QUALITY ASSURANCE CHALLENGES

A study of quality assurance in private secondary education in Vietnam

BY

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ABSTRACT

Due to the developing of the science and technology, education is fundamental for a country to develop human resource, talent resource and improve the knowledge of people. UNESCO extremely stress on the importance of the education which is the obviously human right for whole their life. Moreover, this right must be shown in the term of the quality (UNESCO, 2017). Especially in the context of the twenty-first century, globalization is a community oriented process for advancement, yet it is an effective procedure as far as ensuring national interests, particularly in developing nations like Viet Nam. The global monetary rivalry is turning out to be progressively wild and severe, well off nations are gradually generous thus of their upper hand in preparing the first HR and in examining and creating propelled innovation. ICT is utilized as a part of all zones of social life, and are gainful in instruction. The education framework is open; distance learning allows students to learn at any time, any place, at all levels and for all, which has turned into an exceptionally powerful answer to taking care of the expanding demand for instruction in the public arena (MOET, 2015).

Beside the global aspects, the primary mission for the school is to ensure the quality of the school to provide the good learning environment for students to develop. In the past, there are many researchers who proposed the theories and frameworks to help school in term of quality assurance. Among those theories and frameworks, the quality of the school life (QSL) framework should be noticing because students spend most of their time in the school so that the quality of the school life is a part of the quality assurance in the school. Vietnam is one of the countries which spend a lot of money on the education. However, the education system of Vietnam has been focusing on the student's performance for many years, especially in secondary education, not the quality of the student life. Within the scope of this thesis, the researcher aimed to identify issues related to the school life of secondary school students in Vietnamese private schools, to assess the current level of school life of the students and proposed recommendations for quality improvement to achieve the student satisfaction. To ensure this goal, the researcher used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, in which the survey is an important part. From the survey of students who have been studying at the school, the researcher collected the data using the QSL questionnaire to have the comparision with the previous studies about the quality of the student school life, which will contribute to the future research.

Based on the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, we clarified the positive quality of the school life in the secondary school in Vietnam. There are a positive relationships among the perception of teacher, the opportunity to learn, the perception of student status, and the student satisfaction and the quality of the student school life. However, there is no positive relationship between the gender and the quality of the school life. On the other word, the females and males perceive the quality of the school life equally. In comparision with public secondary school, we found out the differences among school type. In overall, the private secondary schools have more neutral and negative feedbacks than the public secondary schools due to the more autonomy in this school type. While the public schools focus more on the learning environment so that the pressure for the students in public school are high, the private schools focus more on the development environment so that the pressure and the competitive aspects are less. The students in private schools concern

about the tuition fee, the rector, the school policies, whereas the students in public school concern about the uniform, the competitors. There are also some negative issues in private secondary schools which are the teacher behaviours, school policies so that make student feel not good about school.

According to the results of quantitative and qualitative datas, the researcher proposed the recommendations to improve the quality of the school life to gain the student satisfaction based on the Deming Wheel.

Keywords: Quality assurance, Student satisfaction, quality of the school life

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

(QSL): The quality of the school life

(MOET): Ministry of Education Training

(DOET): (City) Department of Education and Training

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide the brief introduction about this study, which include of the overview about the topic, the definition of the problem, research objective, research methodology, sampling and data analysis method, and the structure of the study.

1.1. An Overview

In Vietnam, the quality aspects in the educational system is concerned by the government. Being one of the countries where the government spends a lot of money on education, especially national education, Vietnam regards education as one of the nation's top developmental aspects. Since independence, Vietnam has consistently implemented large and small educational reforms. The national education system is now largely influenced by the reforms in 1986, with four levels of primary education, including preschool, elementary, middle and secondary school. Of these four levels, secondary education is the most deserving of its kind. From 2013 onwards, Vietnam offers two separate exams, including a secondary school graduation exam in June with six subjects each year, and a university entrance examination in July every year, which made a high pressure for secondary school students. Since 2014, to reduce the pressure for secondary school students, the Ministry of Education and Training decided to have only one National Exam. However, the number of students attending this exam in Vietnam is always high, which can be shown in the Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2 below. This is the pressure for all secondary schools in the country to organize examinations because of a large number of students who participate.

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of students enter the National Exam	946,000	910,000	1,004,911	887,396	866,000

Table 1.1: Number of students enter the National Exam

Source: (Vietnamnet, 2017) (thptquocgia, 2016) (doisong&phapluat, 2015) (baomoi, 2014) (kenhtuyensinh, 2013)

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of students enter the National Exam in Hanoi	78,000	76,153	120,000	76,137	72,939

Table 1.2: Number of students enter the National Exam in Hanoi

Source: (Vietnamnet, 2017) (Vietnamnet, 2016) (doisong&phapluat, 2015) (baomoi, 2014) (Hanoimoi, 2013)

The problem for secondary education in Vietnam is not only in the final stage of exam preparation but also in the early stages to ensure the quality of education for students. In the new context, with the transition from a subsidized economy under France to a market economy, Vietnam's school system is no longer just public schools but has a system of private schools, bilingual schools, international school, boarding school. Particularly in Hanoi, the number of private schools accounted for 43% of the total number of secondary schools in the city. Every year, about 60-70% of the 10th-

grade students enter the public school, the rest of students will go to private schools. However, while public schools are always taken care of detailed schedules for each class, private schools have autonomy from the finance to the program, which can be different from the public schools. It is necessary for Vietnam to recognize the presence of a private school system with the quality that private schools offer to secondary school students studying in Vietnam to have an education that meets the country's development needs, and to reduce the pressure on the admission evaluation for public schools.

Previous studies have shown that many objects in the school may affect the quality of the school, specifically the classroom environment, programs, teachers, employees, parents, and students. This research will focus on student aspects because students are both customers and co-producers. Previous studies have discussed the student's view of educational quality in order to enhance the student's role in assessing school quality. Students can measure the effectiveness of teacher teaching, program (Kember, 2002) (Biggs, 2011) (Bagley, 2007). Therefore, collecting feedback from students not only to monitor but improve the quality of the school, which has been going on for a long time.

In this research, we will concentrate on the quality of student's school life from the student's perspective, which can be considered as a part of educational quality assurance. The quality of school life can be considered as a measure of student feedbacks, and their perceptions of the school where they are attending, which in turn can explain part of their learning goals by deciding to stay or leave school. This research will be practical in recognizing and evaluating the quality of private schools by measuring the quality of school life, especially, this research is valuable to managers in private schools, parents and students, educational researchers.

1.2. Problem Definition

In both public and private schools, ensuring that the quality of education meets academic goals is the aim of the school. However, the interest in the school life of students has not been paid attention to, because the Vietnam's education system also put a lot of pressures on student's academic achievement. In recent years, the number of private schools with new school models aimed at creating a distinct value for private schools from the Vietnamese education system is increasing. However, the quality of a school, which cannot be limited to scores, but also student satisfaction, student assessments, and school activities still has less attention. Previous studies about the quality of the school life in other developed countries have demonstrated that the quality of life of students contributes to improving the quality of the school.

The quality of the school life from the perspective of students has been studied from developed countries such as Canada, Australia, Hong Kong, not in developing countries. Therefore, when conducting this study, the researcher considered the relevance of the methodology to the Vietnamese context to determine the quality of life of the students and to build recommendations.

1.3. Research Objective

The objective of this study is to measure the quality of school life in Vietnamese private secondary schools, and the major issues that affect the quality of school life for students, why the students like or dislike their school life, and propose the recommendations to improve the quality assurance in schools.

1.4. Theoretical Framework

1.4.1. The quality of the school life scale

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the studies about QSL framework. There are four factors which can influence to the quality of the school life, which are following:

- (1) Perception of teachers
- (2) Opportunity to learn
- (3) Perception of student status
- (4) Student Satisfaction

However, because of the context of Vietnam so that some factors which are mentioned in the original QSL framework not include in this study, such as part-time job, science course. Moreover, other factors such as socioeconomic status of the student family, education of the parents, family structure have gone beyond the scope of this research to address causality relationship in this thesis.

1.4.2. The variables of the study

According to QSL framework, there are five major variables in this study, which are following:

- *Demographic background of students:* The characteristics of the first assumption include the gender characteristics of students, which may indirectly influence student learning motivation.
- *Perception of student status:* This variable relates to the self-awareness of the students to understand how the students engage in studying. The primary characteristics of the school are teaching and learning so that if the students who are more engaged in studying may enjoy their school life than others (Mok M. &, 1998).
- *Student satisfaction:* This variable focus on how well the students are satisfied or dissatisfied with the school
- *Perception of teacher:* This variable will relate to the relationship between teacher and student to create the learning environment at the school.
- *Opportunity to learn:* The more positive attitudes of the students toward the school, the more they can get in term of learning environment and the education program (Ainley J. , 1995).. This variable refers to the chance that the school delivers to the students in their educational program so that the student will place the school work to be supportive and effective for their developments.

1.4.3. Research Limitations

- QSL is a cross-sectional study, so that it is not easy to determine which variable is the reason, and which variable is the result, thus, QSL should be implemented in conjunction with a vertical research method so that researchers can find out the causes and the effect, or the relationship among variables in a larger scope.
- Assessments of students' potential and abilities are not included in this study. Because of ethical reasons, this study will select the factors carefully in the student academic's performance to analyse.
- This study does not include interviewing other stakeholders in the educational environment, such as teachers, staff, management.
- The sample size for this study is limited. Therefore, the study also has assumptions, which namely:
 - This survey was filled in by the typical students represent for the schools.
 - The feedback and evaluation of students are correct
- The results of this study may not generalizable to other (developing) countries.

1.5. Research Questions

1.5.1. The major research questions

The major questions for this study will be following:

1. In overall, how well do students evaluate quality of their school life?
2. According to QSL framework, which factor influences quality of their school life most? Which one has less impact?
3. In general, why do the students at the private secondary school like or dislike their school?
4. How to improve the quality of student's school life to increase the satisfaction to ensure the quality assurance at the private schools?

1.5.2. The minor research questions

In order to have the right answers for the major research questions, in this study, we define the minor research questions as the guideline which supporting the primary questions:

1. In general, is there a difference between the quality of student school life in private secondary school and in the public secondary school?
2. How well do the perception of teacher effect to the quality of the school life?
3. How well do the opportunity to learn effect to the quality of the school life?
4. How well do the perception of student status effect to the quality of the school life?
5. How well do the student satisfaction effect to the quality of the school life?
6. How well do the gender effect to the quality of the school life?
7. Based on the student's perspective, what are the strengths and the weaknesses of the private secondary school life?

1.6. Research Methodology

This research was conducted based on surveys and statistics to measure the quality of school life but did not cover social impact issues due to the scope of the study. Based on a statistical survey, the study describes the quality of school life through assessments of students who have been studying in private secondary schools. This study is a cross-sectional study because of the determinism moment during implementation.

To achieve this research goal, the researcher has implemented both quantitative and qualitative research methods to collect data. In the descriptive study, the questionnaire was a useful tool for collecting opinions of students following the QSL framework. This survey includes not only 37 measurement questions in 5 levels of the Linkert scale but also included a qualitative question to gather details of the student status and why students liked or disliked the field, which may affect to their learning purposes. The survey was designed in May 2017 and conducted in June 2017.

1.7. Sampling and Data Analysis Method

The study was conducted with five private secondary schools and five public secondary schools in Hanoi, and each school has about 50-60 students took part in the survey. Of the respondents, 46.9% of the genders were male, 53.1% of the sexes were female. The researcher asked for the permission from the Vice Directors of these schools before sending the survey to the students through their head teachers, class representatives. This survey is also spread out through the researcher's personal Facebook.

STATA software is used to analyse research data in this study. Specifically, we conduct Cronbach Alpha and regression of the subscales in the quality of school life framework. At the same time, the researcher also uses the qualitative data to support for the result in quantitative data, in order to identify key issues in the quality of life of secondary school students, thereby facilitating recommendations to improve.

1.8. Thesis Structure

This study consists of five chapters which will be as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

In this chapter, we will provide the overview about the research include of the research statement, the research objective, research questions, the theoretical framework, research methodology, limitation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

By listing the books, articles, reports, website which related to this research, we would like to provide a background for the issues studies in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter will focus on how the study will be conducted to explain why this study has proposed a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussions

This chapter discusses students' assessments of the quality of school life through analysing collected data by using Stata, which presents the findings of this study.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

This final chapter will summarize the findings, and propose recommendations for improving the quality of school life, and give implications for the future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality management in general and quality assurance in education is not new in the twenty-first century. Educators tend to try their best to provide a good education environment as well as improve the good educational system for students. Therefore, for everyone that works in the education field, it is necessary to understand the importance of quality management in education to provide the best education for children. Along with the development of society, it is possibly urgent for schools today to meet the total quality issues, process quality management in all activities of the school.

The main purpose of this chapter is to discuss about the different perspectives from different authors about the quality assurance to provide the overall about the literature in this research topic. Besides, we will discuss deeply about the theories and models in education which will be used in this research to find out the literature gap for the study.

2.1. Quality assurance

2.1.1. Educational quality definition

The word “quality” comes from the Latin word ‘qualis,’ which has the meaning is ‘what kind of.’ Because of no specific meaning for this word, there are many ways to define it in one way. Because of the using purpose in which industry and the person who define this word, the meaning of quality will be different (Taylor R. &, 2003). In business, quality can be the primary consideration in accomplishing aggressiveness. With the expanded globalization of business sectors and advancement of nearby economies, it has ended up essential for organizations everywhere throughout the world to create focused techniques. So that the quality management is the business methodology on consistent change, an association having enhanced its execution has increased its competitiveness in the commercial centre to the detriment of its rival (Farooq, 2007).

On the other hand, the meaning of quality in education seems to be a little bit different. The previous two decades have seen a developing exhibit of researches on quality management in education. There are different models and theories which are related to the educational quality topic defined the essential components in not only the local but also the global context. Cheng and Tam discussed the transfer of the management theories into the educational field. They clarified seven models which are the specification, the resource input, the goal and specification, the process, the satisfaction, the legitimacy and the absence of problems and the organizational learning as a reference to provide the understanding of the context of educational quality, and how to develop the strategies to achieve the goals (Cheng, 1997). Bogue clarified about the four standards of actions which are reviewing the concede and program to stress the rules of peer review, external criteria, the movement of the assessment and outcome to develop the evidence to the questions, the total quality management which concentrated on the continuous improvement and the customer satisfaction. Bogue argued that the supporting of value in schools must go past the reasonable and specialized duties which are suggested by these methodologies to address the right and good parts of value in joining the systemic and individual measurements of QA (Bogue, 1998) . The similar discussions are made by a few researchers in researching the significance of social context to class adequacy (Battistich, 1997) (Tinto, 1997) (Juvonen, 2007).

The other idea of educational quality is multifaceted and multi-dimensional as for the very conceptualization, appraisal, and estimation; subsequently hard to be surveyed through one viewpoint. (Sahney S. D., 2008). The main points of view set forth have for the most part been on the client desires and general fulfillment from the framework. Sahney has presumed that education foundations ought to satisfy the expectation of different partners, through the outline of a suitable structure containing a management framework, a technical and social system. Hence, the meaning of quality in education from a general viewpoint would mean including the quality of the input and output as well as the quality of procedures. In fact, the very concept would be different from the academic life (Sahney S. B., 2003).

Another researcher argued that the concept of the quality can start from the stakeholders' perspectives who can be government, the educational institution who manage the educational system, staffs, teachers, students, even the general public. Each of them can see the concept of quality in a different point of view. In this regard, the educational system can be such a negotiation between the various groups of people in the society, and the aim of the education and training research is struggling for the acceptance (Law, 2010). Also attempt to define the meaning of educational quality, Harvey and Green (1993) and further elaborated in Harvey and Knight (1996) analytical framework is worth noticing due to the relation in the concept of quality that they proposed. They argued that the quality can be described as six perspectives which are exceptional, of perfection, fitness for purpose, value for money, or transformation (Harvey, 1993) (Harvey L. a., 1996). Among those concepts, Harvey stated the idea of transformation which considers the quality as a process of change to add more value to students through their learning experiences more than others. Lomas also agrees with Harvey by indicating the fitness for purpose and transformation are the most two relevant definitions for the quality (Lomas, 2002).

2.1.2. Trends in quality assurance in education

Quality assurance (QA) is related to the processes which focus on the input, output and the procedure to maintain the quality of the educational system. In organizations, QA is typically implemented through checking and supervising (Chiaha, 2014). Through observing and supervision deficits during the teaching time, the potential problems which can influence the learning and teaching can be recognized and revised to improve before real issues result. The highest need of QA is to set the high objectives. Following the topic of QA, Cheng indicates there have been three waves of the comprehensive education reforms which based on the differences in theories of the adequate education so that the researchers propose various strategies to change the school and the education since the 1970s (Cheong Cheng, 2003). The first wave concentrated on the way to improve the internal performance of the school by improving the processes in learning and teaching methods to achieve not only the educational goals and plan but also the system level. As the result of this wave, there was a coming up with the teacher and student standards for the educational reform (Goertz, 2001) (Mahony, 2000) (Heller, 2001).

In the 1990s, the second wave brought the expectation of the public and stakeholders to emphasize the interface effectiveness in the school quality. The primary purpose of the effort was to ensure the quality of the school to either internal or the external stakeholders so that the schools were fulfilled by a lot of activities such as quality assurance, reviewing and monitoring the school, the involvement of the governance to ensure the interface. The discussions among educators were around how to improve the existing structure of the school at the various levels to satisfy the stakeholders' expectations (Cheng Y. a., 2000).

However, due to the rapid changing of the technology so it is doubtful about the effectiveness of the last two waves for the education field. The globalization stresses the importance of information technology so that it is necessary to have a new reform to shift the learning and teaching process into the new decade with the other performance in term of setting goals, contents, best practices, and management. The third wave of educational reforms addresses a future educational outcome with a new educational model that involves multiple contextualization of knowledge, globalization, localization, and personalization. Therefore, it has been various levels of learning such as lifelong learning, networking (Cheng Y. , 2000b) (Daun, 2001) (Burbules, 2000). Cheng argues that it depends on the country and the particular area so that each country may have the disadvantage in the history and the context, which lead to the improvement and the characteristics of the education reforms may be different. However, these three ways represented for the changing in the models and theories in education quality and the effectiveness of the school, and create the difference in strategic approaches towards quality assurance. Therefore, the educational reforms either need to make efforts to focus on the quality assurance or the future quality assurance to gain the purpose of quality education (Cheong Cheng, 2003).

2.1.3. Overview of Vietnam educational system

Since the independence in 1945 until now, Vietnam has carried out three educational reforms in 1950, 1956, 1979 and conducts ongoing educational reform since 1986 to date. Among these reforms, the most important reform was in 1986, which was the general reform in the whole country.

In the 1980s, the challenges for the MOET was providing the finance for the schools. Education was one of the fields in Vietnam at that time, lacking the resources. There was no finance for the school to run out; the school could not effort to pay for teacher's salaries, which came up with the numerous students and educators left the schools. Whole the quality and the size of the educational system in Vietnam reduced. To overcome these challenges, MOET tried endeavours to keep up, upgrade and create the national education framework, and to put accentuation on enhancing the material and otherworldly lives of instructors and instructive supervisors - those with an unequivocal part in accomplishing better educational quality and effectiveness. These actions led up to the educational system, which could be divided into five parts, included kindergartens, general education, vocational education, higher education and continuing education. For general education; there were some changes which consist of keeping on carrying out and making adjustments to educational program destinations and substance, course books, and training related observations. Due to such these sound effortless, the national education system in Vietnam got some achievements such as the

expansion of the size of the schools and the number of the students; more adults could have opportunities to participate classes (Nguyen, 2008). The average salary per capita has expanded consistently over the course of recent years, from 377 USD in 1997 to 650 USD in 2005, then to 823 USD in 2007 and 1,168 USD in 2010, then to roughly 1,900 USD in 2013. The advancement of science and innovation, the blast of the information economy and the improvement of the market economy oblige representatives to enhance their level consistently of training and overhaul their insight and data (WorldBank, 2017). In term of education, from 2001 to 2010, the net enrolment rates expanded significantly. Admission of 5-year-old children in kindergarten grown from 72 to 98 percent, primary education enrollment increased from 94 to 97 percent, basic secondary education increased from 70 to 85 percent and the secondary school changed from 33 to 50 percent (MOET, 2015). Until now, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has been trying to change some issues in the national education system, but it can not be a huge reforming.

Until 2017, the national education system in Vietnam has no change from 1986. At the first of the system, kindergartens are not compulsory for whole children. Because of the Children's Right in Vietnam, the kindergartens welcome the children who are from three months to 6 years old. The kindergartens are responsible for taking care of the children and providing the physical and emotional services as well. Secondly, general education consists of primary education and secondary education. September 5th is chosen to become the day to bring the children at the age of 6 to the primary school. There is no mark grading for the students in the primary school so that every student can complete the primary curriculum after five years. There is two level of the secondary education in Vietnam. Basic secondary education is for students from 12 to 15 years old, and the secondary education is for students from 16 – 18 years old. Because of no grading for primary students, all of them can enter the basic secondary education. However, this policy is not for secondary education. Secondary students can not enter the secondary education if they do not pass the entrance examination at the end of grade nine and grade twelve. The result of this examination includes four – year – result in basic secondary education plus two exams which are mathematic, literature or three-year-result in secondary education plus three exams which can be mathematic, literature, foreign language or physical, chemical, geography, history. The secondary education's selection depends on a particular province in Vietnam. In some big cities such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Da Nang, Hai Phong, this entrance examination seems to be more difficult than other small provinces.

According to WorldBank, Vietnam is one of the countries which government spends a numerous money on education (6.303%) (WorldBank, 2012). Vietnam seems to consider education is one of the top national aspects. However, the realistic shows some limitations besides the achievement that the country gains. Techniques for teaching for so long which don't fit the necessities for individuals. School viciousness has still happened; exercises of guides are uncontrolled; the circumstance of manhandling of accumulation, study, exams are still substantial; negative still exists, an expectation for everyday comforts of educators is still troublesome. Besides the managers to promote the role, dynamic capability, and creativity, there are those who try to gain illicit profits as regarded education as a common market such as the type of market "supply and demand," which is a highly dangerous activity. Because of various reasons, in Vietnam society today, most people do not see learning as

the application for knowledge. They consider the study to get qualified to pursue own interests their achievements disease, developed in quantity without focusing on quality, which has an impact on the process of teaching, learning, and assessment of student activities and educational management. Moreover, this is one of the reasons for the evaluation of education, especially regarding quality, do not reflect the nature of the education system in Vietnam (Phu Hop Mai, 2013).

2.1.4. Overview of Vietnam secondary education system

Despite the context of the country, PISA's result for secondary education of Vietnam seems to be surprised to other countries. OECD (PISA agencies and organizations) uses the results of the two test programs in Mathematics and Science capacity of students in the international scope, including many participating countries through several stages, to analyze and compare the correlation possible between the test results with economic factors - a society in each country. According to the list of proper sampling PISA 2015 survey, Vietnam has 188 schools which consist of vocational school, centers for continuing education, minorities boarding school, basic secondary school and secondary school with 5,826 students from throughout country participated in the survey. Accordingly, Vietnam ranked No. 8 in the field of science out of 72 countries participated in the assessment (OECD, 2016).

However, this result does not seem to provide enough information about the secondary education in Vietnam. First of all, the number of the schools which participated in the survey are too small. For big cities such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Hai Phong and Da Nang, the number of the schools are more than that, for instance, there are 220 secondary schools in Hanoi which are the capital of Vietnam (DOET, 2017). These larger cities have better facilities and teachers than any other mountain or delta provinces in the country. Moreover, Hanoi has mostly the top secondary schools in the country, the results-based on the assessment of these students might not reflect the reality of the secondary level in Vietnam. The second reason is lacking the participation of the private schools. At the national level, MOET is responsible for giving the educational strategies. MOET also has the right to manage the human resource of the education, the budget for educational activities, curriculum and quality control. It is only MOET can formulate the educational law and policies for the country under the direction of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Because of this kind of centralization management from MOET, it is possible for MOET to know what is going on in any class on any day at any hour in Vietnam, especially in public schools (London, 2011).

Nevertheless, this kind of control is not strong enough for private schools because private schools have independent finance, different curriculums which just keep general curriculum from MOET and add on extra subjects or totally different. Moreover, the number of the students that enter private schools are quite high. For instance, on June 2016, the Department of Education and Training Hanoi (DOET) held entrance examination to enter the 10th grade school year 2016 – 2017. There were 75,000 students took the test. In particular, students entering public schools were over 50,000. In particular, the fighting rate of public schools is quite high. For instance, Nguyen Van Cu secondary school has 460 targets for 2,700 registered, Tran Nhan Tong secondary school has 520 targets for 2,630 registered, Tran Hung Dao - Thanh Xuan secondary school has 480 for 4,000 registered. As a result, students who were not admitted in public schools tended to apply to 91 private secondary

schools (DOET, 2017). With the number of private schools accounting for 41.36% (91 out of 220), it seems to be a challenge for Vietnam, particularly in big cities like Hanoi is about how to manage the quality of private secondary schools.

2.1.5. Quality assurance in Vietnam secondary education

In November 2012, MOET issued Circular 42/2012 / TT-BGDDT regulating the quality of education standards, procedures and the cycle of accreditation of educational institutions. Accordingly, the primary objective is to help the general education authorities and institutions, implement self-assessment and external evaluation about organizing and managing schools, school managers, teachers, staff, and students, facilities and teaching equipment, relationship between school, family, and society, educational activities and educational results. Among those, MOET determines self-assessment is the process of examination and assessment by the educational institution to determine the quality, effectiveness of education, human resources, and physical facilities to meet the educational quality assessment standards. On the other hand, external evaluation is the assessment by the state management agency to determine the extent to which the educational quality evaluation criteria of the educational institution are met. This evaluation takes place annually according to MOET's schedule.

According to this Circular, in Article 9, Clause 5 on education and educational outcomes. The results of educational classification of students at schools should meet the educational objectives, namely the ratio of pupils rate "Average, Fairly", "Good", and "Excellent" in their final results. And the effectiveness of the school's educational performance is reflected in, the ratio of pupils attending classes, the percentage of pupils who have got "Good" or "Fairly" degree, and how many pupils participating in contests and exchanges organized or hosted by district level (districts, provincial towns or cities).

In addition to the public schools, in June 2013, Hanoi officially promulgated a regulation on the criteria for high-quality secondary education models, mainly focusing on student achievement scores. For instance, there are good students at the city and national level, 90% of students have "Good" and "Excellent" score in the final report, 100% of students pass the National Exam (GDVN, 2014). In general, because of the above objectives, the quality of secondary education in Vietnam is mostly based on student performance. As a result, student outcomes seem to have become one of the measures for the quality of school education that students attend.

2.2. Theories and Models

2.2.1. Quality from consumer's perspective

Quality is one of the major factors which make the consumer buy the product. Because of the high quality of this product and other products so that the consumer buy it. Deming who is the author and the consultant in the quality field states the importance of the role of consumer. He considers the consumer is the most important part of the product line that the quality should focus on the consumer's needs. The products are produced to satisfy the consumer's demand in this present and the future. It is not only one demand in the market; there are many demands with different

expectations. Therefore, it is necessary for the producers to know what is the needs of the consumers, what they want. If the producers can make a product which meets the consumer's demand, the consumers will pay for that product. Moreover, one way to get the consumer's perspective is considering the design process (Taylor R. &, 2003).

On the other hand, in term of consumer's perspective, Lengnick determines the consumers can lead to the changing in an organization, for instance, Fortune has 1000 firms, but a half of their employees work directly with the consumers to contact so that they can get the consumer's expectation. These actions seem to become a primary goal in some organizations. Plus, the demands of the consumers are always increasing in term of quality because of their knowledge about the products are raising. They would like to pay attention to the products in detailed. They have the experiences with the products at a time so that their requirement for the products can change. The organizations, so that need to adapt to fit themselves with the consumer's preferences changing (Lengnick-Hall, 1996).

Other argument states that the organizations can consider the consumer as a role of partners. Because this relationship is useful for the organizations to conceptualize the quality (Joyce, 1999). Another idea shows that we can divide into four roles for consumers which are resource, worker (or co-producer), buyer and user which require the increasing in the social network. Moreover, so that the organizations have to cross their boundaries (Matthias, 2003). The fifth role for the consumer can come from the human service field, in which the consumer can become the key outcome of the activities of the organizations. For instance, the patient 's health is the outcomes of the health care process. The increasing in student's knowledge and skills are the outcome of the education (Lengnick-Hall, 1996).

In summary, the prior research determines that the consumers not only receive what the organizations deliver but also influence in the operation process of the organizations. They are the consumers, but they are the co-worker as well.

2.2.2. Student's perspective and the school quality

Researchers discussed the students' view on the quality of school much in the past. Different researchers come from the different perspectives to emphasize the different areas of student achievement in schools, both academically and socially. Although there is a long tradition of evaluating the quality of education for students' academic performance, particularly in the efficient learning movement, some researchers evaluate the student confidence (Bagley, 2007) (Marsh, 1994), other prefer to study about their self-learning concepts (Marsh H. W., 1997) , or student perceptions of quality of life in schools (Johnson, 1993).

In fact, previous studies show that students can measure the effectiveness of teaching, which mean teacher's perception. Especially, by using feedback questionnaires, school can collect the data from the students about the reality in the classroom to improve the quality of teaching, the way that the staffs support students, other requirements such as facilities, tools that students need to study in their

class, and improve the quality of school monitoring as well (Kember, 2002) (Leckey, 2001) (Biggs, 2011).

However, other researchers argued that it could be better to evaluate and monitor the school's quality through student's experiences. These experiences could relate to the school programmes, and how do they feel as learners, which are better than focusing on their feedback about teaching quality (Wilson, 1997) (Lizzio, 2002) (Richardson, 2005). Apart from the student's experiences about programmes at school, there are other ideas state that the school quality can be seen by the total experiences that students get in the school time. These researchers believe that the amount of the time that students spend on their learning activities can show which activities were monitored well to support students' learning and development (Kuh, 2001).

On the other hand, Schreiner indicates that when the number of customers is increasing, there is a competition among schools to collect the feedback of the students to improve the school's quality (Schreiner, 2009). Therefore, the student's experiences in the school become the most important point for the quality process of the school. The schools start to collect the feedback from the student, how they are satisfied with the school so that the school managers can improve, keep and attract the student's satisfactions (Kane, 2008).

Even though there are some arguments among researchers, it is evident from the above literature that the student's perspective plays a significant role in the quality of the school. It depends on the purpose of using so that the criteria and the factor can be determined to collect the opinions, and feedback from students.

2.2.3. The quality of school life framework

The quality of life has played a role as an important and relevant concept for everyone, especially for children who are staying most of their time at school. The idea of the quality of life for children comes from several factors which are children themselves, their families, and the environment they live, school. Among these, school is the important aspect that provides the experience of theirs' life. Therefore, the quality of the school life can be the children's welfare in the life and the learning environment (Karatzias et al., 2001) and the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of children in school life (Epstein, 1976). Many authors have perceived the quality of school life as an important aspect of learning as it relates to student motivation and performance (Karatzias, 2001) (Flynn M. &, 2002) (Holcombe, 2010). The quality of school life can be determined as an assessment of students' reaction and how they feel toward the school, which link to the purpose of continuing to stay at the school.

The psychologists have fulfilled the most of the quality of the school life (QSL) in the past. Herzberg came up with the idea about the satisfaction in education and argued that the productivity is the emotional responses of the worker for their job (House, 1967). After that, other researchers applied this argument successfully in determining the relationship between the spirit of the student and the results that they get in their studying. In 1989, Schibeci discovered there was a connection between

the student's academic achievement in science and their attitudes in science at the school (Schibechi, 1989). Follow this research; other researchers found out the relationship between the academic result of the student in mathematics and reading and their behaviours towards learning (Bulcock, 1991) (Roberts, 1992) (Hurley, 1997) (Lee, 2011). Da Costa identified a negative relationship between teacher effectiveness and student attitudes. Despite, he proved the negative correlation between student attitudes and academic achievement in the school in this study as well. These relationships and the inconsistencies of some relationships in this research come up with the idea about the necessity of more assessment about the impact of the student reaction toward the schools (Da Costa, 1995). Among these studies, the Quality of School Life scale (QSL) which was created by Epstein should be noticing. QSL consist of 27 questionnaires. Each sub-section of QSL is based on a different dimension to the quality of school life. Satisfaction (SAT) is a common concern about welfare; Subscale Commitments (COM) related to learning behaviour and life plans; the subsection of globalization refers to the relationships among students. Separate subdivisions may be selected for specific research questions. After that, this model was developed by Williams and Batten at the Australian Council (Williams, 1981). After interviewing thousands of students from different schools in Victoria, they proposed a model of student opinion about the quality of school life, distinguished as a common sense of well-being and interpersonal emotion. The common areas of quality learning life have two subscales, namely:

1. *General satisfaction* - it measures common feelings about school (for example, my school is where I like to go every day).
2. *Negative Impact* - It measures negative personal reactions to the whole class (for example, my school is where I feel sad).

Both of these subjects are a measure of the overall well-being of students in the school. William also indicated five specific areas of student experience stemming from an educational theory developed by Mitchell and Spady (1978) (Williams, 1981), which include:

- *The relationship between teacher and student* - it refers to the full interaction between teacher and student (e.g., my school is where my teacher helps me do the best).
- *Social Inclusion* - It relates to a student's relationship with another person and his or her classmates (e.g., My school is where other students accept me as I am).
- *Opportunity* - it refers to belief in the appropriateness of learning (e.g., My school is where my education is important to me).
- *Achievement* - it refers to a sense of academic success (for example, my school is where I succeed as a student).
- *Adventure* - it relates to the meaning of self-reliance in learning and the sense that learning is enjoyable because of itself (e.g., my school is where I feel excited about the work we do).

Based on this framework, a school life questionnaire was developed by Ainley, Reed, and Miller in Victorian high schools (Ainley J. &, 1992). Their work shows that the student's view of the quality of school life relates to aspects of school organization and teacher satisfaction. This research was

continuing to develop by other researchers (Bourke S. , 1993) (Bourke S. &, 1992.) (Mo Ching Mok, 2002) (Karatzias A. P., 2001) (Cenkseven-Onder, 2009). In the later studies, researchers change the name of some factors, add more subscales so that the number of the questionnaires become 43, but the mainly framework is still maintained, which can be shown in the table below:

Williams, 1981	Bulcock, 1989	Bulcock, 1995
General affect	Schooling satisfaction	General satisfaction
Negative affect	Student dissatisfaction	Student dissatisfaction
Status	Student status	Student status
Identity	Identification with school	Opportunity to learn
Opportunity to learn	Usefulness of schooling	Perception of teacher
Perception of teachers	Opportunity to learn	
	Perception of teachers	

Table 2.1. The quality of the school life factors.

Source: (Bulcock N. P., 2012)

The scale has been utilized broadly with regards to Australia schools and other countries as well (Ainley J. , 1995) (Bourke S. &, 1995). In general, these studies support the appropriateness of scale. Also, scale validity was established using factorial analysis of the responses from 4,949 students (Flynn M. , 1993) (Mok, 1994), to identify different factors that confirm the constructs proposed by Williams and Batten. These factors, in turn, constitute a higher order element, understood as a measure of trust, called the quality of the school life (QSL), and the overall welfare level of the student at the school. In the beginning, QSL is designed for the secondary school students. However, there are some evidences to prove for the using at the secondary and lower levels are available (Bourke S. , 1993).

In fact, there are various tools to evaluate the quality of student life. However, mostly these studies do not cover all areas related to the quality of life in school (Murray-Harvey, 2010) (Weintraub, 2009) (Opdenakker, 2000). Moreover, most of the studies which related to the quality of school life are largely published in educational research materials. Because of this, school medical researchers may not be able to access them. In Finland, schools construct a system for storing health records of students in grades 4-12 as a tool for assessing the safety of students at school (Konu, 2006). This tool consists of 2 different versions. Version 1 contains 56 questions for elementary school, and Version 2 includes 80 secondary school items that focus on four areas: school conditions, social relationships, self-employment, and Student health. The school manages this record based on the web site, but this tool seems to be used for the purpose of evaluating and taking care of the health of students at school rather than studying the academic results of students at the school. Meanwhile, the quality of school life (QSL) is designed for students in secondary and primary schools in Australia do not have a simplified version for elementary students. That's the reason why by 2010, Murray-Harvey developed a Your Life questionnaire with 86 items focusing on five areas including supportive

relationships, stress relationships, adaptation to social and academic sentiment for students from grades 5 to grade 9 in Australia (Murray-Harvey, 2010).

In the Netherlands, Opdenakker & Van Damme (2000) built a welfare scale that included eight health-related indicators at school which is the social integration in the classroom, teacher relationships, Interest in learning activities, the attitude of the student to homework, the enthusiasm in the class, and the concept of academic self-study based on a previous measure of school happiness (Opdenakker, 2000) Also in 2010, Løhre, Lydersen, Vatten developed 49 Likert questions and open-ended questions to measure the level of academic success, the relationship between you and the teacher, and support in school. But do not care about the school environment (Løhre, 2010). The questionnaire was administered to 423 students in grades 1 through 10 in Norway and showed the reliability of the test. However, the structure of the device, internal consistency and validity are not officially verified. The QSL framework is a self-reported method developed in Israel to assess the perceptions of elementary school students about the quality of school life (Weintraub, 2009). QSL is a tool to evaluate all areas of student well-being, including the school environment, and brief that are convenient for using in a comprehensive survey of students. For these reasons, we indicate that QSL tools are the best way to measure the quality of school life in our study of secondary school students in Vietnam.

2.3. Literature gap

As mention in the previous session, Vietnam considers education as one of the most important aspects to develop the country. However, according to the criteria and factors which are shown in the quality assurance process in Vietnam secondary education seem to focus more on the facilities of the school, the policy and the right that students should have. The student aspects which relate to the student status, how the students are satisfied with the school or with the teachers seem to be less regard in Vietnam.

Moreover, Vietnam concentrates on the academic result of the students as the factor to measure a high-quality secondary school. Therefore, Vietnamese students can get a high score in the PISA test as a consequence of the educational system which regards the high-performance not what student's feelings. Among the current research papers, there are no document studies about the quality of life of high school students in Vietnam besides the great results. For this reason, within this research scope, we will concentrate on the quality of school life of the secondary level students in Vietnam that can contribute to provide an overall background of the secondary education in Vietnam.

2.4. Summary

In this chapter, we have presented articles, books and reports related to research to find literature gap. Research on quality assurance in education has been done in many previous studies, and QSL is also a proven method. More specifically on the research process, we will discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, we will present the problem definition, research objectives, research questions, theoretical frameworks, research limitations, how to get data and patterns, data analysis procedures in detail to provide accurate information about the research methodology.

3.1. Problem Definition

Studies in the previous chapter have shown that students can evaluate the quality of the school. School quality is also reflected in many factors, not just only students' grades. However, in Vietnam, the emphasis placed on scores leads to high student learning pressures to achieve good grades, especially in the secondary level. Many interviews conducted in Vietnam before the secondary school entrance examination have somewhat expressed the views of parents and students as they perceived the quality of secondary schools. For instance, "studying at a private secondary school is a shame," "only bad students have to go to the private secondary school," "high tuition fees in private sectors," "better quality in public schools", "must get a high score for public entry" (Dantri, 2017) (Vietnamnet, 2016) (Vietnamnet, 2017).

In fact, all aspects that parents and students wondered have some evidences. In the past, there is such a long time that people measure the school by using the academic achievement so that parents believe that if their children study in a school with high score in performance, they will have a good learning environment and good quality of the school life. In spite of the fact that schools can determine many different objectives to achieve, not only academic goal (Pang, 1999). In Hanoi, the entrance exam to secondary level is the toughest exam because the enrolment targets in public secondary schools only reach about 70% of the candidates in 2015, 60% of the candidates in 2016 (Newszing, 2016). The proportion of Vietnamese students who do not pass public entrance exams will probably increase as the population in this age group in Vietnam tends to grow (WorldBankData, 2017). However, the students and parents are eager to choose public schools because tuition fees are many times lower than private ones. According to DOET, tuition fees for public secondary pupils in urban areas in 2017 are 110,000 VND / month / student (about \$5), rural area is 55,000 VND / month / student (about \$2.15), the mountainous area is 14,000 VND / month / student (about \$0.54). Meanwhile, the tuition fees of private secondary schools are many times higher, ranging from 1,000,000 VND (\$45) / month / student to about 80,000,000 VND (\$3,600) (Giaoduc, 2017).

Besides, the general mentality of parents is looking forward to a good quality school, especially a top school for their children. Unfortunately, in Hanoi's top 30 secondary schools based on the result of the National exam, only two non-public schools are on the list, which creates pressure on public secondary schools to prepare admission work with a large number of applicants, and the entrance exam becomes the difficult one in comparison with the National exam (NDH, 2014). In contrast to the state of public schools, some private schools that have built long-term brand can accommodate enrolment enough or more; there are also some schools do not enrol enough students. For instance, in 2014, by the end of July, 68 out of 89 non-public secondary schools had not met the target of enrolment in grade 10 (40% of the total). In particular, many schools enrolled only 5-10 children,

equal to 10-20% of set targets. With the number of private secondary schools in Hanoi accounting for over 40%, the mechanism of financial autonomy, self-reliance on facilities, and the right to decide on program development, private secondary schools can have the competitive advantage to compete with public schools.

Rather than waiting for students to pass the entrance exam so that students who cannot enter public schools will choose private schools, private schools can create their value to encourage choice for students and parents. For example, making a new type of school like boarding school. In public schools, when students finish their classes at school, parents will have to pick them up every day, but for boarding schools, students study and live at school five days a week, all activities take place with support and orientation from the teacher. This model can save the time of picking up children and at the same time, ensure the safety of students. FPT secondary school has followed this model since its inception in 2013, and up to now, the school has good enrolment every year (Dantri, 2016). Or, private schools can focus on other aspects besides learning, such as in recent years, parents have begun to care about developing life skills for students (Dantri, 2016). As the education system in Vietnam focuses on only the scores, most of the time the students focus on learning, not having the time to develop individual skills. Some private schools have started to concentrate on this aspect such as Vinschool, Olympia school, Wellspring, Hanoi Academy, so even though these are new schools, the school still have enough enrolment.

Regarding tuition fees, in recent years, the GDP growth rate in Vietnam is rising (Tradingeconomics, 2017), the payment of tuition for private schools is possible. The reality in private secondary schools shows that students will still go to private schools, though little. These students can enter to the private school because if they cannot go to university, they can go to vocational training, but in Vietnam, if they cannot get into grade 10, there are no other gates open for them. Therefore, private schools are still a parent's choice for their children to complete the secondary level. But how to make parents choose, and students believe in schools because of quality, like the way parents and students massively enrol in public schools? The issue for private secondary schools may still focus on quality assurance.

3.2. Research Objective

As discussed in the previous literature, there are many different aspects in school may be included in the quality assurance issues. Based on studies by (Epstein, 1976) (Williams, 1981) (Ainley J. &, 1992) (Mo Ching Mok, 2002) (Bulcock N. P., 2012) we will focus only on the quality of the school life of students in private secondary schools, in comparison to public schools in Hanoi in this research. The objective of this study is to measure the quality of school life in Vietnamese private secondary schools, and the major issues that affect the quality of school life for students, why the students like or dislike their school life, and propose the recommendations to ensure the quality assurance in schools by focusing on Hanoi. Because Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam where has most of the schools with high score in the National Exam, and also Hanoi is one of the big cities which has a large number of students participate in the National Exam every year. The size of the QSL in this study can be helpful in researching potential values to evaluate and monitor the progress of individuals, groups,

classes, or extra-curricular programs beyond the school. Students' feedback on this issue can be helpful for many levels, if they are consultants, they can use this information to evaluate students. If they are school administrators or teachers, they can use this research to make large-scale assessments of the changing in the student's quality of the school life. When the quality of private schools has positive effects, enrolment pressure for public schools may decrease, and as a result, the testing pressure for the secondary level students will be less than at present.

3.3. Theoretical framework

3.3.1. The quality of the school life scale

Based on the studies of discussed above, there are five essential elements to implement (Ainley J. &, 1992) (Bourke S. , 1993) (Hurley, 1997) (Mo Ching Mok, 2002), namely:

- (1) Perception of teachers
- (2) Opportunity to learn
- (3) Perception of student status
- (4) General Satisfaction
- (5) Student Dissatisfaction

In the original version, Epstein combine factor 4 and 5 into 1 factor which is namely "Satisfaction with the school". (Bulcock N. P., 2012) proved that there is no different between choosing 4 or 5 factors, the result of the QSL framework will be similar. Therefore, we used the original framework with 4 factors which is created by Epstein. Four dimensions which will be used in this study are namely:

- (1) Perception of teachers
- (2) Opportunity to learn
- (3) Perception of student status
- (4) Student satisfaction

We used the questionnaires that were done in the previous studies for this research (Epstein, 1976) (Williams, 1981) (Hurley, 1997) (Mo Ching Mok, 2002). However, some factors in the QSL framework include the ethnicity, socioeconomic status of the student family, education of the parents, family structure, understanding of the school, teacher expectations, have gone beyond the scope of this research to address causality relationship in this thesis. Nevertheless, some aspects of part-time jobs are not suitable in Vietnam because Vietnamese students spend most of their time at school or study centre to study, not for working. Decree No. 102 of the Vietnamese Government states that there is no salary for students in secondary level to work. The companies cannot hire the students in secondary level because they will have to face with the children's right law. Therefore, those factors will not be proposed in the scope of this study.

Besides, we edited the Q28 (student's grade on the final report card) from A, B, C, D, F to 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, and less than 5 because we do not use letters for grading in school. We also added some questions to make the survey suitable with the context of Vietnamese education, which are Q18 (cheating),

Q19 (substance abuse), Q20 (safety) in Opportunity to learn part, and Q32 (timetable), Q33 (course organize), Q34 (change communication) in General Satisfaction part. We choose these topics because according to Decision No. 22/2013 / QD-UBND dated 25/6/2013 of Hanoi People's Committee, DOET has decided to tighten the management of extra classes in high schools. Therefore, managing the timetable and organizing the subject matter is a necessary issue in Vietnam secondary education to minimize the learning pressure for students. The number of exams is also reduced to help students have more time without learning (Bnews, 2016). Therefore, timetabling is a necessary element in measuring the quality of school life of Vietnamese students. Many previous studies also stated the relationship between cheating and the learning environment by using Likert scale (Schab, 1991) (Murdock, 2004) (Davis, 2011). We choose this factor also because, in Vietnam, if student cheats in school, he or she will be reprimanded, lower the score in the academic transcript. If cheating happens in the National Exam, students must go to jail. The process of this study will be shown in the figure 3.1 below:

Figure 3.1. The process of the study

3.3.2. The variables of the study

3.3.2.1. *Demographic background of students*

Gender of the student is the first variable of this study. Although the gender of students has no direct effect on the quality of their life at school, they may indirectly influence student motivation (Mok M. &, 1998).

3.3.2.2. *Perception of student status*

The primary characteristics of the school are teaching and learning so that if the students who are more engaged in studying may enjoy their school life than others (Mok M. &, 1998). In this study, the academic motivation can be measured by some dimensions which are namely:

- *Enjoy the school:* Students decide to stay in the school because they find the interest in the schoolwork, and they feel happy when they are in their school. This dimension can be determined by the Linkert scale items, for example: "I am very happy when I am in school.". If a student always feel that at school, it will be clarify that he or she has more learning motivation than other students who never feel that way. This dimension can also be determined by the open question, which is "How much do you like or dislike your school?". The student who enjoy the school will give the reason for he or she statement.
- *Learning purpose:* Students may decide to stay in the school due to the school work can be useful for he or she to pass the National Exam through the school's learning and teaching activities, he or she does everything best at school. This dimension can be comprised by the Likert scale items. The typical statement can be: "Your potential as a student". If the student always learns as much as he or she can, which mean they may find the useful in the school work, and they have the learning purpose to help them enjoy all stuffs at school.
- *No other choice:* This dimension can be found out when the student express their feeling about staying or dropping out of their school and Likert scale which can be "Describes the amount of times you think about dropping out of school". A student feels that he or she does not belong to the school means that this is not the best option for he or she to study. There may be another reason for him or her to choose this school, which can be express in the open question also.

3.3.2.3. Student satisfaction

Based on the Likert scale from 1 to 5, these variables will help us to understand how well the students are satisfied or dissatisfied with the school, namely:

- *Academic satisfaction:* This relates that the students evaluate the school at the good place for developing their academic abilities, which includes of the teaching methods to deliver the courses, the variety of the subjects, the variety of the activities. If the student satisfied with those items, it can indicate that their expectations meet the school goals in term of academic. These items are measured by the Likert scale, for instance: "I am satisfied with the methods used to teach the course material".
- *Timetable satisfactions:* These items will measure the efficiency of the arranging of the curriculum. If the student satisfies with the timetable of the school, it means that he or she feels the meaning of the timetable that the school deliver to the student. The timetable is good enough for he or she to gain the educational goals. The typical item can be assessed by Likert scale, which is: "Timetable works productively for me".
- *Communication satisfaction:* This item will dedicate how well the school communicate with the students when they have some changes, which is important to make the learning and teaching process go smoothly to gain the student's goals. If the student satisfaction with this item, it means that he or she may not face with any trouble in understanding the changing of the school in teaching action. An example for this item is: "Any changing announcement in the courses or instructing have been conveyed effectively".

- *Facilities satisfactions:* These items will measure the effectiveness of the facilities to the students. A typical example can be: “The teacher often asks us to find information by using computers”. If the student satisfies with the supporting, it means the schools provide good facilities that are suitable for student in the learning environment to support studying at school.
- *Proud of the school:* In overall, if the student find their expectations are satisfied by the school development, they may be proud of being a part of the school. Thus, student’s proudness about their schools is also measured with a Likert scale.

3.3.2.4. *Perception of teacher*

Teacher is an important factor for the learning and teaching process in the school. This dimension relates to the relationship between teacher and student to create the learning environment at the school, which will be measured by the Likert scale items. An example of the scale can be: “My teachers explain assignments clearly”. If the students feel the safety whenever they make a question or ask for a help from their teachers during the school time, which means that students are staying in a good learning environment.

3.3.2.5. *The opportunity to learn*

Ainley stresses the importance of the positive attitudes of the students toward the school in term of learning environment and the education program (Ainley J. , 1995). This dimension refers to the chance that the school delivers to the students in their educational program so that the student will place the school work to be supportive and effective for their developments. This subscale can be measure by Likert items, which can be: “The teacher often gives suggestions to students’ progress in learning”. This dimension also measure the involvement of students in their school life such as students play a role in planning the school activity, they can have more choice on finishing their stuffs not only the assignment but the project. Moreover, if the schools provide a great chance for students to learn, they will place themselves as belonging to their school.

3.4. Research Questions

3.4.1. *The major research questions*

The major questions for this study will be following:

1. In overall, how well do students evaluate quality of their school life?
2. According to QSL framework, which factor influences quality of their school life most? Which one has less impact?
3. In general, why do the students at the private secondary school like or dislike their school?
4. How to improve the quality of student’s school life to increase the satisfaction to ensure the quality assurance at the private schools?

3.4.2. *The minor research questions*

In order to have the right answers for the major research questions, in this study, we define the minor research questions as the guideline which supporting the primary questions:

1. In general, is there a difference between the quality of student school life in private secondary school and in the public secondary school?
2. How well do the perception of teacher effect to the quality of the school life?
3. How well do the opportunity to learn effect to the quality of the school life?
4. How well do the perception of student status effect to the quality of the school life?
5. How well do the student satisfaction effect to the quality of the school life?
6. How well do the gender effect to the quality of the school life?
7. Based on the student's perspective, what are the strengths and the weaknesses of the private secondary school life?

3.4.3. Research Hypothesis

Based on the QSL framework which was developed by (Epstein, 1976) (Mo Ching Mok, 2002) (Bulcock N. P., 2012), and the research question, the conceptual framework which lead this study can be shown in the Figure 3.2. In other research, the researcher can also measure the affects may have among each factor. In this scope of this study, we concentrate on the simplified QSL framework.

Figure 3.2. The simplified QSL framework (Epstein, 1976)

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between the perception of teacher and the quality of the school life;

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between the opportunity to learn and the quality of the school life;

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between the perception of student status and the quality of the school life;

Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between the student satisfaction and the quality of the school life;

Hypothesis 5: There is a positive relationship between the gender and the quality of the school life.

3.5. Research Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that QSL is a cross-sectional study, so that it is not easy to determine which variable is the reason, and which variable is the result. One could argue that students may have had great interactions with their families, schools, and societies, so the quality of life of students at the school could be the result or effect of previous achievements. One may argue that perception of students may influence the perception of the teacher, and the perception of student can affect to the perception of the teacher as well. Therefore, in a larger scope, QSL should be implemented in conjunction with a vertical research method so that researchers can find out the causes and the effect, or the relationship among variables.

Nevertheless, assessments of students' potential and abilities are not included in this study. Someone may argue that secondary school alumni that got the high score on the National Exam and their academic transcripts may have better relationships with teachers and have better views of life than those with low scores. However, for ethical reasons, this study will select the factors carefully in the student academic's performance to analyse.

This study is based on the student's assessment through Google Form, without interviewing and including other stakeholders in the educational environment, such as teachers, staff, management. Besides, the sample size for this study is limited. Therefore, the study also has assumptions; firstly, the students who fill in this survey are the typical students represent for the schools. Secondly, the feedback and evaluation of students are correct and genuine. Thirdly, all schools in the scope of this study have enough economic and human's capacities and desires to make quality improvements, so that it is necessary to propose recommendations.

Finally, due to the cultural, economic, social and political differences, the results of this study may not be correct when applying to the reality of another country.

3.6. Research Methodology

3.6.1. Research Type

This study was conducted by using QSL framework, in which, the factors that could affect the quality of life at the student's school were pre-determined. This study can be viewed as a descriptive analysis of the quality of the school life through students' perspective. To carry out this study, theoretical materials related to the quality of the school life, quality assurance, student satisfaction, and relevant questionnaires in previous studies were considered to develop a survey for this study to collect data and propose the recommendations for schools.

In the past, QSL has been endorsed and can be implemented on a large scale so that this study may be positivistic as well as explanatory, although not measure all issues related to the quality of school life. Conducting a survey for the student is the way that this research uses to clarify the research question. Besides, the study uses the secondary data to support the data which is collected from the survey to describe and explain the way students view the quality of life in private schools. The survey questionnaire of this study was developed in May 2017 and was implemented in early June 2017.

3.6.2. Research Design and Process

We use quantitative and qualitative research methods in this study. The purpose of the questionnaire is to collect information about the factors that affect the quality of the school life from the student's perspective. Therefore, when designing surveys, we have a plan that includes both qualitative and quantitative questions.

The original version of the questionnaires was intended to follow the prototype of previous QSL studies. After that, the researcher sent this version to 10 managers in 10 schools which in the scope of the study to ask for comments on the relevance of the survey to the context of the secondary schools in Vietnam. The final version of the 38 questionnaires eliminated irrelevant factors such as science courses and the part-time job to fit the respondent's context better. Besides, the study included further questions about the scores of graduate students at the school, and their graduation year to clarify the student status of the survey further. Surveyors include students in grades 10-12, and students who have graduated from those high schools, all of them participate voluntarily.

The survey was written in Vietnamese and English to provide the best possible condition for participants to take part in the study. Besides, participants in the study are encouraged to give individual opinions about the quality of the school life and explain why they love or don't love the school. The personal pieces of information of the survey participants are not mentioned to facilitate their sharing of information.

3.6.3. Research Framework

The research framework for this study is based on the QSL, which can be shown as following:

Figure 3.3. The research framework

3.6.4. Data Collection Instrument and Source

The data in this study is collected through the Google Online Form in early June 2017. For data collection, the researcher contacted the Vice Director of those schools, the head teachers of the class, class representative by phone, skype and email to ask permission for sending the survey via Facebook, and email. Some participants in the study may be random, voluntary because the researcher also shared the questionnaire on the personal Facebook.

The total number of respondents received for the study was 523. Participants were students from 10 secondary schools in Hanoi, including five public and five private schools, each school with an average of 50 -60 students conduct the survey. We selected ten high schools within this study in pairs to compare based on the existing top 100 best secondary schools in Hanoi. In particular, we chose a pair of schools in the top 10, two pairs in top 40, one pair in top 70, the last couple has one in a top 10 and one not in the existing list (NDH, 2014). On average, this survey takes 10-15 minutes to complete. Before carrying out the study, we stressed the student's attention to the truthfulness of the survey, encouraged them to give their personal opinion, and make sure not to disclose personal information. The purpose of the study was to understand the quality of the school life, not for the purpose of individually evaluating the quality of the school life in a single school.

3.6.5. Sampling Methods

These respondents consisted of 523 students from 10 schools in the study area. Of the respondents, 46.9% of the sexes were male, 53.1% of the genders were female. 67.5% of the students in this

survey were students who had attended the school and almost graduated in 2016. Of the remaining 32.5%, 50.3% were 12th-grade students, 31.9% were 11th-grade students, 17.8% were 10th-grade students. There is no international school among ten schools, so students who took part in the survey are Vietnamese students only.

3.6.6. Data Analysis Methods

The data analysis of research includes two phases. In phase 1, the researcher will perform regression analysis of the quality of school life. Regression is a test of the research model after running a series of Cronbach's Alpha, and Correlations analyses to select independent variables that satisfy the regression requirement (Draper, 2014) (Montgomery, 2015). We use regression to determine the specific weight of each independent factor influencing the dependency from which the regression equation is derived, according to the purpose of the paper. From there, we define the impact of each independent factor on the dependent factor. In the second stage, the researcher will use the qualitative data to support for the result of quantitative data. All the quantitative data in this study was done using Stata software.

3.7. Ethical consideration

One may argue that using scores to clarify a student's condition and the difference in judgment of high-score students with low-scoring students is a moral offense. That is why, despite the collection of student scores, we have not mentioned this issue.

We also do not disclose the particular identity of each school result in the research results nor disclose the personal information of the persons participating in the study to ensure that the research results will not affect the number of enrolment in the next school year, which is related to the school's profitability issue.

3.8. Summary

In this chapter, we have presented the research problem within the framework of theoretical and methodological research. This study focuses primarily on student assessments of the quality of the school life to improve. To accomplish research purposes, we combine quantitative and qualitative methods in QSL framework to implement in the research survey. In analysing data, we have identified key issues that affect the quality of the school life which will be discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings as we analyse the data from the survey. The discussion in this section consisted of two parts from quantitative data and qualitative data, which can help us to propose the current quality of the school life and clarify the main issues in the private secondary schools.

4.1. Quantitative Data findings and discussions

4.1.1. Demographic of Responses

There were 523 responses collected for this survey, of which 46.9% of participants were male, 53.1% of survey participants were female. Figure 4.1 can show the gender profile of the respondents:

Figure 4.1. Gender profile of the respondents

More than a half of students who participated in this survey are 19-year-olds (62.33%), joined the National Examination in 2016. They are now first-year undergraduates so that these students have more experience than those who have not yet taken the National Exam. They also have learning experience in university to compare with their high school environment. 17.78% of the participants are current 12th-grade students (18 years), participated in the National Exam in June 2017 and will get the results in July 2017. The 17-year-old students have two years of school experience is 11.28%. The number of 16-year-old students who are freshmen at the school for one year accounts for 5.74%. The rest is former students, over 19 years old, accounting for 2.87%. Figure 4.2 below can show the detailed percentage for per age.

Figure 4.2. The percentage for per age

The percentage of responses for each school can be shown in the Figure 4.3 below:

Figure 4.3. The percentage of responses per school

There are 270 private school students and 253 public school students participate in this study. According to the data collected, there are much error data (unfilled information, wrong information) from public school 4 (PLS4) so that we removed this school quantitative data analysis. However, we keep the comments that students in this school wrote in the qualitative analysis because of the personality in the comments are clear, no signs of copying comments. Therefore, the total number of samples collected for the study was 463.

4.1.2. Reliability

We do not measure Cronbach Alpha for question # 38 because it is qualitative data, and item number 28 regarding student GPA is not a Likert scale 5 points. Gliem proved that for Linkert scale, Cronbach's alpha should be at least .7 to be acceptable (Gliem, 2003). The internal reliability of the data in this study is below:

No	Items	Cronbach Alpha
1	Perception of teacher	0.7604
2	Opportunity to learn	0.8555
3	Perception of student	0.7570
4	Student satisfaction	0.8633

Table 4.1. The internal reliability of the data

The results of Cronbach Alpha from Table 4.1 show that all the subscales in each research dimensions (perception of teacher, opportunity to learn, perception of student, student satisfaction) are having significant meanings, and can be represent for related dimensions.

4.1.3. Data analysis

The first major research question: In overall, how well do students evaluate quality of their school life?

The description about the total quality of life table below shows the positive feedbacks from students regarding the quality of school life. On the Linkert Scale, 5 is the highest score, means positive feedback, the scores below 3 are negative feedbacks. There is no negative value in the table, which indicates that the majority of the responses are positive. In other words, secondary school students have positive experiences in their school life. The indices of the subscales in the mean column are relatively evenly spaced, with less difference, which may indicate that most students consider these factors as related to their school lives. The perception of student value is higher than other factors in the results table, which can mean that students have a sense of themselves in relationships with other people who may be friends, at school. On the other hand, due to the QSL subscales values in the results table it ranges from 1 to 5, it also shows that besides the majority are satisfied with school life, there are also many unhappy students who do not like their school life. Can the reasons for this dissatisfaction come from teachers, from timetables, from academic pressures, from family, or from personal inferiority? We will analyze in more detail about the student dissatisfaction with school life in the qualitative analysis.

Items	Min	1 st Q median	Mean	3 rd quartile	Max
Perception of teacher	1	2	3.14	3	5
Opportunity to learn	1	2.91	3.37	3.83	5
Perception of student	1	3	3.45	4	5
Student satisfaction	1	2.56	3.22	3.78	5
Total quality of the school life	1	2.63	3.12	3.58	5

Table 4.2 The description about the total quality of the school life

The first minor question: In general, is there a difference between the quality of student school life in private secondary school and in the public secondary school?

Based on the result table 4.3 with Prob > F = 0.0042, R-squared = 0.0415, and the results of VIF are lower than 4, we can indicate that there is almost no difference between the quality of school life for public and private school students, which can be as following:

Items	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t
Perception of teacher	-0.08	0.05	-1.45	0.148
Opportunity to learn	-0.05	0.06	-0.85	0.394
Perception of student	0.07	0.05	1.58	0.115
Student satisfaction	-0.06	0.05	-1.22	0.225
Gender	0.03	0.05	0.64	0.525
_cons	0.83	0.15	5.47	0.000

Table 4.3. The quality of the school life scale by school type

Items	VIF	1/VIF
Perception of teacher	1.78	0.56178
Opportunity to learn	3.36	0.297624
Perception of student	2.10	0.476247
Student satisfaction	2.81	0.356477
Gender	1.01	0.985745
Mean VIF	2.21	

Table 4.4. Variance inflation of the factors

We can see that most secondary school students in Vietnam have responded positively to school life. Figure 4.4 shows the differential distribution of the positive comments about the quality of school life in public and private schools. While public schools have more satisfaction, private schools have more dissatisfaction on the quality of the school life. To clarify this difference of the quality life of the school life by school type, we will discuss on the qualitative analysis.

Figure 4.4. The QSL by school type

The second major question: According to QSL framework, which factor influence quality of their school life most? Which one has less impact?

To find the answer for the second major question, we will define through five minor questions, which are following:

- The second minor research question: How well do the perception of teacher effect to the quality of the school life?
- The third minor research question: How well do the opportunity to learn effect to the quality of the school life?
- The fourth minor research question: How well do the perception of student status effect to the quality of the school life?
- The fifth minor research question: How well do the student satisfaction effect to the quality of the school life?
- The sixth minor research question: How well do the gender effect to the quality of the school life?

The table 4.5 show the regression result among factors in the quality of the school life scale:

Items	Coefficient	t	P
Perception of teacher	.27	268.30	0.000
Opportunity to learn	.33	269.77	0.000
Perception of student	.14	161.74	0.000
Student satisfaction	.25	252.12	0.000
Gender	-.00	-0.63	0.527
_cons	.01	0.03	0.048

Table 4.5. The regression result among factors in QSL framework

From Table 4.2 we can see students respond positively to school quality. They may find their school work interesting, learning can be fun. The results in Table 4.5 show that $R\text{-squared} = 0.9998$, the coefficient of perception of teacher, opportunity to learn, perception of student, student satisfaction are higher than .1 and the cons $\neq 0$ so that there is a positive relationship between the perception of teacher and the quality of the school life (H1), the opportunity to learn and the quality of the school life (H2), the perception of student and the quality of the school life (H3), the student satisfaction and the quality of the school life (H4). However, there is no relationship between the gender and the quality of the school life (H5). Among these factors, the more influencing factor for quality of school life is the opportunity to learn. This result is consistent with the conclusions of previous studies about QSL framework. The opportunity to learn factor influences more, which also means that students with a more positive attitude toward learning opportunities have a better quality of life than those with less positive attitudes toward the learning opportunities created in the classroom. William demonstrated that this factor could clarify how confident students are and what students do at school by reporting how satisfied they are, how well they are coping with schoolwork so that they feel good about what they do in school (Williams, 1981).

Also in Table 4.5, the perception of the teacher and the student satisfaction are the second factors that affect the quality of school life. In the educational management, the factor of teacher contributes largely to the learning environment at school. Many previous studies in the field of education have also shown that teacher behavior in the classroom, such as fair grading, teaching methods, or attitudes of teachers to students, influences the achievement of the student, student satisfaction, and the quality of school life (Sanders, 1997) (Darling-Hammond, 2000) (Swan, 2001). In the first study of QSL, Epstein emphasized the importance of the quality of teacher-student relationships that affect the quality of school life (Epstein, 1976). Developing this view of Epstein, Maele demonstrates the trust in the relationship between teacher and student that has an impact on the quality of school life (Van Maele, 2011). The teacher factor affecting the quality of private school life will be analyzed in more detail in qualitative data analysis.

Ainley points out that the level of student satisfaction with their daily lives at school is related to the quality of school life. Because the quality of school life is tied to the student's experience at school, the quality of student learning can vary widely between schools (Ainley J. , 1995). The differences between schools will be discussed in the qualitative data.

Among QSL elements, the perception of the student has less influence on the quality of the school life than other factors in this study, which is right because Table 4.2 shows that besides students who are satisfied with the school, there are also students who do not have expected learning experiences. They may feel lonely or too stressed, or their different expectation in term of teachers, opportunities they have in school. Student status is drawn mostly from their perceptions of how they are treated by others in the learning environment (Bulcock N. P., 2012).

4.3. Qualitative Data's findings and discussions

There are 323 students out of 523 students who participated in this study provide feedbacks in essay format, of which, there are 170 public school students and 153 private school students.

The first minor question: In general, is there a difference between the quality of student school life in private secondary school and in the public secondary school?

We conducted a survey of 323 students' comments. Responses such as "I like my school," "I love my school" are positive feedback. Responses such as "I hate my school," "I do not like my school," "I am afraid of my school" are negative feedback. Some comments look like "I do not like or hate school". However, there are some students who give both negative and positive comments at the same time so that the number of respondents are different from the number of students who give the comments. Table 4.6 below shows the frequency of classified respondents:

School type	Public school			Private school		
Number of students	170			153		
Number of respondents	177			159		
Classified respondents	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Positive
	37	25	115	59	31	69
	20.90%	14.12%	64.97%	37.11%	19.50%	43.40%

Table 4.6. Frequency of classified respondents

According to table 4.6, there are differences between the quality of the school life from the student in private secondary school's perspective and the quality of the school life from the student in secondary school's perspective. Among 170 public school students who present essay comments, 64.97% of students give positive feedback. Among 153 private school students leave comments, 43.40% of students respond positively. This result shows that public school students are more satisfied with the school life than private school students. These results highlight the results of the first major research question that in overall, students respond positively to school life, but many students respond negatively to school life. There are 37.11% of private school students give the negative comments while there are 20.90% of public students give the negative comments. The number of students who give the neutral comments in private school are also greater than in public school. Therefore, this result from qualitative data highlight the answer of the first minor question that there is a different between the quality of the school life in private school and in public school

In previous studies on QSL, researchers also presented results of positive feedback from students about school life (Epstein, 1976) (Ainley J. , 1995) (Williams, 1981) (Bulcock N. P., 2012). However, in previous research, researchers have not measured students' responses to school life by school type. The study of student's perspectives by type of school for comparison is not new (Freeman, 1999) (Hill, 2006) (Topçu, 2008). Because the student in public school in Vietnam have been controlled by the school and DOET, the freedom in the school will be less than in the private school

where has greater autonomy. People in the private school may be more demanding than people in public school, which lead to more negative feedback on the school life than in public school. The previous studies show that this negative feedback in private school can happen not only with students but also with other people such as teachers and staffs in private school as well (Ingersoll, 2001) (Liu, 2005).

The third major question: Why do the students at the private secondary school like or dislike their school, in general?

The third major question will determine the reasons for the negative and positive feedback of students in private schools. To present the answer for these research questions, we conduct statistics on students' comments by factors according to the QSL framework. The results are presented in Table 4.7 below:

Items	Sub-items	Public School		Private School	
		Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Perception of Teacher	Teacher Quality	28		24	4
	Teacher Behaviour	2	11	2	14
	Foreign Teacher	1			
	Rector			2	2
Opportunity to Learn	Learning Environment	56	4	11	4
	Development Environment	4		13	
Student Satisfaction	School Atmosphere	16		9	
	Teaching Method	4	1	3	
	Location and Facilities	4	7	5	4
	Extra Activities	7	5	9	7
	Schedule		9		5
	Uniform	1	2		
	Policy				11
	Student Behaviour		3		
	Operation and Communication			4	5
	Tuition fee				2
	Overall	41	2	32	
Perception of Student Status	Competition		17		
	Pressure		30		7
Total		164	91	114	65

Table 4.7. Summarize of the frequency of classified comments by school type

a. Perception of teacher

In private secondary school result, among 48 times that students mention about the perception of teacher, there are 28 times show that students are happy with the teacher, which means that there is a positive relationship between teachers and students, which positively affects the quality of school life. Positive comments on teachers focus on the teacher quality topic (the teacher understands the desires of the student, the teacher is enthusiastic about the subject teaching, the teacher is interested in the progress of students), teacher behaviour.

Unlike public schools, in private schools, some students are concerned about the principal, which is not mentioned in public school students' responses. This item indicates that private school students may be interested in the school's management. The student's comment shows that there can be a relationship between the principal and the student at the school when operating the school, which makes the student interested in this relationship. For instance: #56: "The rector works very closely in discipline, which makes students in the school much more obedient, such as an absolute ban on riding a motorbike, length of skirts, natural hair, not pollen". #293: "Since the absence of the old principal, the activities of the school have reduced the attractiveness. I miss her".

Besides, the negative feedback in the teacher dimension in the feedback of public and private school students is primarily focused on teacher behaviour. Previous studies have shown that different behaviours of teachers will affect the quality of relationships and student satisfaction (Voelkl, 1995) (Baker, 1999) (Cenkseven-Onder, 2009). Epstein also emphasized in his study about the particular instructional qualities through the teacher-student relationship in the perception of the teacher (Epstein, 1976). Students feel the fairness and warmth from the teacher's treatment towards them will lead to the level of satisfaction with the school will increase. This result also shows that the student's appreciation for the quality of the teacher does not mean they are satisfied with the behaviour of the teacher in the classroom.

b. Opportunity to learn

Private school students tend to be interested in both the personal development environment and the learning environment, while public school students are most concerned about the learning environment. The student comments show that private school students have a positive response to personal development through individual skill development programs in private schools. For example: #27: "Teamwork, self-awareness, creativity, art"; #56: "exchanges with students in ASEAN, exchanges with students in Ho Chi Minh City, extracurricular activities weekly". Meanwhile, in public schools, there is only a few positive feedbacks on soft skills development in general. From there, it can be determined that the private schools focus on developing the knowledge and skills of their students, while the public schools are primarily concerned with the learning of knowledge.

c. Perception of student status

The dimension of the perception of student status shows the differences between public and private schools, which further clarify the outcome of the opportunity to learn. Public school students are more concerned about the learning environment, which causes more academic pressure than private ones.

In particular, in private schools, none of the students' responses refer to competitive elements in the school, but public school students refer to this factor multiple times. This competitive pressure stems from the assurance of educational achievement, which also arises from the teacher, or from exams, from parents. It is worth mentioning that related to the academic pressure; public school students refer to the using of tranquilizers to relieve stress, while private school students do not. For instance, #427: "Last year my class had a medical emergency due to using tranquillizer because of high pressure on the exam. I'm afraid of my school very much".

d. Student satisfaction

In general, public and private school students make positive evaluations of school life, which is reflected in item overall. In private school, there is no negative feedback on the overall satisfaction about the school, whereas there are two dissatisfied comments in public school. On specific issues, there are more differences between public and private schools. Private school students have a keen interest in education policy, which is not addressed by public school students. For instance, students are dissatisfied with the expulsion of student if they do not have good academic performance, dyed hair exclusion, long hair restriction (#336), management of student dormitories, males are not allowed to go in the same stair with females (#339), students are not allowed to read comics in school (#228).

Private school students also mentioned about tuition fees, meanwhile public school students mentioned about uniforms and student behaviour. The reason for this is the tuition fee is higher in private schools. Teaching methods of teachers are not negatively evaluated in private schools. Besides, they are interested in Operation and Communication item while public school students do not address this issue. This issue may come from respecting the freedom of the students in private schools, school's autonomy so that student can give more demand toward their school. The students' comments for this item usually start with "The school's management is not effective" (#130), "make up for marketing activities" (#27), "unstructured school activity" (#229). Positive comments will begin with "Good School Management" (#267). By students' comments, it can be seen that students evaluate the school's operations through the way the management team manages school policies. They value the communication through the way schools advertise with parents, with them before they go to school and compare with the things that they are received after a period of study at school. Through these remarks, there may be differences between students' expectations and the reality they receive from the school, which in turn leads to their dissatisfaction.

Although there are not many comments on the school's timetable, all the comments regarding schedules in public and private schools are negative. That means both public and private school students are unhappy with their school schedules because of their academic plans (#395) (#340) (#204). Moreover, both public and private school students evaluate the positive atmosphere of learning in school due to one of the main reason is they feel the school is suitable to their abilities (#310) (#462). They also assess both positive and negative side about location and facilities items and extra activities item at the school.

4.4. Summary

In Chapter 4, we analysed and discussed the results obtained from the data.

Qualitative analysis has shown the results which are namely:

- There is a positive relationship between perception of teacher and quality of school life (H1)
- There is a positive relationship between the opportunity to learn factor and quality of school life (H2)
- There is a positive relationship between perception of student status and quality of school life (H3).
- There is a positive relationship between the student satisfaction and quality of school life (H4)
- There is not a positive relationship between gender and quality of school life (H5)

Quantitative analysis clarifies the following issues:

- There is a difference between the quality of school life in private schools and public schools
- The items which are only mentioned by students in private schools are the issue related to the principal, school policy, operation and communication, and tuition fees.
- Private school students prefer their schools because of the combination of the personal development environment and learning environment at school, teaching methods, teacher quality, a small part of school principals, and extracurricular. They do not love their school because of teacher behaviour, school policy.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter will present the results of the research, and we will make recommendations based on the current situation on the quality of school life in private secondary schools in Vietnam.

5.1. Conclusions

Apparently, it can be seen that students share their experiences in school life that are not only a happy place but that schools also have negative aspects. However, whether students like it or not, studying is compulsory in most countries around the world. In the past, researchers focused on student achievement, student ability, but we could not concentrate on student emotional well-being issues. Whether students are happy at school, satisfied with schoolwork, and satisfied with relationships at school are not focused, especially in developing countries like Vietnam. Epstein recognized the importance of the quality of school life since 1976 (Epstein, 1976), after that many researchers developed his research by evaluating the items in QSL framework, making the sub – items into more detailed. Most recently, by 2012, Bulcock's research has once again begun to pay attention to this issue (Bulcock N. P., 2012).

This research was conducted to describe the quality of life of secondary school students in Vietnam and thereby contribute to quality assurance in schools. The QSL framework includes teachers' aspects, learning opportunities, the perception of student status and student satisfaction, using data from 523 students in ten secondary schools in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The results of the study show that most students have positive feedback about school life, but in addition to the positive feedback, there are also students who are unhappy with school life. The learning opportunity factor has more influence on the quality of student's school life than other factors. On the other words, there is a positive relationship between the quality of the school life and the opportunity to learn (*H2*). This factor is related to the learning environment of the student to develop knowledge and other skills. Other two important factors are the perception of teacher and student satisfaction factor also influence the quality of the student's school life (*H1*) (*H4*). Teacher factors emphasize teacher behaviour, classroom activities, teacher - student relationships, meanwhile the student satisfaction factor highlights student needs, school policy. Plus, there is a positive relationship between the perception of student status and the quality of the school life. This factor has less impact on the quality of the school life than other factors, which refers to how much they enjoy their school life (*H3*). The result of this research also shows that there is no positive relationship between the gender and the quality of the school life, which means males and females enjoy the school time equally (*H5*).

By qualitative and quantitative methods, this study has identified private school students with positive evaluations of school life. The major problems affecting private school students' school life are teacher behaviour, and school policy, which are also two of the main reasons make private school students do not like their school. However, they like their school life because of some factors, such as teacher quality, learning environment, and personal development environment.

5.2. Recommendations

The fourth minor question: Based on the student's perspective, what are the strengths and the weaknesses of the private secondary school life?

Based on the student's feedbacks and the result of this study, we determine the major characteristics of the private secondary schools in comparison to the public secondary schools in Vietnam can be following:

No	Items	Private school	Public school
1	Financial management	Autonomy	Subsidized by the government
2	Tuition fee	High	Low
3	School policies	Depends on single school	Managed by DOET
4	Perception of teacher quality	High	High
5	Opportunity to learn	Focus on personal development	Focus on learning achievement
6	Competition and learning pressure	Low	High
7	Extracurricular	Variety	Less variety
8	Student satisfaction	Neutral	Positive

Table 5.1. Characteristics of the private school and public school

According to these characteristics, the strengths and weaknesses of the private secondary school life, which make the differences from the public schools can be presented as following:

Strengths

- *Teacher quality:* Lecturers in private schools are both qualified and passionate about their subject. In the smaller private school community, students have closer communication with teachers and the school managers, which can help them in the learning activities.
- *Development environment:* Private secondary education programs focus more on specialized topics (such as creativity, teamwork, self-awareness) to create development environment to develop personal skills in addition to developing a learning environment, which is an excellent idea to prepare students for careers and higher education in specific fields.
- *Less competitor:* Because private schools focus on developing personal goals, there is less competition among students in private school than in public schools.
- *Extracurricular:* Extra-curricular activities are the strengths of private schools. While extra-curricular activities of public schools are concentrated inside the school, extracurricular activities of private schools can be both inside and outside the school.

Weaknesses

- *Tuition fee*: Private tuition fees are higher than public school tuition fees. On the other hand, specialized courses occupy smaller numbers than compulsory subjects in Vietnam. Therefore, the pressure in the subjects required to pass the National Exam with students is still high.
- *Student goals*: Their goal of success may be different from that of a public-school student, for example, study abroad, high scores are not their problem.
- *School policies*: The number of students who study in private schools is less than that of public schools. Therefore, the level of detailed of the school's policies will vary by school, not as common as in public schools. That lead to high students' dissatisfaction with school policy.

The fourth major question: How to improve the quality of student's school life to increase the satisfaction to ensure the quality assurance at the private schools?

Dr. W. Edwards Deming is the author of Total Quality Management (TQM) framework in the late 1950's. Among the numerous number of the studies about quality assurance in education, Deming's philosophy seems to be more popular than others and be proved the efficiency when applying in education (Sherr, 1991) (Montano, 1999) (Matsuo, 2013). The first time when TQM surfaced in education is in 1988 at Mt. Edgecombe High School in Sitka, Alaska. David is the name of the teacher who applied TQM in his classes, after that TQM became increasingly popular in education and became the topic of many types of research (Iftikhaar W. A., 2014). This concept particularly focus on how well the quality determined by customers is perceived so that the quality can be continuous improving. Based on the Deming Wheel (PDCA Cycle) (Taylor A. &., 1992), we propose 4 steps for private schools to improve the quality of student's school life below:

Figure 5.1. Deming Wheel (PDCA Cycle) for private secondary school

Step 1: Using the QSL framework for internal assessment

In previous studies, it has been shown that QSL is negatively related to the level of stress experienced by students at the school. The relationship between QSL and its positive effects on the quality of life of the school has also been discussed previously. That increases the eligibility for QSL to be widely used in many countries to ensure the quality of educational services in schools through student feedback. Based on the educational psychology, QSL is an excellent, concise, reliable tool that can be completed in a short time, without training to use. Therefore, private high schools can widely use at the school for internal assessment to control the affects at school. Using QSL annually can also help teachers to assess their specific aspects of their teaching to improve the teaching quality and behaviour.

Based on the results of the QSL, the school can determine which items need improvement in the year and make a plan in phases to achieve the goals. This step can be involved by the third-party team to give some recommendations to maintain the goals of the school. For example: Teacher's plan, management team's plan, staff's plan by day, week, month to keep track of the day's activities during the week at the school so that they can be adjusted appropriately. In this step, the school may consider about adding extra resources to support for the action plan to avoid the overload working for their teachers, and staffs.

Step 2: Implement the action plan

The implementation of quality assurance requires the involvement and commitment of all those involved in the school who are staffs, teachers, school managers to satisfy the customers (students). The school can also provide their staffs, teachers some coaching in term of teaching method, communicating with students or some collaborating activities to build the relationships among them so that the action plan can work effectively.

Step 3: Checking the action plan

School managers examine and evaluate the implementation of the plan through a variety activities, such as:

- Focus on the student learning experience: all the factors which are checking can be referred to the student satisfaction, not only on the perception of teacher's activities and reports. Therefore, the school can send the second QSL survey by the end of the year to get the feedback from the student to make a comparison between the result of the beginning of the school year and the result by the end of the school year
- Involve the third-party team to assess the results which are collected by the second survey to measure the quantitative data. This third-party team can also do the student interviews based on QSL factors to make qualitative analysis. This combination of the analysis methods will help them to maintain the accuracy of the evaluation.
- Review through job reports and assessments of individual teacher/staff, groups of teacher/staff, meetings to ensure quality, timely resolution of difficulties.

Step 4: Adjust the action plan

This step can be seen as a reflection activity of whole the school after getting the results from what they have done during the school year. Based on the checking activities, the school can make adjustments for their action plan in the next school year. The school can consider whether they add enough resource to make the action plan work effectively, or people in the school are engage in the new approaches or not, which factor did not work well, which will help the school in the assessment and planning for the next school year.

The continuous cycle in Deming Wheel helps the school improve the quality continuously because it is needed time to make people such as teachers to change the way they behave or teach students in the school to gain the student satisfaction. Due to the autonomy in the private schools, the school can change by applying TQM. Meanwhile, it is not easy to implement by public schools which are managed by the DOET. These schools cannot change without the confirmation from the DOET.

5.3. Future Research

QSL can also be widely used at the national level. The using of QSL on a larger scale can facilitate policy-makers to look at each particular school to determine which areas of the school need to be improved, to help schools have a positive experience and increase the satisfaction with school.

Future studies should unify a model of QSL and the linkages between QSL and other social factors such as gender, types of school, differences between levels, different personalities, economic and political factors because previous studies have not been consistent about these.

At the same time, the scale of QSL should also be considered to ensure the reliability of the framework. Future studies may also make additional modifications to adjust subcategories to adapt the requirement of globalization. Previous studies have shown the stability of QSL during random sampling, but this stability is not maintained at different levels of education.

QUALITY ASSURANCE CHALLENGES

Dear participants,

I am Anh G.Q. Hoang, Master of Management student at Maastricht School of Management, the Netherlands. I would like to invite you to participate in our survey for my master thesis about quality management in private secondary education in Vietnam (Quản lý chất lượng trong giáo dục phổ thông trung học dân lập tại Việt Nam).

In this survey, approximately 500 students will be asked to complete questionnaires about quality management challenges in secondary school within 10-15 minutes. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. Besides, this is not a test so that there are no right or wrong answers. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point because it is very important for us to learn your opinions. If no answer is exactly what you think, choose the one that closest to what you think.

Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported only in the aggregate. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact me by email quynhanhhg2409@gmail.com, you may contact Maastricht School of Management (MSM), Endepolsdomein 150, 6229 EP Maastricht, The Netherlands

Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start with the survey now by clicking on the Continue button below.

Best Regards,
Anh G. Q Hoang

Part A. General Information

1. What is your date of birth?
2. What is your gender?.....
 - a Female
 - b Male
 - c Other
3. Which school are you studying/ did you study?
 - a. Cau Giay secondary school
 - b. Dao Duy Tu secondary school
 - c. Dong Da secondary school

- d. Foreign language specialized school
 - e. Hanoi - Amsterdam secondary school
 - f. Luong Van Can secondary school
 - g. Luong The Vinh secondary school
 - h. Phan Huy Chu secondary school
 - i. Tran Hung Dao - Thanh Xuan secondary school
 - j. FPT school
4. If you are studying at high school, which grade are you in?
- a. Grade 10
 - b. Grade 11
 - c. Grade 12
5. If you are alumni, which year did you graduate?
6. Your total score in National Secondary School Exam
- a. Mathematic score
 - b. Literature score
 - c. Foreign language score.....

Part B. Factor 1: Perception of teacher

Choose the best describes what you think

1.Circle the one that best describes how many of your teachers care if you learn:

- a) None
- b) Few
- c) About half
- d) Most
- e) All

2. How often do your teachers clearly explain what to do on assignments?

- a) Always
- b) Usually
- c) About half the time
- d) Seldom
- e) Never

3. How many of your teachers are willing to give students individual help outside of class time?

- a) All
- b) Most
- c) About half
- d) Few
- e) None

4. My teacher often act as if they are always right and I am wrong.

- a) All my teachers act this way
- b) Most of my teachers act this way
- c) About half of my teachers act this way
- d) One or two of my teachers act this way
- e) None of my teachers act this way

5. Most of my teachers really listen to what I have to say.

- a) I always feel this way
- b) I often feel this way
- c) I sometimes feel this way
- d) I seldom feel this way
- e) I never feel this way

6. Most of my teachers want me to do things their way and not my own way.

- a) I always feel this way
- b) I often feel this way
- c) I sometimes feel this way
- d) I seldom feel this way
- e) I never feel this way

7. Most of my teachers do not like me to ask a lot of questions during a lesson.

- a) I always feel this way
- b) I often feel this way
- c) I sometimes feel this way
- d) I seldom feel this way
- e) I never feel this way

8. Circle the one that best describes your teachers' grading systems:

- a) All of my teachers grade fairly.
- b) Most of my teachers grade fairly.
- c) About half of my teachers grade fairly.
- d) Only one or two of my teachers grade fairly.
- e) None of my teachers grade fairly.

9. Certain students in my classes are favoured by my teachers more than the rest.

- a) This happens in all my classes
- b) This happens in most of my classes
- c) This happens in about half of my classes
- d) This happens in one or two of my classes
- e) This never happens in my classes

10. How would you rate the ability of most of your teachers compared to teachers in other schools at your grade level? My teachers are...

- a) Far above average
- b) Above average
- c) Average
- d) Below average
- e) Far below average

Factor 2: Opportunity to learn

How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

11. The work I do in most classes is ...

- a) Not at all important to me
- b) Not too important to me
- c) Somewhat important to me
- d) Pretty important to me
- e) Very important to me

12. In my classes I get so interested in an assignment or project that I don't want to stop work.

- a) This never happens
- b) This hardly ever happens
- c) This sometimes happens
- d) This happens quite often
- e) This happens every day

13. In how many of the student activities that you participate in are the students involved in planning the activity?

- a) All
- b) Many
- c) About half
- d) Few
- e) None

14. The teacher often provides individual students with some ways for improving his/her learning.

- a) This happens in all my classes
- b) This happens in most of my classes
- c) This happens in about half of my classes
- d) This happens in one or two of my classes
- e) This never happen in my classes

15. The teacher often gives suggestions to students' progress in learning.

- a) This happens in all my classes
- b) This happens in most of my classes
- c) This happens in about half of my classes
- d) This happens in one or two of my classes
- e) This never happen in my classes

16. The teacher often encourages students to see whether their study methods are helpful or not to their learning.

- a) This happens in all my classes
- b) This happens in most of my classes
- c) This happens in about half of my classes
- d) This happens in one or two of my classes
- e) This never happen in my classes

17. I often feel that the activities in my class are innovative.

- a) Always
- b) Usually
- c) About half the time
- d) Seldom
- e) Never

18. Cheating cannot occur in our school

- a) Definitely agree
- b) Mostly agree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Mostly disagree
- e) Definitely disagree

19. There is not a significant problem with substance abuse (e.g., drug and/or alcohol problems) in my school

- a) Definitely agree
- b) Mostly agree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Mostly disagree
- e) Definitely disagree

20. I feel safe whenever traveling to and from school

- a) Definitely agree
- b) Mostly agree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Mostly disagree
- e) Definitely disagree

21. Circle the one that best describes the level of your participation in school-sponsored activities:

- a) No participation
- b) Little participation
- c) Average participation
- d) High participation
- e) Highest participation

22. How often do you feel that you "belong" in your school?

- f) Always
- g) Usually
- h) About half the time
- i) Seldom
- j) Never

Factor 3: Perception of student status

23. Most of the time I do not want to go to school.

- a) I always feel this way
- b) I often feel this way
- c) I sometimes feel this way
- d) I seldom feel this way
- e) I never feel this way

24. I hardly ever do anything very exciting in class.

- a) I always feel this way
- b) I often feel this way
- c) I sometimes feel this way
- d) I seldom feel this way
- e) I never feel this way

25. I am very happy when I am in school.

- a) All the time
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Seldom
- e) Never

26. Circle the one that best describes your potential as a student:

- a) I am learning as much as I can.
- b) I am learning close to my potential.
- c) I am learning about half of what I could learn.

- d) I am learning a little compared to my potential.
- e) I am learning zero compared to my potential.

27. Circle the one that best describes the amount of times you think about dropping out of school:

- a) Never
- b) One or two times
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) All the time

28. Describe your grades on your final report card last school year

- a) I mostly got 9
- b) I mostly got 8
- c) I mostly got 7
- d) I mostly got 6
- e) I mostly got 5
- f) I mostly got less than 5

Factor 4&5: Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction with the school

29. Circle the one that best describes how many classes in which you are satisfied with the methods used to teach the course material:

- a) All
- b) Most
- c) About half
- d) Few
- e) None

30. Circle the one that best describes how many subjects in which you are "learning a lot" this year:

- a) In all my subjects
- b) In most of my subjects
- c) In about half of my subjects
- d) In one or two of my subjects
- e) In none of my subjects

31. Circle the one that best describes your satisfaction with the types of student activities offered:

- a) Very satisfied
- b) Satisfied
- c) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- d) Dissatisfied

- e) Very dissatisfied

32. *Timetable works productively for me*

- a) Very satisfied
- b) Satisfied
- c) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Very dissatisfied

33. *The courses are running efficiently*

- a) Very satisfied
- b) Satisfied
- c) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Very dissatisfied

34. *Any changing announcement in the courses or instructing have been conveyed effectively*

- a) Very satisfied
- b) Satisfied
- c) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Very dissatisfied

35. *The teacher often arranges some outside-school visits (such as public library, museum).*

- a) In all my subjects
- b) In most of my subjects
- c) In about half of my subjects
- d) In one or two of my subjects
- e) In none of my subjects

36. *The teacher often asks us to find information by using computers.*

- a) In all my subjects
- b) In most of my subjects
- c) In about half of my subjects
- d) In one or two of my subjects
- e) In none of my subjects

37. *In general, how proud or ashamed of your school are you?*

- a) I am very proud of my school.
- b) I am proud of my school
- c) I am neither proud nor ashamed of my school
- d) I am ashamed of my school

e) I am very ashamed of my school

Part C. Your own comment

38. In overall, how do you like or dislike your school, and why? Write as much or as little as you wish

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