer the qualification
Pre-school and elementary school teachers		- Professional secondary school diploma in teaching (Bằng Tốt nghiệp Trung học Sư phạm) - or a one-semester teacher training certificate (Chứng Chỉ Sư Phạm) with bachelor degree holders in other disciplines No. 11/2021/TT-BGDĐT	- Secondary teacher training schools - 49 education universities and colleges according to the MOET in 2019
Lower-secondary school teachers	12 school years + 3 college years	- Teaching diploma - or a one-semester teacher training certificate (Chứng Chỉ Sư Phạm) with bachelor degree holders in other disciplines No. 11/2021/TT-BGDĐT	- Pedagogical junior college (Cao đẳng Sư phạm) - 49 education universities and colleges according to the MOET in 2019
Upper-secondary teachers	12 schools years + 4 higher education years	- Bachelor's degree in education - or a one-semester teacher training certificate (Chứng Chỉ Sư Phạm) with	- Pedagogical university (trường đại học Sư phạm) - 49 education universities and colleges according to

		bachelor degree holders in other disciplines No. 11/2021/TT-BGDĐT	the MOET in 2019
University lecturers	12 school years + 4 higher education years + 2 post-graduate years	- Master's degree or above - Chứng Chỉ Bồi Dưỡng Chứng Danh Nghề Nghiệp (Professional Title Training Certificate) No. 40/2020/TT-BGDĐT, 2020	- Universities that are qualified to offer master courses - 49 education universities and colleges according to the MOET in 2019

The table shows that pre-service teacher preparation is the foundation for all future teachers, and that the process takes place mostly in higher education institutions, implying that this process of improving teacher's quality requires a lot of attention on higher education in order to improve teacher development.

2. Research methodology

- Instrument: There were 4 sets of statements on students' point of view on teacher training and requirements of the labour market as well as career development.

- Objectives: 149 students of Hanoi University who are/were enrolled in the teacher training courses of all departments.

- Research procedures: online Google form

3. Mismatch between teacher training and requirement policies of the labour market in Vietnam

Since the start of the "Đổi mới" plan in 1986, Vietnam has implemented a number of master plans, including the Higher Education Reform Agenda (HERA), the 2012 Higher Education Law, and the most recent Higher Education Strategy/Master Plan 2021–2030, all with the goal of advancing human capital development, increasing higher education enrollments, and modernizing education to meet the needs of a developing country in the time of globalization. (2017, Trines)

Although there are numerous institutions that provide teacher education programs, the curriculum and knowledge taught sometimes overlap due to the lack of a particular assignment for each university in the system. There is no link between educational universities and localities, as Nguyen Danh Nam wrote in 2020. To put it another way, there is no link between supply and demand, which means that the quality of teachers' output does not satisfy professional teacher standards.

Table 3: How students of Hanoi University rate their soft skills related to teaching from a range of score from 1 to 5

Soft skills related to teaching	Points				
	1	2	3	4	5
Communication skills	7	19	73	35	14
Group work skills	4	21	53	48	22
Language skills	5	16	59	56	12
Problem-solving skills	8	16	59	53	12
Emotional skills	7	27	48	44	22
Critical thinking	7	32	63	40	6
Planning skills	5	21	54	51	17

As can be seen, HANU students rate their soft skills which are related to teaching on average at 3 points, which puts them in the middle of the scale. There are also a lot of students who ranked themselves as 4, showing that HANU students tend to think highly of themselves in terms of soft skills.

According to the World Bank's skills and enterprise study (2019), 73 percent of selected Vietnamese businesses have trouble finding personnel with leadership and management skills, 54 percent with socio-emotional skills, and 68 percent with job-specific technical abilities. At the same time, Vietnamnet, a daily published by the Ministry of Information and Communications, reported that the number of unemployed workers with bachelor's degrees is four times higher than those with junior college or intermediate school diplomas.

(Vietnamnet, 2019) This points to a significant skills gap among employees. One of the most significant factors is the dearth of industry-based or work-based courses and internships in

higher education. This is also claimed by the MOET as the biggest weakness of the higher education system is claimed by MOET (2005b, p. 12): the incapacity to expand human resource capacity to satisfy the needs of industrialisation and modernisation. In the 2018 Competitiveness Index on the skills relevance of university graduates as indicated by employers in separate countries, the country was ranked in the lowest third of 140 countries (World Economic Forum 2018).

The skills gap, on the other hand, appears to be the outcome of several inconsistencies in teaching and learning that are now outmoded. Vietnam's education system is frequently not student-centered, and it continues to fall behind with the lecture style, which lacks much practical application and is still quite theoretical (Tran, 2013).

4. HANU students' take on the labour market, teacher education and career development

Table 4:

Statement	A	N	D
I have a picture of the overview of the pedagogical labour market in Vietnam	54	77	17
The soft skills I learned in university will be useful in my future pedagogical work	95	41	13
The knowledge in the curriculum is useful in future pedagogical work	105	34	10
I actually applied the knowledge and soft skills acquired to work related to teaching	57	69	22
The current bachelor's degree helps a lot in finding a job related to teaching in the future	56	77	15
I have to take more courses to become a teacher/lecturer	100	32	17
I have to take further studies after a degree to be a lecturer/teacher	103	36	10
I feel that I haven't had enough knowledge to be a teacher/lecturer	68	70	10
I feel that I haven't had enough soft skills to be a teacher/lecturer	68	63	17
I feel the labor market is very competitive and it's hard to find a good job	71	60	17

I feel that the covid epidemic has greatly affected the job search process	94	40	14
I feel that the salary of teacher/lecturer is not reasonable enough to me	64	62	23
I feel that the development path of a teaching career is not right for my future development goals	39	72	38

The table above provides a more detailed look into Hanoi University's perspective on teacher education and the labour market.

When asked if they had any knowledge of the labour market, more than half of the students (about 51.6 percent) said "neutral." The percentage of students that "Agree" is likewise high, at around 37%, demonstrating that when picking a major, students tend to have some beforehand understanding of what awaits them in the future.

More than 70% of all replies are "Agree" on the statement indicating that students find the knowledge gained at university useful. Only 63 percent of participants feel that skills obtained during their training are relevant for their teaching career path, which is a minor reduction. Students also have a positive perspective of their present bachelor's degree, but when questioned if the degree would help them find a suitable job or if they could utilize the knowledge and skills in their future profession, the majority of them remained "neutral."

The poll also looks into additional factors that could be preventing future teachers from extending their careers:

- To be a teacher/lecturer, the majority of responses (about 67 percent) indicate that students must attend extra courses or acquire postgraduate degrees (69 percent). This reflects the demands placed on teachers and lecturers in Vietnam, where all lecturers must hold a master's degree or higher before being allowed to work (**Table 2**). If a student wants to work as a lecturer, he or she must spend at least 2 years pursuing a master degree, meaning there would be a feeling of "lagging behind" compared to their other friends who are already joining the workforce.
- Students commonly believe that their soft skills and knowledge are insufficient for becoming a teacher or lecturer.
- The labor market is extremely competitive, and most participants believe it is difficult to get a good job. They also have fewer job opportunities, particularly during the covid epidemic.

- Students' decisions are also influenced by a good wage. 43% of the students polled believe the teacher's pay is insufficient for them.
- Students are unsure if working in pedagogy is the proper path for their personal development goals, with a large proportion (48 percent) remaining "neutral" and 26% of total replies indicating that this career path is not right for them.

Table 5:

Relevance level to future teaching career					
Subject name	Points				
	1	2	3	4	5
Psychology in Language Learning and Teaching	5	15	29	49	50
Teaching Methodology	3	9	34	29	73
Syllabus and Curriculum Design	3	7	34	42	62
Language Testing and Assessment	3	12	27	57	49
Introduction to Teaching	6	17	41	44	40

Subjects from their pedagogy orientation courses are likely to be applicable to a teaching career path for HANU students. Teaching Methodology, Syllabus and Curriculum Design, and Psychology in Language Learning and Teaching are the most relevant courses with the highest scores. When asked what skills they think might be more useful for effective teaching in the future, participants mentioned the following:

- Emotional skills
- Problem solving skills during class
- Generating students' motivation
- Teaching skills
- How to impart knowledge effectively
- Psychology in Language Learning and Teaching
- Technology skills
- Public speaking
- Syllabus and Curriculum Design

- Interaction skills
- Online teaching skills

It's also worth noting that, with online classes becoming more widespread, some students are eager to improve their online teaching and IT skills. According to HANU students, the following elements have an impact on online teaching:

Table 6:

Factors affecting online teaching/learning	
Platforms (Google Meet, Teams...)	2
Internet	27
Interaction in class	37
Students' motivation	43
Online teaching skills	37

Despite the fact that the government and universities have recommended various forms of online teaching and distance learning for years, few institutions, scholars, and students have expressed interest in these methods (Pham, 2020). The recent pandemic situation has acted as a catalyst for making online teaching and learning more likely, but there is still much to be done. For future teachers, how to motivate their students during online class is the most important factor, followed by interactions and online teaching skills (Table 6). As online teaching becomes more widespread, teachers must refresh their knowledge and abilities as quickly as possible to keep up with the changes.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Finally, in this study paper, we aimed to address the gap between teacher training and policy requirements, as well as the need for more immediate action on updating new skill-based curriculum. The findings suggest that students have challenges in pursuing a pedagogical career and struggle to refresh their skills in order to prepare for a future career. This study can shed light on how to remedy the mismatch by providing the current condition.

5.2 Recommendations

Because the survey was conducted on a small number of respondents (149 students) and under time restrictions, the results above are unlikely to be typical of all Hanoi University students. In addition, a questionnaire was used to perform the research. As a result, it isn't a very rigorous method of evaluating real-world issues in teacher education and the job market. The overall complete viewpoint is disconnected and incomplete due to managerial fragmentation. According to the Asean Development Bank, despite the fact that universities and colleges are obligated to submit annual reports to MOET, just a few of them did so. (The Asian Development Bank, 2010) As a result, more research is needed to develop a stronger curriculum centered on soft skills and people skills in order to improve higher education in general and teacher quality in particular.

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