AN INVESTIGATION INTO CONTEMPORARY FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING SERVICES: A CASE STUDY IN VIETNAM

A Thesis submitted by

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ABSTRACT

This research thesis investigates contemporary factors that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring services as a case study in Vietnam. These factors include: (i) Government's regulations on private tutoring; (ii) Private tutoring fees; (iii) Private tutoring knowledge; (iv) Private tutoring locations; (v) Tutors' knowledge deliveries; and (vi) Students' knowledge acquisitions. In the literature review, these six factors, together with four theoretical frameworks (Fielden and LaRocque's theory; Bray et al.'s theory; Moust's theory; and Cameron's theory), were elaborated to assemble the conceptual model of the study.

The exploratory research and data collection were conducted on a sample of 72 parents of grade 1 to 12 tutees in three urban and three rural areas in North, Central and South Vietnam. Brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews were used to explore contemporary factors that influenced parental perceptions of private tutoring services.

The main findings show that from parental viewpoints: (i) two Vietnamese government's regulations are likely to broaden opportunities for disguised private tutoring rather than minimize it, and one regulation is generally ineffective in organizing private tutoring classes inside and outside formal schools; (ii) parents are willing to pay private tutoring fees as bribes for teachers when necessary to purchase advantages for their children's future exams and in exchange for their children's safety nets; (iii) private tutoring knowledge revises low level tutees' learning performances effectively, maintains medium level tutees' learning performances appropriately and advances high level tutees' learning performances brilliantly; (iv) private tutoring locations are more developed in urban areas and less developed in rural areas because urban areas have more advantages than rural areas; (v) tutors' knowledge deliveries should be able to apply information technology techniques, whilst still maintaining and advancing the traditional teaching methods; and (vi) their children's excited and satisfied feelings when receiving the knowledge acquisitions from tutors and other classmates. The current parental perceptions relating to various countries in the international private tutoring context are additionally discussed, compared and contrasted. Some research limitations, theoretical contributions and policy implications of the study are also outlined.

CERTIFICATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is the work of The Cuong Nguyen except where otherwise acknowledged. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

Principal Supervisor: Associate Professor Abdul Hafeez-Baig
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ABBREVIATIONS

AUD: Australian Dollars

Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT: Circular number 17/2012/Circular-Ministry of Education and Training, providing MOET's regulations on private tutoring for students in primary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary school levels in Vietnam

COVID-19 pandemic (Coronavirus pandemic): A pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 as defined by WHO (World Health Organization)

Document No. 10176/TH: Document number 10176/Primary Education, providing MOET's regulations on private tutoring for students in primary school level in Vietnam

Document No. 7291/BGDDT-GDTrH: Document number 10176/Lower-Secondary and Upper-Secondary Education, providing MOET's regulations on private tutoring for students in lower-secondary and upper-secondary school levels in Vietnam

MOET: Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam

VND: Viet Nam Dongs/Vietnamese Dongs

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter in the thesis introduces an overview of research into private tutoring. Initially, the background of private tutoring study focuses on the current definitions and key elements of private tutoring, as well as advantages and disadvantages of this phenomenon. Second, both private tutoring in the international context and the Vietnamese context are introduced. Third, the research problems of the study are identified. Forth, the importance of researching parental perceptions of private tutoring and possible factors affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring is confirmed. Next, the process of research undertaken is demonstrated. Finally, the structure of the thesis is outlined.

1.1. Background of private tutoring study

The private tutoring phenomenon has become one of the most complicated, sensitive and controversial issues in the global education system (Ashley et al. 2014; Azam 2016; Bray 2009; Bray 2020; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Kwok 2003; Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray, Kwo & Jokić 2015; Brehm & Silova 2014; Liu & Bray 2020; Mercy & Dambson 2014; Open Society Institute 2006; Zhang & Bray 2020). The interest generated by this phenomenon has generated a number of definitions about private tutoring from researchers and research centres worldwide. For instances:

Ng and Li (2012, p. 9) defined 'private tutoring as tutoring in academic subjects which is provided by the tutors for financial gain and which is additional to the provision by mainstream schooling.' Dang (2013, p. 2) defined private tutoring as 'any private lesson purchased by households to provide instruction to children in subjects that they study in the mainstream education system'.

Likewise, Dongre and Tewary (2014, p. 1) defined private tutoring as 'fee-based tutoring that provides instruction to children in academic subjects that they study in the mainstream education system'.

As considered as a fuller explanation, Bray and Kwo (2014, p. viii) suggested that 'tutoring in academic subjects is delivered in exchange for a fee. The formats of tutoring range from one-to-one provision to large classes. Some tutoring is provided informally by university students and others, while other tutoring is

provided by teachers and by specialist companies.'The definitions of private tutoring activities above, as a consequence, lead to a common and worldwide understanding of the following key aspects of this phenomenon: (i) private tutoring is a type of educational services (Bray & Kwo 2014); (ii) private tutoring service activities are usually undertaken for fees (Dang 2013; Zhang & Bray 2020); (iii) Tutors often provide student revisions and practical exercises of academic subjects that students must learn at their mainstream schools. In practice, many tutors are also teachers who teach students at their regular schools (Ng & Li 2012; Zhang & Bray 2020); and (iv) private tutoring service activities are organized by both public and/or private tutoring centres and individuals (Bray & Kwo 2014).

In terms of advantages, private tutoring provides benefits for parents and other stakeholders such as their children, public and private tutors, public and private tutoring centres (Sun et. al 2020; Zhang & Bray 2020). First, private tutoring helps disadvantaged students (such as students with limited knowledge and students with slow knowledge acquisitions) to take more opportunities to access the knowledge revisions of important academic subjects (Liu & Bray 2020; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020). Additionally, intelligent students might learn new specific knowledge and skills in the private tutoring classes that they may not have opportunities to study in their regular schools (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020). As a consequence, many students are able to apply their knowledge acquired in private tutoring classes for doing their assessments (tests, exams, etc.) successfully at regular schools (Bray & Kwo 2014; Sun et. al 2020). Second, many parents are occupied with their work and therefore, private tutoring classes create opportunities to provide additional care for their children, and may lead to higher academic achievements at regular schools (Bhorkar & Bray 2018; Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray & Kwok 2003; Open Society Institute 2006). Third, private tutoring service activities generate income for tutors, regardless of their roles as either university students or school teachers. For university students, getting private tutoring jobs helps them to earn income to cover their living and study expenses in their student life. Similarly, private tutoring jobs bring school teachers a significant source of income to support their family (Bray & Kwo 2014; Open Society Institute 2006; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020). Fourth, a stable income from public and private tutoring centres comes from the tuition fees

of students, which are usually paid for in advance by their parents (Bray et al. 2016; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020). Finally, the number of students who enrol in private tutoring classes might be the most persuasive advertising image to demonstrate the education quality of such public and private tutoring centres (Bray & Kwo 2014).

Although there may be many advantages, private tutoring services also bring some disadvantages to parents and their children. For instance, parents must pay significant amounts of their monthly income for their children's private tuitions and therefore incur a financial burden (Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020); their children have no time to undertake physical activities because they spend most of their available time taking extra classes (Bray & Kwok 2003); students in rural areas have fewer opportunities to access extensive academic knowledge than students in urban areas due to the significant development of private tutoring services in urban areas rather than in rural areas (Dang 2011; Pallegedara 2018; Pearce, Power & Taylor 2018); and teachers may teach a part of lessons in the mainstream classes and teach the rest in private tutoring classes due to financial incentives (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Ille & Peacey 2019). Consequently, a number of policy makers have issued legislation for regulating and controlling these educational services (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Kwo 2014; Ille & Peacey 2019; Mwebi & Maithya 2016; Zhang & Bray 2020). However, private tutoring has still tended to grow dramatically in the main cities and provinces of many countries (Ashley et al. 2014; Bray 2003; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Kwo 2014; Mwebi & Maithya 2016; Patrinos, Barrera-Osorio & Guáqueta 2009).

1.2. Private tutoring in the international context

According to Zhang and Bray (2020), private tutoring, which is also called as shadow education, private supplementary tutoring, or cram schooling, has been a long history. In the mid-19th century, there were private tutoring service advertisements in Russia (Mikhaylova 2019). At the end of the 19th century, tutorial institutions known as *frontistiria* were emerged in Greece (Tsiloglu 2005). At the beginning of the 20th century, shadow education service was named as *jukus* in Japan (Sato 2012). Private tutoring has also appeared in Mauritius since 1901 (Foondun 2002). However, this global phenomenon has been discussed critically only in the international organisations and worldwide educational

forums as an educational topic in the academic literature since the 1980s so far (Zhang & Bray 2020). For example, the works relating to private tutoring of professor Mark Bray and his associates had been published by UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) and CERC Monograph Series in Comparative and International Education and Development (Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray 2021).

Bray (2020) analysed the development of European private tutoring with various issues in four subregions: (i) in Southern Europe, Greece and Cyprus had the higher tutoring enrolment rates than Italy and Malta, which could be caused by their own cultural factors and political forces (Buhagiar & Chetcuti 2013; Campani 2013; Lamprianou & Lamprianou 2013; Tsiplakides 2018); (ii) in Eastern Europe, the collapse of social and economic structures in the former Soviet countries in the early 1990s decreased teachers' salaries; thus they have to teach private tutoring classes for earning extra incomes. E.g. Estonia (Kirss 2011), Czech Republic (Šťastný 2016), Hungary (Długosz 2017), Slovenia (Faganel & Trnavˇceviˇc 2013); (iii) in Western Europe, the government schooling system has been marketised, the society was more competitive, the labour forces and their skills were more mobilised, causing the growth of shadow education. E.g. Netherlands (Elffers & Jansen 2019); United Kingdom (Sutton Trust 2018); Spain (Runte-Geidel & Femia Marzo 2015); Italy (Campani 2013); and (iv) in Northern Europe, although students and their parents seemed least influenced by private tutoring, recently some countries such as Sweden (Hallsén & Karlsson 2018), Denmark (Christensen 2019), and Ireland (Smyth 2009) started the occurrence of shadow education services.

Similarly, Bray and Kwo (2014) showed that there have been variations in the development of shadow education in Asia. In East Asia, the high enrolment rates of private tutoring have belonged to China (Zhang 2011), Japan (Jung 2012), and the Republic of Korea (KOSIS 2019). Some authorities in the Republic of Korea have tried to decrease the demand of parents and students for private tutoring; however, they were hard to reach their significant successes (Choi & Cho 2016). In contrast, private tutoring in other territories such as Taiwan (Liu 2012), and Hong Kong (Bray & Kwok 2003) has seemed to completely develop in free educational service markets. In South Asia, some countries comprising of India (Azam 2016), Pakistan (ASER-Pakistan 2019) and Bangladesh (Mahmud & Bray

2017) have also had high enrolment rates of shadow education. Particularly, private tutoring was officially discussed in the early 1940s under the Sri Lankan colonial government (Ceylon 1943). In Central and Northern Asia, the shadow education phenomenon is more significant in many nations like Kazakhstan (Kalikova & Rakhimzhanova 2009), Kyrgyz Republic (Bagdasarova & Ivanov 2009), Tajikistan (Kodirov & Amonov 2009), Turkmenistan (Silova 2009), and Uzbekistan (Namazov 2013). In Southeast Asia, private tutoring is also broadening in many parts of the region, including Brunei Darussalam (Wong et al. 2007), Malaysia (Kenayathulla 2013), Indonesia (Suryadama et al. 2006), Philippines (de Castro & de Guzman 2010), Singapore (Tan 2017), Thailand (Lao 2014), Laos (Dang & King 2013), Cambodia (Bray et al. 2018) and Vietnam (Dang 2013).

In Africa, Bray (2021) confirmed that shadow education has appeared and existed in many countries. In North Africa, there have been some nations with high private tutoring enrolment rates such as Egypt (Sieverding et al. 2019), Algeria (Thani 2012), Sudan (The World Bank 2012), and Tunisia (Akkari 2010). In West Africa, there were expansions in private tutoring of Ghana (BusinessGhana 2018) and Burkina Faso (Ouattara 2016). In Southern Africa, some nations having high and reasonable shadow education education rates in the contemporary era were Botswana (Chabaditsile et al. 2018), Malawi (Masanche et al. 2017), Mauritius (Dwarkan 2017), Mozambique (Moreno et al. 2017), Namibia (Shigwedha et al. 2015), and South Africa (Chetty et al. 2017). In Middle Africa, there was a significant expansion in private tutoring of Angola (Chionga 2018). In Eastern Africa, similarly, the expansions in shadow education were available in Kenya (Karogo et al. 2019), Tanzania (SACMEQ 2010), Uganda (Kwaje 2018), Ethiopia (Melese & Abebe 2017), Madagascar (Andriamahavonjy & Ravelo 2009), Zambia (SACMEQ 2010), and Zimbabwe (SACMEQ 2010).

Finally, some studies showed that private tutoring has been growing in Latin-America, including many nations in North America (e.g. Canada and the United States), Central America (e.g. Costa Rica, Mexico) and South America (e.g. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Peru, Uruguay) (Bray 2009, Bray 2020, Entrich 2021). This worldwide educational phenomenon has been also available in Oceania, consisting of Australia and New Zealand (Bray 2003, Dooley et al. 2018, Entrich 2021).

1.3. Private tutoring in the Vietnamese context

As confirmed by the National Assembly (2019), the Academic System of Vietnam's Education System Structure represents six stages, beginning from the Pre-Primary Education level and terminating at the Post Graduate Education level. The largest estimated student enrolment number of the Vietnamese education system in the school year 2019–2020, according to the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam (2020), was 17,055,000 in the general education sector. This number of student enrolments belonged to three educational levels: (i) 8,760,000 in the primary education; (ii) 5,650,000 in the lower-secondary education; and (iii) 2,645,000 in the upper-secondary education. Additionally, the pre-primary education was 5,352,600 students, consisting of the nursery education (787,600 students) and kindergarten education (4,565,000 students); and the full time higher education sector was only 1,518,986 student enrolments. Thus, it is strongly believed that the private tutoring services in Vietnam have been increasing mainly in the three educational levels (primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary) of the general education sector (Tran & Pasquier-Doumer 2019).

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, there have been so far some following studies relating to parental involvements of their children's private tutoring in Vietnam. All of these researches mentioned to the role of Vietnamese parents involve ther children's private tutoring enrolments in various education levels and geographical locations in Vietnam.

1.3.1. Studies of Dang (2013), Ha and Harpham (2005) and Rolleston and Krutikova (2014)

In Vietnam, Ha and Harpham (2005) and Rolleston and Krutikova (2014) found out that many Vietnamese parents of primary students (e.g. grade 3 and grade 5 students) usually encourage their children to attend private tutoring classes in mathematics and Vietnamese language to gain more knowledge of these subjects. Another study by Tran and Harpham (2005) stated that the Vietnamese urban students were more likely to attend private tutoring services than rural students. t

1.3.2. Research of Le and Baulch (2012)

Le and Baulch (2012, p. 1) stated that the effectiveness of parental spending on their children's private tutoring has been still one of the 'unanswered questions' in

the private tutoring literature. Vietnamese parents generally have invested significant expenditure in this type of private education. For instance, according to the *Young Lives* statistical data, parents of 14 to 15 year old children spent '31.8 per cent of educational expenditure on extra classes', while the expenditure of parents for their 8 to 9 years old children on private tutoring was 27.9% (Le & Baulch 2012, p. 2). Furthermore, the richest parent quintile of 14 to 15 years old children 'spent 11.2 per cent of household non-food expenditure on extra classes', and 4.7% was the spending of the poorest parent quintile (Le & Baulch 2012, p. 2). For the parents of 8 to 9 years old children, the spending of the richest and poorest quintiles were 8.2% and 4.2%, respectively. One of the reasons for these facts was because private tutoring fees for secondary school students are usually more expensive than those for primary school students (Le & Baulch 2012).

Approximately 33% of surveyed parents of aged 14 to 15 years old tutees admitted that private tutoring was 'helpful practice for examinations' (Le & Baulch 2012, p. 2). In details, 43% of these tutees' parents declared that their children enrolled in mathematics, while 28% and 23% of them enrolled their children in foreign languages and Vietnamese literature respectively. Additionally, nearly 10% of them stated that they sent their children to private tutoring services because 'not all the curriculum was covered in regular school classes' (Le & Baulch 2012, p. 2).

Research by Le and Baulch (2012) confirmed that private tutee attendance varied significantly in different geographical areas. In other words, there were high numbers of tutee enrolments in urban areas; but these attendance numbers were not high in rural areas such as the mountains, the coasts and the southern deltas.

1.3.3. Research of the Thanh Nien newspaper (2014)

According to a 2014 survey undertaken by the Thanh Nien newspaper and analysed by the Institute for Educational Research of Ho Chi Minh City University of Education with over 800 participants as students' parents in over 140 primary schools in 6 cities and provinces (Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Quangnam, Danang, Cantho and Binhdinh), approximately 74.6% of parents enrolled their primary school children in extra classes, even though no private tutoring services are allowed to provide for primary school students as regulated by Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam (Ho 2014). Interestingly, 55.8% of these parents agreed that primary school students did not

need to undertake private tutoring classes; but surprisingly, when parents were dissatisfied with private tutoring services, only 17.9% of them complained with school administrators and local authorities (Ho 2014).

Ho (2014) stated that although the provision of private tutoring services for primary school students has been banned by the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam, high percentages of parents in both urban and rural areas of Vietnam ignored the ban and still sent their children to private tutoring services in 2014 with 74% in Hanoi, 88.2% in Danang and 76.4% Ho Chi Minh City as the three urban areas and 68.5% in Quangnam, 74.5% in Cantho and 65.2% in Binhdinh as the three rural areas. Such differences might relate to students' parents, as their parents, depending on locating in urban or rural areas, are likely to make the appropriate decisions for their children's private tutoring enrolments.

Ho (2014) argued that according to a recent survey of approximately 800 parents in Vietnam about their children's private tutoring enrolments from 7th to 21st April 2014, the percentages of participants who sent their children to public school teachers' houses was 39%; to private tutoring centres was 16.3%; to public schools was 14.1%; and within their houses was 13.5%. Among 6 surveyed cities and provinces, the percentages of participants sent their children to public school teachers' houses were high: In Quangnam it was 51.9%; in Danang it was 32.4%; in Hanoi it was 49%; in Cantho it was 44.7%; in Ho Chi Minh City it was 33.5% and in Binhdinh it was 27.2%. Moreover, 32.8% of participants enrolled their children in private tutoring classes of teachers teaching their children; 33.1% of participants enrolled their children in outstanding level teachers' private tutoring classes; and 9.1% of participants enrolled their children in other professional tutors' classes.

Additionally, 47.3% of parents revealed that the teachers teaching their children also organized private tutoring classes; 23.7% of parents responded that the teachers teaching their children did not do that; while 29% did not respond to this survey question. Therefore, 52.2% of parents agreed that they were willing to continue enrolling their children in private tutoring classes of teachers teaching their children. These parents explained that this was because of two benefits for their children: (i) The teachers currently teaching their children knew clearly about the advantages and disadvantages in teaching their children through the teaching and learning activities in public schools. Hence, they would know how to

maximize the advantages as well as to minimize the disadvantages in teaching their children by applying their knowledge deliveries in the private tutoring classes; and (ii) The teachers currently teaching their children might be very happy when working with the same students in both public schooling and private tutoring. Thus, they could easily favor the tutees in the teaching and learning activities of public schooling (Ho 2014).

There were 51.5% of participants arguing that their children have more knowledge after enrolling in private tutoring. Moreover, 19.6% of parents revealed that the public school teachers were happy and willing to help their children after their private tutoring enrolments. These summaries were consistent with the purposes of parents such as revising, maintaining and advancing knowledge of their children's learning as expected. However, 10.4% of parents admitted that their children's learning performances were unchanged after enrolling in private tutoring (Ho 2014).

According to these participants, after undertaking private tutoring classes, their children only improved their abilities in doing practical exercises and taking exams. Nevertheless, students improved little in vital skills of their own lives such as teamwork, self-study, creative activities, exploring problems and finding appropriate solutions (Ho 2014). For instance, 44.5% of parents confirmed that their children developed exercise practicing skills, whilst 40.3% of parents considered that their children improved exam taking skills. In contrast, only 14.8% of parents pointed out that their children were able to self-study and do creative activities; 8.8% of parents stated that their children were able to do teamwork; and 6.8% of parents believed that their children were able to solve daily life problems (Ho 2014).

1.3.4. Research of Tran and Pasquier-Doumer (2019)

Tran and Pasquier-Doumer (2019) confirmed that although many Vietnamese schools offer full-day schooling places for students to ensure that they should have enough instructional time to deliver lessons to students, many Vietnamese families still use private tutoring services to guarantee that their children should be able to achieve learning objectives through acquiring the most advanced and updated private tutoring knowledge. For example, according to the estimations of these authors in *the 2012 Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey*, there was approximately 35 per cent of the Vietnamese primary school students attended

private tutoring classes to gain extra knowledge because their parents were willing and ready to pay fees for these (Tran & Pasquier-Doumer 2019).

To sum up, although there has been no official and full national statistical data of the private tutoring enrolments of Vietnamese students from the Vietnamese government and local authorities so far, it is still confirmed that those numbers are quite large as these appeared from the education demands of students and their parents (Nguyen et al. 2019). At present, the private tutoring phenomenon in Vietnam has occurred in both inside and outside urban public schooling and mostly in inside rural public schooling. Private tutoring activities inside mainstream schooling majorly include the final test and exam preparations for school students at the end of each education level with the permission of local departments of education. Public schools usually charge parents tuition fees based on the agreement between the boards of school administration and parents. Thus, formal schooling normally manages and controls its private tutoring activities adequately. On the other hand, private tutoring activities outside regular schooling are various, such as home private tutoring of school teachers, local private tutoring centres, foreign private tutoring centres, tutoring in groups, one-on-one tutoring, etc. Private tutoring fees outside mainstream schooling, therefore, are also various for parents. As a result, although Vietnamese local authorities give permissions for private tutoring outside formal schooling, they still have difficulties in managing and controlling these types of private tutoring activities (Nguyen et al. 2019).

1.4. Research Problems

According to many previous private tutoring studies, some initial factors such as cultural, social, economic, educational and psychological factors that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring broadly are standardised traditionally and historically in various educational contexts (Bray 2020; Zhang & Bray 2020; Bray 2021; Guill & Bos 2014; Mwebi & Maithya 2016; Ravi & Suresh 2016). Unfortunately, these broad traditional factors have still not been clearly applied for exploring the private tutoring phenomenon in varying national contexts (Bray & Kwo, 2014; Bray & Lykins 2012; Bray et al. 2016; Guill & Bos 2014; Mwebi & Maithya 2016; Ravi & Suresh 2016). For example, some following research problems might arise:

(i) In fact, it is difficult for education policy makers to determine how the cultural factors such as religions, beliefs, superstitions, etc affect students and their parents' perceptions of private tutoring. It is also hardly for local education authorities in many countries, particularly in Asian nations, control such cultural factors in the shadow education prevalence. Consequently, the governments should play their role in managing and adjusting such sensitive issues through their approved private tutoring regulations in the local and state levels.

(ii) Unsurprisingly, most of families generally welcome and accept private tutoring, regardless of rich, middle-income or poor families. Rich families might use private tutoring to maintain their social superior class and show off their children's educational styles in public. Meanwhile, middle-income and poor families usually invest in private tutoring with the hope that their children may have opportunities to upgrade their social classes through undertaking exams and entering the next study levels successfully (Bray 2003). However, it is very difficult to determine or explore the investment ranges of parents and their families in private tutoring for their children without utilizing private tuition fees.

(iii) Many parents should not be able to help their children to do home-works because they may not have specific subject knowledge at their children's schooling. Therefore, low-educated parents simply think that if they are not able to help their children with their studies, tutors will instead help them to do that difficult task with unavoidable costs. Surprisingly, even parents of high level students also trust that private tutoring will help their children to study better, regardless of their children's excellent academic performances in high prestigious schools (Bray & Lykins, 2012). The reasons might be because in parental viewpoints, private tutoring helps their children for advancing lesson understanding, increasing students' self-confidence, and improving their academic achievements (Ireson & Rushforth 2014). Hence, the role of private tutoring knowledge should be examined critically.

(iv) In fact, private tutoring services in urban areas usually have been increasing than in rural areas. The higher demand of private tutoring in urban areas is because of some following reasons: the competitiveness in urban schools is definitely higher than in rural schools, corresponding with the competitiveness in the urban cities; urban parents are often expect their children achieve higher

academic performances due to their higher educational levels than parents in rural areas; and urban parents are generally wealthier than rural parents whilst affording to pay substantial private tutoring fees for their children (Bray 2003). On the other hand, rural students have fewer opportunities to receive private tutoring services than students in urban areas, due to their rural parents' incomes are low and less affordable for private tutoring fees; and both rural parents and students have less access to some types of private tutoring than urban parents and students (Bray & Lykins 2012). As a result, in parental viewpoints, the private tutoring activities in urban and rural areas should be clarified.

(v) There are some reasons for parents to employ private tutors for their children, mainly at their primary age such as: the obsession of parents in scholarship exams; the high level study performance required to get the scholarship grade; and the secure of a study place in the desired school or university (Bray 2003). Thus, how parents should be able to select tutors with good or even outstanding level in delivering private tutoring's knowledge to their children is questionable.

(vi) Parents understand clearly the good purpose of home-works for their children. However, their inability to help their children to do home-works successfully makes teachers think that such students need additional learning support. In other words, these students need to enroll in private tutoring to get the good knowledge acquisitions at their formal schools (Bray & Lykins 2012). As a consequence, parents should consider how their children should be able to acquire knowledge in private tutoring sufficiently and effectively.

Therefore, it is required that there should have appropriate contemporary factors which should be utilised to explore their influences in parental perceptions of private tutoring. Thus, this research thesis argued that there are also other factors that may have profound effects on parents' perceptions of private tutoring. They are: *(i) Government's regulations on private tutoring; (ii) Private tutoring fees; (iii) Private tutoring knowledge; (iv) Private tutoring locations; (v) Tutors' knowledge deliveries;* and *(vi) Students' knowledge acquisitions.* These factors might be smaller and more detailed than the cultural, social, economic, educational and psychological factors, although they are drawn from the cultural, social, economic, educational and psychological factor categories above (Bray 2003; Bray 2020; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Kwo 2014; Dang 2013; Herppich et al. 2016; Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Jones 2015; Liu & Bray

2020; Pourghaznein, Sabeghi & Shariatinejad 2015; Zhang & Bray 2020). In other words:

(i) Government's regulations on private tutoring come from the educational and social factor categories, because private tutoring regulations are usually designed and issued by Ministries of Education on the behalf of National or Federal Governments of many countries (Bray 2003; Bray 2020; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Kwo 2014; Liu & Bray 2020; Zhang & Bray 2020).

(ii) Private tutoring fees are withdrawn from the economic factor category, as parents have to choose very carefully between the incomes and expenditures of their households to ensure that they can afford reasonable amounts of private tuition fees for their children as well as their households' compulsory expenses (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Dang 2013; Zhang & Bray 2020). Nevertheless, Ireson and Rushforth (2014) insist that private tutoring fees can be also a psychological factor when many parents complain that the private tutoring expenses in their families are too expensive and force them to tighten their family budgets to afford these unavoidable costs.

(iii) Private tutoring knowledge is definitely contained in the educational factor category as both the private tutoring and public schooling curricula are designed and issued by reputable educators, academics, researchers and scholars who usually work for or cooperate with Ministries of Education in many nations (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Kwo 2014; Zhang & Bray 2020).

(iv) Private tutoring locations are organised in the economic factor category because of the significant differences of economic benefits, including medical and educational benefits, between urban and rural areas (Bray 2003; Bray 2020; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Jones 2015; Zhang & Bray 2020).

(v) Tutors' knowledge deliveries can be argued as belonging to educational, cultural and psychological factor categories. When parents are simply interested in the tutors' teaching methods in their children's private tutoring classes, the factor of tutors' knowledge deliveries is educational (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Herppich et al. 2016). Furthermore, the trust of parents in the Confucian philosophy that teachers/tutors can be seen as vital guardians of their children makes tutors' knowledge deliveries a cultural factor (Dang 2013). However, if parents pay attention to the issue of whether the desired academic achievements

of their children are due to the pedagogical methods of tutors, the issue becomes psychological (Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Liu & Bray 2020).

(vi) Students' knowledge acquisitions are also examined as depending on the categories of educational, cultural and psychological factors. When children are acquiring knowledge in private tutoring classes, parents are happy and therefore, the factor of students' knowledge acquisitions is educational (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Pourghaznein, Sabeghi & Shariatinejad 2015; Zhang & Bray 2020). Moreover, the effective knowledge acquisitions of students prove that they have followed exactly and successfully the study passion traditions of their families as a cultural factor (Dang 2013). On the contrary, if parents are dissatisfied with their children's knowledge acquisitions and feel that their financial investments in their children's studies are not effective, the factor of students' knowledge acquisitions becomes psychological (Ireson & Rushforth 2014).

1.5. The importance of researching parental perceptions of private tutoring and possible factors affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring

As analysed above, the phenomenon of private tutoring have been spread out in all over the world and influencing many stakeholders in any country such as students, teachers, parents, school leaders, school administrators, local authorities, local and state governments, public policy makers, etc. Among such various complicated and controversial issues, why doing research in parental perceptions of private tutoring and possible factors affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring are so important?

Research in parental perceptions of private tutoring contributes significantly to the recent education literature. In other words, researchers might consider important issues such as the comparison of parental perceptions between school education and shadow education, or specifically, between public schooling and private tutoring, because: (i) private tutoring phenomenon has become more professionalised; (ii) private tutoring curriculum contents has become more specialised; (iii) some components of private tutoring curriculum contents such as subject outline, mode of delivery, assessments, etc have become more standardised; and (iv) the overall demand of private tutoring for students and their

parents have become more diversified and comprehensive (Zhang & Bray 2020). Thus, understanding possible factors influencing parental perceptions and decisions to utilize private tutoring critically could assist policymakers, professionals and practitioners design and issue more appropriate and effective policies of private tutoring (Liu & Bray 2020).

1.6. The process of research undertaken

The author had decided to utilise the exploratory research to conduct the PhD research project in Vietnam as a case study, as he tried to gather ideas and opinions of the Vietnamese parents as research participants to seek the new findings for the research problem. Therefore, he used the *snowball sampling technique* to find a total of seventy-two appropriate research participants in three urban areas and three rural areas of North, Central and South Vietnam. Additionally, he undertook some qualitative research techniques such as *brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions* and *in-depth individual interviews* for data collection (Creswell & Creswell 2018; Neuman 2014; Zikmund et al. 2010; 2013). In the data analysis stage, the researcher utilised a series of techniques for analysing the qualitative data such as: *transcribing* raw verbal data; *translating* Vietnamese data into English; *sorting* data into appropriate categories; *coding* each category based on appropriate themes and main issues respectively, *comparing and contrasting* responses of participants; and *triangulating* various data from participants in different geographical areas to seek similar and different evidences of research findings realistically and validly. Finally, the candidate gathered all harvested findings, organised the structure of the PhD journey and started writing his PhD thesis (Creswell & Creswell 2018; Neuman 2014; Zikmund et al. 2010; 2013).

1.7. Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is outlined as follows: Firstly, in the introduction chapter, the background of private tutoring study, including definitions, key elements, advantages and dis advantages of private tutoring were identified. Secondly, both private tutoring in the international context and the Vietnamese context are introduced. Thirdly, the research problems of the study are critically identified. Next, the importance of researching parental perceptions of private

tutoring and possible factors affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring, as well as the process of research undertaken were also examined. In the literature review chapter, firstly parental roles in their children's private tutoring enrolments were introduced; and parental perceptions of private tutoring were interpreted. The traditional factors that affect parents' perceptions of private tutoring, consisting of cultural factors, social factors, economic factors, educational factors and psychological factors were determined. Furthermore, knowledge gaps in the literature review were examined. Therefore, the literature of the six contemporary factors: (i) Government's regulations on private tutoring; (ii) Private tutoring fees; (iii) Private tutoring knowledge; (iv) Private tutoring locations; (v) Tutors' knowledge deliveries; and (vi) Students' knowledge acquisitions, was demonstrated with the proposed research questions to support both the research questions and the qualitative research methods in the study. In addition, the research questions, research aims and research objective of the study were outlined with the motivation of the study. In the next chapter, appropriate theoretical frameworks (representing Fielden and LaRocque's theory of government regulations in private education, Bray et al.'s theory of private tutoring fees model, Moust's theory of tutor performance model and Cameron's theory of the household registration system for education) and a conceptual model (with full explanations of variables and related items and research questions versus variables and related items) of the study were introduced. In the research methodology chapter, at first, definitions and organising frameworks of case study research were investigated. Following this, both theoretical and practical reasons for choosing case study research as the appropriate research method of the thesis were explored. Finally, the case study research design process and population and sampling method, data collection and data analysis techniques were represented. In the findings and discussions chapters, all findings and discussions of (i) Government's regulations on private tutoring; (ii) Private tutoring fees; (iii) Private tutoring knowledge; (iv) Private tutoring locations; (v) Tutors' knowledge deliveries; and (vi) Students' knowledge acquisitions that influenced parents' perceptions of private tutoring were very clearly presented to answer all the six research questions respectively. In the conclusion chapter, firstly the short summary of the study was displayed. Secondly, the outcomes of the study were presented. Thirdly, the significance of the study was demonstrated. Fourthly, the

benefits of the study and the unique contribution to knowledge were pointed out. Fifthly, the unique of contributions to knowledge was argued. Sixthly, the limitations of the study were explained. Finally, the suggestions of further research of the thesis were determined.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW, RESEARCH GAPS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter initially introduces parental roles in their children's private tutoring enrolments and interpretes parental perceptions of private tutoring. Second, it reviews details of traditional factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring, consisting of cultural factors, social factors, economic factors, educational factors and psychological factors as mentioned above. Secondly, the audience should be able to identify the current knowledge gaps of the research topic of private tutoring. the reader should be able to realise why the proposed factors could also affect parents' perceptions of private tutoring and in what way these proposed factors would be called contemporary factors. Thirdly, such contemporary factors, including (i) Government's regulations on private tutoring; (ii) Private tutoring fees; (iii) Private tutoring knowledge; (iv) Private tutoring locations; (v) Tutors' knowledge deliveries; and (vi) Students' knowledge acquisitions had been critically reviewed along with the related research questions. Next, the research questions, research aims and research objective of the study were outlined. Finally, the motivation of the study was reflected.

2.1. Literature review

2.1.1. Parental roles in their children's private tutoring enrolments

In the global phenomenon of private tutoring, the roles of parents in their children's tutoring enrolments is extreme noticeable because of some following reasons pointed out by Zhang and Bray (2020): (i) the complicated interactions among parents, tutoring schools/centres and socio-economic development based on the social power and classes in the society; (ii) the reactions of parents for the expansion of shadow education markets as a global phenomenon; (iii) parental behaviour for the closure of face-to-face tutoring centres in the spreadout of the COVID-19 pademic in all over the world since 2020 and the dramatical increase in online tutoring sessions instead (World Health Organisation 2020); and (iv): the attractive curricular and pedagogical contents of private tutoring for parents.

Hence, it is important to understand the parental perceptions of private tutoring because parents are usually: (i) the main guardian of their children's studies at home and schools; and (ii) the main stakeholder who pay tuition fees for their children in both mainstream schooling and private tutoring (Edwards et al. 2019; Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Liu 2019).

Some previous studies have shown the significant contributions of parental perceptions of private tutoring to our understanding of shadow education. For example, Zhang and Bray (2020) suggests that parents have attemped to utilize all possible private tutoring options to help their children escape some disadvantages from public schooling (e.g. lacking of advanced knowledge for students, less developing students' soft skills; hindering students' creativity, etc.) as much as possible. Meanwhile, urban and rural parents have different atttitudes in accessing shadow education, depending on their socio-economic resources such as their occupations, incomes, educational backgrounds, aspirations on their children's education, etc. (Liu 2019; Zhang & Bray 2019). Therefore, parents have afforded to buy private tutoring services for their children for gaining the competitive advantages for their children's exam preparations in the future (Liu 2019; Zhang & Bray 2020). Moreover, busy parents who have to work full time have considered private tutoring services as the ideal places where professional tutors could be able to help them supervise their children to acquire useful school knowledge as well as reduce harmful activities such as online computer games or gamblings (Zhang 2019). With various contributions into private tutoring literature, it is questioned that: What are parental perceptions of private tutoring?

2.1.2. Parental perceptions of private tutoring

There are a number of definitions of perception: Hanna, Wozniak and Hanna (2017, p. 81) define perception as 'the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting sensations into a meaningful whole'. Alternatively, Solomon (2018, p. 124) explains that 'perception is the process by which physical sensations such as sights, sounds and smells are selected, organized and interpreted'. Based on the current definitions of perception above, how could parental perceptions of private tutoring be interpreted?

Bray, Kobakhidze and Kwo (2020), Briant et al. (2019), Liu and Bray (2020) and Zhang and Bray (2020) argued that parents use private tutoring services as a helpful tool to increase their confidence in the educational service market,

decreasing the pressure of child support responsibility, as well as maximizing their children's academic performances and minimizing the future risks of less education and unemployment for their children. Hence, under the educational and business perspectives in this study, *parents' perceptions of private tutoring* could be considered as the process of collecting and interpreting information of various factors within this shadow education service that influences them as well as their children and families (Dang 2013).

2.1.3. Traditional Factors Influencing Parents' Perceptions of Private Tutoring

In fact, many previous studies proved that parental perceptions of private tutoring have been influenced by broad traditional factors like *cultural factors, social factors, economic factors, educational factors and psychological factors.* Unfortunately, to the best knowledge of the candidate, there has not been so far a definition of traditional factors affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring in the literature review. Therefore, the candidate, by his own knowledge and experience in researching private tutoring topic for several years, has proposed his own following definition: **Traditional factors affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring are factors which have been built for a long historical time period with the reasonable stability and sustainability, having strong spiritual values and influences for parental perceptions of private tutoring.**

As a result, these groups of factors are considered as traditional by the candidate because they were explored, identified, clarified and justified by many well-known researchers and academics such as Dang (2007), Dang (2011), Bray (2020), Bray (2021), Bray and Kwo (2014), Guill and Bos (2014), Ireson and Rushforth (2014), Zhang and Bray (2020), etc. for over 17 decades since the early 1850s. Therefore, when having to pay significant amounts of their monthly incomes for their children's private tuitions, parents also have been influenced by various broad traditional factors for their perceptions as indicated and analysed below (Dang 2007; Dang 2011; Bray & Kwo 2014; Guill & Bos 2014; Ireson & Rushforth 2014).

2.1.3.1. Cultural Factors

The cultural factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring in the world might vary in different geographical regions (Bray 2003; Bray 2020; Bray

& Lykins 2012; Bray & Kwo 2014; Zhang & Bray 2020). Parents in European and North America are likely to be persuaded by individual ability of their children who receive private tutoring, while families in Oceania are more likely to be affected by competitions in the education systems which encourage private tutoring of their children (Bray 2003; Bray 2020). Surprisingly, although private tutoring in Africa has received little concentrations because researchers and academics have been paying more attentions to their research priority in bringing all African children into school at their first time as the Fourth of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4) suggested, African parents have still increased their children's enrolment rates in such after-school tutoring classes (Bray 2021). Parents in East Asian and Southeast Asian countries such as China and Vietnam are affected significantly by the Confucian philosophy in many generations (Feng 2019). Thus, parents should be able to use private tutoring for educating their children to ensure that they have study passions in their lifetime and desire to compete for good leadership and management employment positions after graduating from universities (Bray et al. 2020).

2.1.3.2. Social Factors

As another important issue, Dang (2007) and Bray and Lykins (2012) focused on East Asian and Southeast Asian countries such as China and Vietnam, investigating cultural factors that affect parents' perceptions of private tutoring like the Confucian philosophy, the teachers' role and the study passion tradition of families. Confucianism demonstrated that through hundreds of years within the Feudatory periods, the Kings often selected officials based on their examination results to ensure that all candidates were competent through their educational achievements (Feng 2019). Therefore, under the Confucian philosophy, the role of teachers was very important as they specialised in educating and training prospective candidates for the Kings (Feng 2019). Therefore, although many European, Oceanian, Latin-American and African parents have currently followed private tutoring services for their own educational philosophy in the modern societies under the present Industrial Revolution 4.0 (Bray 2021; Zhang & Bray 2020), there still has been an unofficial and traditional study passion philosophy among the generations that grandparents and parents always remind their nieces/nephews/children: They often recommend the next generations to study

hard to achieve a better life and future (Dang 2011). Similarly, the traditions of private tutoring have also passed down from grandparents, parents and children in South Asia (e.g. Sri Lanka) (Bray & Lykins 2012). As a consequence, to adapt this valuable study passion tradition, parents often invest a lot of their income in their children's studies, including private tutoring lessons (Bray & Lykins 2012; Dang 2011).

2.1.3.3. Economic Factors

In the former Soviet Union, parents benefited from the fee-free private tutoring of the socialist ideal (Bray 2003; Bray 2020). However, like parents in other free market economies in Europe, Latin-America, East Asia and Southeast Asia, they started to face the fee-paid private tutoring market in the post-Soviet era (Bray 2003; Bray 2020; Bray & Lykins 2012). One reason might be that some parents have read and understood the theories of the rates of return in education economics. Moreover, most parents strongly believe that if their children can stay longer in a better education system through a private tutoring tool, such children will have more opportunities to enjoy the higher quality of this type of private education and enhance potential earning rates and living standards for their lifetime. In contrast, if their children achieve poor examination performances in schools, they will have less of a competitive advantage in their future employments resulting in incur low living standards (Bray & Lykins 2012).

As parents are usually the owners of households, Dang (2011), Choi and Choi (2016), Liu and Bray (2017) and Pallegedara (2018) have pointed out that parents' perceptions of private tutoring are also based on some economic factors such as: *(i) Household living standards:* Not unexpectedly, wealthy households usually spend more on their children's private tutoring classes than the poor households; *(ii) Household sizes:* Generally, households with more children have smaller expenditure on their children's private tutoring classes and vice versa; *(iii) Parental education:* Parents who have higher education levels are more likely to pay more for their children's private tutoring classes; and *(iv) Locations:* Households in urban areas often spend more for their children's private tutoring classes than households in rural areas (Choi & Choi 2016; Dang 2011, p. 27; Liu & Bray 2017; Mahmud & Bray 2017; Pallegedara 2018; Pallegedara & Mottaleb 2018). Many parents have already established that their incomes are sufficient to pay for their children's private tutoring and have expressed their willingness to

use the private tutoring market as a way to secure an educational advantage for their children (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Lykins 2012; Liu & Bray 2020; Zhang & Bray 2020).

These economic factors above significantly influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring, as private tuition for their children is certainly a household expense (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020). As well as the need to meet their payments, parents have other issues to consider. For example, there would be a number of private tutoring services to choose from when selecting the most suitable option for their children (Dang 2013); which private tutoring services have high qualities for wealthy families; what possible consequences in the long-term for low income families who could not afford to pay private tutoring fees for their children (Zhang & Bray 2020); or the increase in private tutoring expense of a number of families as parents have mistrusted the public schooling system (Liu & Bray 2020).

2.1.3.4. Educational Factors

Ireson and Rushforth (2014) proposed that a number of factors in the education system of a nation affect parental perceptions of private tutoring. For example, within the education systems in developed nations such as the USA, South Africa, England and Australia, there are national education schemes to support private tutoring as a supplementary education for students with poor academic performances or slow knowledge acquisition (Mwebi & Maithya 2016). In contrast, in the education systems of less developed countries such as Kenya, Bangladesh or Vietnam, local education authorities might ban or hinder private tutoring with the statement that all national curriculums and exam preparations should be able to be completed in schools within the given semesters; and these rules must be applied for all school students (Dang 2013; Mahmud & Bray 2017; Mwebi & Maithya 2016). It is common for parents of modest means and whose students have a limited study performance to worry about their children's study results. They have the added concern that their children will not have the opportunity to improve their academic performance without undertaking private tutoring classes (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Liu & Bray 2020). Children with a limited study performance may prove to be problematic for their parents but, surprisingly, even parents of high and outstanding level students often utilise private tutoring, lest, for financial incentives, teachers conceal important and

advanced knowledge that is useful for their children in mainstream schools and only deliver such valuable knowledge in private tutoring classes (Addi-Raccah & Dana 2015; Wang & Bray 2016; Zhang & Bray 2020). In other words, most parents are generally persuaded that private tutoring is unavoidable, whether or not they can afford it (Sen 2009). Therefore, parents, regardless of their children's learning performances from teachers' comments, do not want their children to miss the essential knowledge from tutors (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Zhang & Bray 2020; Sun et. al 2020). Consequently, most parents of high, medium and low level students accept the need to send their children to private tutoring classes because of these educational factors (Bray & Kwo 2014).

2.1.3.5. Psychological Factors

Ireson and Rushforth (2014; as cited in Lee, Park & Lee 2009) claim that perceptions of parents in private tutoring depend on some psychological factors: *(i) Motivation:* Overall, the educational values for human development motivate parents to encourage their children to enrol in private tutoring (Liu & Bray 2017; Sun et. al 2020). Additionally, parents always desire that their children will gain the greatest possible competitive advantage in important examinations through private tutoring courses (Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Liu & Bray 2020; Sun et. al 2020; Zhang & Bray 2020). Moreover, parents have a further vision of stimulating their children to use private tutoring knowledge for gaining higher qualifications in prestigious universities in preparation for their future employment (Doherty & Dooley 2017; Pallegedara & Mottaleb 2018; Sun et. al 2020). Many parents, in practice, are forced to utilise the private tutoring services for their children as they are really dissatisfied with the quality of teaching and learning activities in the governmental schooling system and have a great deal of anxiety about their children's learning (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Lykins 2012; Liu & Bray 2020; Sun et. al 2020; Zhang & Bray 2020); *(ii) Expectations:* Parents are more likely to be confident that their children will achieve the desired grades in exams after taking private tutoring courses as expected (Liu 2019; Liu & Bray 2020; Weerasinghe 2017; Zhang & Bray 2017); and *(iii) Satisfaction:* Like customers who use their favourite products and services, parents are psychologically satisfied if the investments in their children's private tutoring result in actual benefits to their children's future (Briant et al. 2019; Kim & Jung 2019; Oliver 2010). These psychological factors

influence parents' minds as follows: Firstly, parents consider that their children's studies in the future will be beneficial and proceed as planned if they encourage their children to enrol in private tutoring (Zhang & Bray 2020). Next, parents firmly believe that their children's attendances at private tutoring classes will lead to their future academic success (Liu & Bray 2020). Finally, parents feel comfortable when their children yield the desired academic achievements through private tutoring activities, as they are certain that their investments in children's studies will return the desired academic benefits for their children (Wang & Bray 2016).

2.2. Research Gaps in the Literature Review

There have been many previous studies that have examined findings and discussions on possible factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Lykins 2012; Butler 2013; Dang 2011; Dang 2013; Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019; Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Liu 2019; Ravi & Suresh 2016). However, the following significant gaps on contemporary factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring as discussed above have still appeared from the literature and remain unanswered:

2.2.1. Lack of appropriate qualitative research methods applying for investigating various issues in the private tutoring phenomenon

Brain and Parnell (2011) and Liu (2019) argued that quantitative research approaches might not be the most appropriate tool to collect data relating to private tutoring because of the significant effectiveness of various qualitative research methods for the same research topic. Similarly, Bray, Kwo and Jokíc (2015, p. 79) supported this argument with the following statement:

> *In the domain of private tutoring, as in educational studies more generally, qualitative research has been less common. While substantial debates about private tutoring and exploration of its foundations and implications are not possible without robust quantitative data, it is also impossible to understand the complexity of private tutoring without rich qualitative data.*

Alternatively, from the researchers' viewpoints above, more qualitative research on the private tutoring topic should be undertaken to continue gathering more

comprehensive unexplored and undetected qualitative data from various stakeholders and differing perspectives (Creswell 2014; Neuman, 2011; Neuman, 2014) about shadow education (Bray & Kwo 2014).

2.2.2. Lack of research in the contextual variability of parents' perceptions of private tutoring

Ireson and Rushforth (2014) confirmed that although many factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring have been investigated, the variation in parents' perceptions of private tutoring is still significant. Hence, future research on this issue should be sampled largely and systematically. Butler (2013) argued that the contextual variability of parents' perceptions of private tutoring might differ widely. Thus, some issues which relate to parents' perceptions of private tutoring such as socio-cultural and educational factors in different contexts should be examined.

2.2.3. Lack of research in purposes of stakeholders, teaching and learning, differences between learning in private tutoring and formal schooling

Guill and Bos (2014) suggested that the following issues need thorough examination: (i) Purposes of parents, students and tutors in private tutoring lessons; (ii) Teaching and learning processes in private tutoring; (iii) Interface between the learning process of students as tutees in private tutoring classes and as pupils in regular schooling classes.

2.2.4. Lack of research with more suitable sample sizes and in more investigated areas

Moreover, Ravi and Suresh (2016) explained that the sample sizes of prior research locations in some cases are small because parents as research participants are busy at work and they do not have the time to tell the researcher about their children's private tutoring. This has resulted in the validity being questioned in these studies. As a result, future research of parents' perceptions of private tutoring should be undertaken in more areas with more suitable sample sizes.

2.2.5. Lack of research in tutors' profiles, their motivations and tutoring methods

Dang (2013) examined whether tutors always play an important role in private tutoring. Hence, some issues such as tutors' profiles, their motivations and tutoring methods should be considered for further research.

2.2.6. Lack of research in factors influencing parental decisions to use private tutoring

Generally, Choi & Cho (2016) summarized that more comprehensive understanding of factors influencing decisions of parents and youths to utilize private tutoring should be investigated to assist policymakers, professionals and practitioners design and issue more appropriate and effective policies of private tutoring.

2.2.7. Lack of research in factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring in different countries

Consequently, parents' perceptions of private tutoring still might vary in the context of different countries (Bray 2003). Hence, Ireson and Rushforth (2014) suggested that further research is needed into factors in other nations that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring.

As a result, one of the desires of the candidate is attempting to narrow as many of the research gaps in the literature review above as possible through the research findings in his PhD thesis. Thus, from the parents' perspectives, these limitations of the literature review have prompted the research thesis to investigate the following contemporary factors: *(i) Government's regulations on private tutoring; (ii) Private tutoring fees; (iii) Private tutoring knowledge; (iv) Private tutoring locations; (v) Tutors' knowledge deliveries;* and *(vi) Students' knowledge acquisitions* that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring deeply with a case study approach in Vietnam. Additionally, by using appropriate qualitative research techniques, the study was expected to culminate in new knowledge contributions to the modified theoretical frameworks and the related conceptual model of these contemporary factors as indicated in the next chapter.

2.3. Contemporary Factors Influencing Parents' Perceptions of Private Tutoring

As demonstrated above, the suggested factors involve direct and/or indirect issues relating to many stakeholders, for example governments, educational policy makers/administrators/managers, educators, academics, school and university

communities, tutors/teachers, students and parents themselves (Dang 2013; Bray & Kwo 2014; Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Jones 2015; Pourghaznein, Sabeghi & Shariatinejad 2015; Herppich et al. 2016). Specifically, due to the daily direct influences in parents' perceptions of private tutoring, such fruitful factors could be recognised as ***contemporary factors*** in the research thesis and are analysed critically below.

Again, to the best knowledge of the author, there has not been so far a definition of contemporary factors affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring in the literature review. Thus, the author, by his own knowledge and experience in researching private tutoring topic for several years, has proposed his own following definition: **Contemporary factors affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring are factors which have been emerged and raised recently, but promptly expressed their significant stability and sustainability in practice, having strong spiritual values and influences for parental perceptions of private tutoring.**

In the candidate's own opinion, there have been the closely and tightly relationships between traditional factors and contemporary factors influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring. Although these relationships have not been detected and analysed in the literature review previously, they are still existed and bringing the philosophical benefits for education researchers and academics when doing research in private tutoring. Hence, the candidate has decided to identify and analyse the principles and arguments of traditional factors and contemporary factors, in his own opinions, for explaining why he clarified factors influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring into such two categories as follows:

First, traditional factors could be considered as the starting points of contemporary factors; whereas contemporary factors are the heredities from traditional factors at the higher levels. For example, the traditional factor *study passion* within the *cultural factor* category should be the benchmark for the contemporary factor *government's regulations on private tutoring*. In contrast, the contemporary factor *government's regulations on private tutoring* is the heredity of the traditional factor *study passion* within the *cultural factor* category at the higher social development level: *study passion* had been appeared in the

Feudatory cultural periods, while *government's regulations on private tutoring* has been only established in the modern and democratic societies.

Second, the values of contemporary factors are effects of the non-stop development of the values of traditional factors. In other words, contemporary factors have the causal origins from traditional factors in the causes and effects relationship. For instance, the contemporary factors *tutors' knowledge deliveries* and *students' knowledge acquisitions* are effects of the non-stop development of the traditional factor *study passion* within the *cultural factor* category for a long historical time period.

Thirdly, both traditional and contemporary factors have their own values when investigating parental perceptions of private tutoring. Therefore, although traditional factors and contemporary factors could be exchanged, replaced or hereditised in different time periods of research, researchers and stakeholders in the private tutoring phenomenon should not ignore, remove or modify any factors in their academic or professional works to avoid missing any useful or potential research issues. For example, any issues of *cultural factors* could be useful, as it may help researchers understand the unknown or hidden reasons in the private tutoring phenomenon of a specific country or a geographical area.

Finally, although having their own values as meontioned above, both traditional and contemporary factors should be combined together at any time for exploring possible unidentified issues in the private tutoring phenomenon. As a result, researchers and stakeholders should monitor both traditional and contemporary factors in their own combination lenses for drawing the useful research ideas and discussions. For instance, the contemporary factor *private tutoring fees* would be considered as the combination of traditional factors (e.g. *cultural factors, social factors, economic factors, psychological factors*) and other contemporary factors (e.g. *government's regulations on private tutoring, private tutoring knowledge, tutors' knowledge deliveries, students' knowledge acquisitions*), as all these factors are directly or indirectly related to financial incentives in the form of fee payments for shadow education services among stakeholders: parents, students, teachers, school leaders, local authorities, government, etc.

2.3.1. Government's Regulations on Private Tutoring

Many studies have mentioned government's regulations on private tutoring in many countries with various responses: Ignoring private tutoring; Prohibiting private tutoring; Recognising and Regulating private tutoring; and Encouraging private tutoring (Bray 2003; Bray 2020; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Kwo 2014; Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Liu & Bray 2020; Mwebi & Maithya 2016; Zhang & Bray 2020) as follows:

Bray and Kwo (2014) explained the reasons for some governments ignoring private tutoring. They argued that private tutoring in their countries is simply a non-significant issue compared to other urgent issues in education, hence it is unattended; or they do not know how to play a positive role to deal with private tutoring, as this educational service is run in under-regulated education markets.

In contrast, some governments strictly prohibit or hinder the development of private tutoring because of common problems: the additional financial burden placed on low income households; opportunities for bribery and corruption for tutors as regular school teachers; inequalities in education as high income families in urban areas will have more opportunities to access quality private tutoring services than low income families in rural areas (Bray & Kwo 2014; Liu & Bray 2020).

Many governments are currently interested in the development of private tutoring services in their countries, as this 'global phenomenon' brings some advantages for socio-economic development, for improvement in school systems and in the future of the next generations (Bray & Kwo 2014, p. x). Thus, most of these governments have issued related regulations to recognise and regulate private tutoring to maintain stability in their schooling systems (Bray 2020; Bray & Kwo 2014).

Finally, a number of governments actively encourage private tutoring because they believe that these extra educational services improve students' grades and their academic results as well as supporting school performances by contributing more knowledge for the national curriculum. Moreover, the private tutoring businesses add revenues for governments through the taxation system (Bray 2020; Liu & Bray 2020; Mwebi & Maithya 2016).

The concensus among most governments, however, as Bray and Kwo (2014) argued, is that private tutoring should be strictly recognised and regulated, as well as these practices should be supported (Bray 2020; Mwebi & Maithya 2016).

Unfortunately, as described by Bray and Kwo (2014), some governments have created inadequate regulations for private tutoring due to their insufficient understanding of causes and effects of private tutoring in both theory and practice. Thus, Bray and Kwo (2014) suggested that global regulations for private tutoring, regardless of whether they relate to developed or developing countries, should be compared, contrasted and revised carefully to formulate the guidelines that are needed for private tutoring. Alternatively, although many governments have attempted to organise appropriate regulations for private tutoring services in their nations, so far there has been little research to reflect how these regulations influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring (Bray & Kwo 2014). Therefore, this gap leads to the first research question: ***How do the government's regulations on private tutoring influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?***

2.3.2. Private Tutoring Fees

As mentioned by Bray and Kwo (2014, p. 1), private tutoring can be seen as a 'shadow education' of mainstream schools due to its extension of regular schools. Thus, fees in private tutoring and in regular schools should be compared and contrasted to identify their similarities and differences (Bray et al. 2016).

As examined in the definition of private tutoring, tutors usually undertake private tutoring classes for fees (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Dang 2013; Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Mwebi & Maithya 2016; Zhang & Bray 2020). In some developing countries, particularly Cambodia and Vietnam, tutors earn private tutoring fees as an extra income for covering their living expenses because of insufficient salaries from their professional teaching (Bray et al. 2016; Dang 2013). In addition, Bray et al. (2016) revealed that tutees and their parents can pay their tuition fees per lesson or per month, depending on their tutors' requirements. Unfortunately, private tutoring fees are often financial burdens to many families in developing countries (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray et al. 2016; Choi & Choi 2016; Dang 2013; Endow 2019; Ille & Peacey 2019; Liu 2018; Liu & Bray 2020; Pallegedara & Mottaleb 2018; Salovaara 2017; Sen 2009; Zhang & Bray 2020). Regardless of this difficulty, many parents understand clearly that if they do not wish to pay private tutoring fees for their children this academic year, they will take risks to pay more in the future if their children fail and have to repeat subjects (Bray 2003). More specifically, Bray and Lykins (2012, p. 25)

confirmed that parents who wish to invest their incomes in private tutoring at the current education level may help their children to gain scholarships at the future education level, or 'pay now to save later'. In contrast, 'save now but pay later' might occur if parents do not invest in their children's private tutoring and their children may gain a future education level place without scholarships. Consequently, parents often face pressure to invest in their children's private tutoring classes (Bray 2003; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Salovaara 2017; Zhang & Bray 2020).

On the other hand, fees in regular schools are generally reasonable and acceptable with most students and their families due to governmental funded-education programs in many developed and developing nations because of the Human Capital policies (Goldin 2014). Therefore, students are usually charged low or reasonable fees by public funded schools (Adeniyi & Taiwo 2011).

As described above, the prior studies on how private tutoring fees influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring have rarely been considered (Bray et al. 2016; Ireson & Rushforth 2014). This gap raises the second research question:

How do private tutoring fees influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?

2.3.3. Private Tutoring Knowledge

Unsurprisingly, many parents strongly believe that there might be significant differences between knowledge in private tutoring and knowledge in government schools (Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Liu & Bray 2020). In other words, if the private tutoring content of curriculum and national mainstream school content of curriculum were the same, there would be no persuasive reasons for students to attend private tutoring classes. Consequently, the differences between private tutoring knowledge and regular schools knowledge should be critically discussed (Bray et al. 2016).

Undeniably, knowledge in private tutoring classes can be varied and adapted flexibly to meet the different and specific categories of students (Kinyaduka 2014). For instance, tutors provide revisions of previous lessons with the repetition of important theoretical knowledge and practical exercises for low level students (Berberog̃lu & Tansel 2014; Liu & Bray 2017; Liu & Bray 2020) as well as the maintenance of current regular and standard theoretical knowledge and practical exercises for medium level students (Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray et al. 2018; Liu & Bray 2020). Moreover, tutors are also happy to introduce more

comprehensive knowledge and related complex exercises for high level students who wish to advance their knowledge in private tutoring (Bray et al. 2018; Guill & Bos 2014; Liu & Bray 2017; Liu & Bray 2020; Wang & Bray 2016).

While the knowledge obtained from tutors may be comprehensive, regular school teachers only introduce knowledge of the national approved curricula in textbooks to their students (Bray et al. 2016; Bray et al. 2018). Theoretically, the national approved curricula are designed by Ministries of Education in many countries to provide appropriate knowledge for students in the same grades (Mwebi & Maithya 2016). In practice, unfortunately, not all students in the mainstream classrooms are able to understand clearly the knowledge in the textbooks that their teachers have taught them (Kinyaduka 2014). As a result, teachers usually suggest their students to come to their private tutoring classes to receive the optional knowledge revisions, knowledge maintenances and knowledge advancements (Bray et al. 2016; Liu & Bray 2017).

As investigated by Bourdeau and Grandbastien (2012), private tutoring knowledge should be further investigated to improve learners' knowledge acquisitions and their parents' perceptions of private tutoring, as new expectations from students and parents for this factor continue to arise. However, the issue of private tutoring knowledge so far has not yet been clearly clarified (Kim & Jung 2019). This gap leads to the third research question: ***How does private tutoring knowledge influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?***

2.3.4. Private Tutoring Locations

As indicated by Bray and Kwo (2014), private tutoring is an educational service in the unregulated markets of various locations. Thus, the differences of private tutoring between urban areas and rural areas should be specified (Zhang & Bray 2020).

Many previous studies confirmed that the rate of private tutoring has been rising rapidly in urban areas (Bray 2003; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray et al. 2016; Dang 2011; Jones 2015; Pallegedara 2018; Pallegedara & Mottaleb 2018; Pearce, Power & Taylor 2018; Zhang & Bray 2018). Certainly, the development of private tutoring is closely related to the allocation of numerous schools in crowded cities (Jones 2015). Alternatively, the more schools are setting up in urban cities, the more private tutoring services are also created to cater for the

demand of students and their parents (Bray & Kwo 2014; Pallegedara 2018; Pearce, Power & Taylor 2018; Zhang & Bray 2018).

Private tutoring in rural areas is, in contrast, generally less developed than in urban areas (Bray et al. 2016; Liu & Bray 2017; Pallegedara 2018; Pallegedara & Mottaleb 2018; Zhang 2018). The possibility might be because there are fewer allocated schools in rural provinces, making these areas less supportive and convenient to live and study (Jones 2015). As a result, parents from rural areas always wish to send their children to live in urban areas to receive better educational benefits, including private tutoring services (Cameron 2012).

As well as urban areas being supportive and convenient, there are a number of reasons for the desire to relocate: (i) The private tutoring competitiveness in urban areas is higher than in rural areas; (ii) Urban parents usually have higher educational levels than rural parents, thus logically they often have higher expectations for their children's education; (iii) Urban parents are more socio-economically secure and more are able to afford private tutoring fees for their children than rural parents (Chew & Leong 1995; Pallegedara 2018; Zhang & Bray 2019; Zhang & Bray 2020).

Consequently, as Lounkaew (2013) explained, educational locations, comprising private tutoring locations, could be further researched in both urban and rural areas, as the gap between high quality schools in urban areas and medium and low quality schools in rural areas might be related to students' living and studying backgrounds and their parents' perceptions of private tutoring. Unfortunately, private tutoring locations in both urban and rural areas still have not been thoroughly studied (Bray & Kwo 2014; Liu & Bray 2017). This gap raises the fourth research question: ***How do private tutoring locations influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?***

2.3.5. Tutors' Knowledge Deliveries

Although both tutors and teachers should be able to deliver knowledge in lessons, there are substantial differences in their knowledge delivery approaches (Bray et al. 2016; Yung 2020a; Liu & Bray 2020). These should be accurately identified to clearly understand the different schedules of knowledge delivery within the roles of tutors and teachers (Guill & Bos 2014).

The purpose of private tutoring is to ensure that tutees have opportunities to understand theoretical knowledge clearly and know how to apply theoretical

knowledge for doing practical exercises coherently (Liu & Bray 2020; Muldner, Lam & Chi 2014). Therefore, tutors often deliver the tutoring lessons slowly and carefully (Guill & Bos 2014). They explain theoretical issues in detail and have sufficient patience to observe students copying down these revisions into their notebooks. Moreover, tutors spend time to ask their tutees to repeat what they have said and what their students have written down. Additionally, tutors also introduce their very detailed methods of doing practical exercises to students as standard samples. After copying these examples, tutees are required to do similar exercises by applying these standard samples. This traditional and prevalent teaching method ensures that at least students should be able to present theoretical issues and understand how to apply theories for doing practical exercises adequately and coherently (Bray et al. 2016; Liu & Bray 2020; Yung 2020a).

One other important issue, according to Bray et al. (2016), is that some teachers do not finish teaching their lessons for students by the due dates as noted in the national curricula. Consequently, teachers sometimes deliver insufficient lesson contents. Therefore, teachers (who are also tutors) frequently deliver their students (as the tutees) the rest of lesson contents in their private tutoring classes (Mwebi & Maithya 2016). These frequent knowledge delivery habits of teachers encourage students to enrol in private tutoring classes with their own teachers to receive the knowledge missing in mainstream schools. In addition, these habits also enable students to perceive that if they are unclear about anything within the lessons in regular schools, they should ask questions and receive feedback only in their teachers' private tutoring classes (Bray et al. 2016; Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019; Yung 2020a).

Similarly, tutors as teachers who deliver private tutoring knowledge for their regular school students as tutees have to apply slow and detailed teaching methods to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of their private tutoring classes (Bray et al. 2016; Liu & Bray 2020). Hence, mainstream school students who are tutees usually have opportunities to ask their teacher questions about unclear issues in private tutoring classes that they have not had the chance to ask them in regular school classes (Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019; Mwebi & Maithya 2016; Yung 2020a). Additionally, many state school students who are also tutees feel confident in their learning strategies after their teachers introduce the important knowledge in their private tutoring classes, including the knowledge

that their teachers do not share with students who are not tutees in their public schooling classes (Guill & Bos 2014).

Unsurprisingly, when returning to the regular school environments, tutors as teachers will come back to the usual teaching methods that they used for their students (Bray et al. 2016; Liu & Bray 2020). Noticeably, many students who are tutees of their teachers' private tutoring classes feel that the mainstream school lessons are boring, as they have known them in advance and copied them down in their private tutoring notebooks (Bhorkar & Bray 2018; Zhang & Bray 2017; Yung 2020a). In contrast, students who do not attend their teachers' private tutoring classes may feel worried or lack confidence about what lessons their classmates have already known in private tutoring classes and they do not know, until their teachers deliver these lessons to them as required within the national curriculums in the mainstream school classes (Bray et al. 2016; Yung 2020a).

In fact, excellent skilled tutors might have to work with unmotivated or incapable students. On the other hand, motivated and capable students may have to study with a lack of knowledge and pedagogically skilled tutors (Yung 2020b). Nevertheless, parents may continue to hire the existing tutors or employ different tutors rather than abandoning private tutoring (Bray & Lykins 2012).

Therefore, many researchers propose further research in knowledge deliveries of both tutors and teachers for motivating the comparing and contrasting ability of parents' perceptions of private tutoring (Brain & Parnell 2011; Lai & Lo-Fu 2013; Herppich et al. 2016; Shuilleabhain 2016). Nevertheless, the remainder of these differentiations in knowledge deliveries of both tutors and teachers above have not been extensively reported. This gap raises the fifth research question: ***How do tutors' knowledge deliveries influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?***

2.3.6. Students' Knowledge Acquisitions

Students' knowledge acquisition is a very important outcome to determine whether a private tutoring performance is successful or not (Bray & Kwo 2014). Thus, the knowledge acquisitions of students in both private tutoring and regular schools should be specifically examined.

Generally, both parents and students confirm that attendance at private tutoring classes helps students to increase their academic achievements (Dohn 2016; Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019; Guill & Bos 2014; Kurvits & Kurvits 2013; Lee 2013). The reason for that might be when deciding to enroll in private

tutoring classes, students have a trust in the nature of private tutoring and prepare their study intention carefully to acquire private tutoring knowledge (Abduli, Aleksovska & Durmishi 2015; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019; Schnurr et al. 2015). Nonetheless, while students can communicate directly with their tutors or use the tutors' feedback to determine their study progress, their parents might not have opportunities to contact tutors in person. Therefore, they have to use their children's assessment summaries from tutors to master their children's study progress (Guill & Bos 2014).

As argued by Abduli, Aleksovska and Durmishi (2015), teachers certainly are the decision-makers on teaching approaches to be used in classrooms to attract and encourage students' knowledge acquisition in the mainstream schooling. Hence, the role of teachers as initiating the study activities in classes will lead students to participate and contribute to the understanding of study concepts and skills (Dohn 2016). Therefore, through their roles in private tutoring classes, teachers as tutors actively understand how their students learn to acquire knowledge and concentrate on revising teaching approaches and technical skills to adapt their students' knowledge acquisition abilities (Abduli, Aleksovska & Durmishi 2015; Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019; Liu & Bray 2020).

In practice, if students have poor academic performances, tutors may blame students' knowledge acquisition abilities rather than themselves (Yung 2020b). Surprisingly, parents might accept that and continue to offer private tutoring jobs for tutors. Alternatively, parents are only interested in how to choose suitable tutors for their children's knowledge acquisitions to purchase private tutoring lessons (Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Lykins 2012; Liu & Bray 2020; Zhang & Bray 2020). Therefore, as Nunes, Tori and Roque (2014) demonstrated, assessment of knowledge acquisition approaches should be conducted in different contexts in future research studies. Likewise, Schnurr et al. (2015) suggested that further investigation is required into whether students who interact face to face with their teachers/tutors have more knowledge acquisition than students who only use online study tools. Nonetheless, the previous research of how students' knowledge acquisitions influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring has rarely been considered (Bray & Kwo 2014). This gap raises the sixth research question: ***How do students' knowledge acquisitions influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?***

2.4. Research Questions, Research Aims and Research Objective

2.4.1. Research Questions

As mentioned above, the following six research questions (RQs) were posited for further investigation:

RQ1. How do the government's regulations on private tutoring influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?

RQ2. How do private tutoring fees influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?

RQ3. How does private tutoring knowledge influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?

RQ4. How do private tutoring locations influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?

RQ5. How do tutors' knowledge deliveries influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?

RQ6. How do students' knowledge acquisitions influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?

2.4.2. Research Aims and Research Objective

The key research objective of the study was *to investigate suggested factors that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring in Vietnam as a given country.* More specifically, the aims of this research were to clarify how the following factors influenced parents' perceptions of private tutoring with Vietnam as a case study:

(i)   Government's regulations on private tutoring;

(ii)   Private tutoring fees;

(iii)   Private tutoring knowledge;

(iv)   Private tutoring locations;

(v)   Tutors' knowledge deliveries; and

(vi)   Students' knowledge acquisitions.

2.5. Motivation of the Study

As introduced above, the private tutoring phenomenon has been a complicated issue worldwide with a number of impacts and significant consequences on related stakeholders (Bray 2020; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Dang 2007; Liu

& Bray 2020; Ng & Li 2012; Dang 2013; Bray & Kwo 2014; Dongre & Tewary 2014; Zhang & Bray 2020). As a case study, and as mentioned in the background of the study, Vietnamese parents have different perceptions of private tutoring, both positive and negative (Dang 2013). Therefore, these facts motivated the candidate to undertake this research to identify suggested factors which influence the Vietnamese parents' perceptions of private tutoring. These proposed factors not only relate directly and/or indirectly to parents, but also involve, directly and/or indirectly many other stakeholders such as governments, educational policy makers/administrators/managers, educators, academics, school and university communities, tutors/teachers, and students (Bray 2020; Bray, Kobakhidze & Kwo 2020; Bray & Kwok 2003; Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray et al. 2016).

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents four theoretical frameworks of private tutoring that have been used to build up the conceptual model of contemporary factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring. Readers should be able to understand why the candidate has chosen such theories, and how one very important theory could relate to three research questions, whist another three theories would be used to explain only one research question each. Moreover, variables and related items are fully explained with the illustration of research questions versus variables and related items.

3.1. Theoretical Frameworks of the Study

According to Creswell (2014), theoretical frameworks should be used in qualitative research to explain the behaviours of participants broadly with related variables and/or constructs. Therefore, the researcher decided that the following four theories below should be used in the study with full identifications of how each theory could be used. In addition, each theory is located in an appropriate position to create the research questions in the conceptual model of the research.

3.1.1. Fielden and LaRocque's Theory of Government Regulations in Private Education

Fielden and LaRocque (2008) declared that governments are obliged to commit that their citizens should acquire the highest quality education in both public and private education sectors in the following statements:

> *13. Governments have an obligation to ensure that their citizens receive a good education from whatever source it is provided. In the case of public sector schools, this means that mechanisms must be in place to ensure that teaching staff, facilities, equipment, and materials are of the best quality that can be provided with available funds. In the case of private sector provision the same principles apply, with the necessity of developing instruments of monitoring and control to ensure that provision of both public and private sectors are of the highest quality possible.*

14. Regulation of private education must seek to ensure high quality delivery, while at the same time encouraging investment – particularly in developing countries where the need is so great and government resources are limited. Too often, government regulation appears designed to discourage private investment without any commensurate gain in the quality of education. A common feature of the regulatory regime is that government funding policies generally favor public provision over private provision, despite the adverse equity and efficiency impact this can have on the sector and the lack of any public policy rationale for such a distinction. Generally speaking, the regulatory and funding frameworks in many countries do little to provide an enabling operating environment that promotes growth in private education. Over the longer-term, this is likely to reduce both the quality and sustainability of the private education sector and the subsequent benefits that such provision might bring to the education sector of a particular country.

15. Governments are fully entitled to exercise rigorous checks and controls on those wishing to create private schools and HEIs and private entrepreneurs accept this. In particular, high quality education providers welcome effective regulatory frameworks – including Quality Assurance (QA) mechanisms – as they provide a guard against poor quality providers who can undercut the potential private sector market, especially where demand is less sophisticated than it could be. A regulatory framework that supports the private sector and assures the quality of private provision is also key to ensuring the longer-term sustainability – both economic and political – of the private education sector in developing countries. Market perceptions of the quality of private education are fundamental and can be easily damaged. Bad publicity about private providers that offer poor quality instruction can harm the reputation of the sector as a whole, affect its ability to be seen as a credible alternative to public providers, and lead to policy reversals from even sympathetic governments. This is particularly true in countries with recently established private education sectors.

(Fielden & LaRocque 2008, pp. 4 & 5)

As specified by Fielden and LaRocque's theory of government regulations in private education above, private tutoring should be discouraged and prohibited if necessary. However, generally private tutoring should also be recognized and regulated strictly by the governments (Bray & Kwo 2014).

In practice, Kinyaduka (2014) indicates that the government intervention theory in education could be in the area of education regulations and control policies, such as approving the educational curriculum of contents, confirming the registrations of educational institutions, and inspecting the operations of these educational systems. Additionally, private tutoring is a service product in the educational market. Governments should consider carefully the costs and the benefits in each of their intervention policies (Bray & Kwo 2014), because these educational policies will influence both students' experiences during their school life and their parents' perceptions as long-term investors in their children's private tutoring classes (Mwoma & Pillay 2016; Ng 2013).

In summary, Fielden and LaRocque's theory of government regulations in private education (2008) should be used to build Research Question 1 in the conceptual model.

3.1.2. Bray et al.'s Theory of Private Tutoring Fees Model

Bray et al. (2016) discovered from their model below that if an education system is underfunded, tutors/teachers must charge private tutoring fees from students or students' parents to cover the operation costs of classrooms, laboratories, etc. and gain additional incomes for covering their insufficient salaries. As a consequence, parents easily incur a financial burden from their children's private tutoring classes (Ng 2013).

> Figure 3.1 shows *that the government's underfunding of the education system leads to the privatisation and marketisation at the school level, but also that the privatisation and marketisation at the school level permits continued underfunding by the government. Within the schools is a cycle through which teachers use their power in classrooms to extract resources from students and their families, while the schools tolerate or even actively encourage the practice in order to gain resources for classrooms, laboratories etc. and to reduce the likelihood that teachers would leave the profession (or those specific institutions) because of inadequate salaries.*
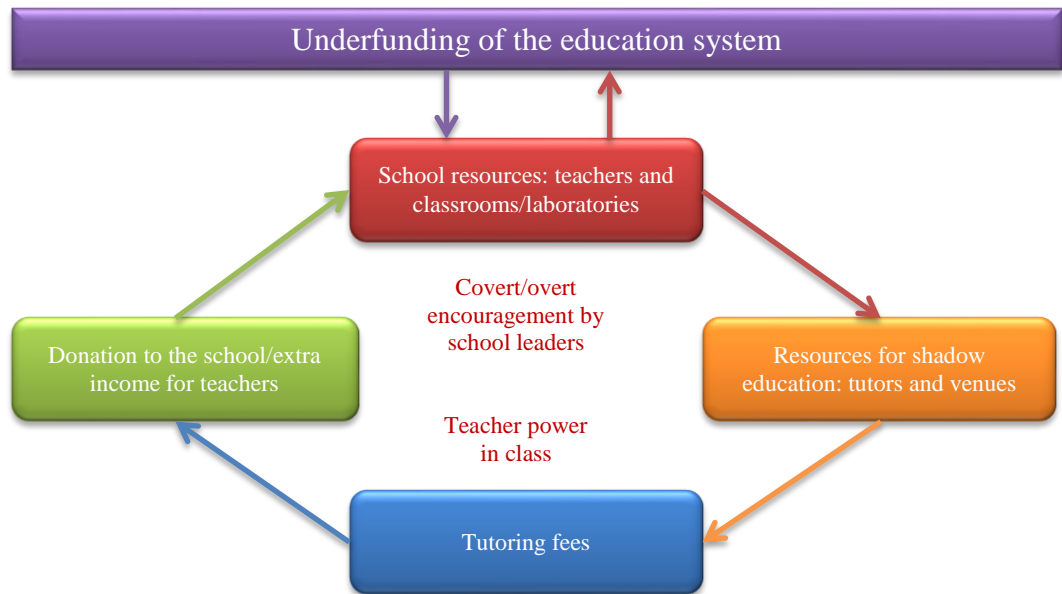
Figure 3.1. Privatisation and Marketisation within Schools via Transformation of Infrastructural, Financial and Human Resources
(Bray et al. 2016, p. 297)

Practically, parents are secondary customers who pay fees for their children's private tutoring services; thus they need to know about the quality of their chosen services from private tutoring providers (Ravi & Suresh 2016). In parents' perceptions, investments in private tutoring could help their children to improve in academic subjects at regular schools, acquire fundamental and advanced knowledge for important examinations, and become competent in further studies (Guill & Bos 2014).

Therefore, Bray et al.'s theory of private tutoring fees model (2016) could be used to construct Research Question 2 in the conceptual model.

3.1.3. Moust's Theory of Tutor Performance Model

Moust's theory of tutor performance model was introduced by Schmidt and Moust (1995) and adapted by Cater and Yam (2013) in the following Figure 3.2 below:

> The theory posits that tutors of the highest calibre should manifest certain behaviours. The six core behaviours influencing student engagement, as identified by the literature, are the same as those nominated by Schmidt and Moust (1995) as influencing students in problem-centred learning. These behaviours are:

(1) The use of subject matter knowledge (expertise use) is related to both teaching expertise and the subject matter expertise. Here, the tutor's experience in industry is especially important in combination of activities and assessment which incorporate real-life scenarios such as property valuations of the student's own home.

(2) Social congruence is considered to be the ability of the tutor to create a relaxed, non-threatening, informal and supportive environment within the context of the tutorial and the broader learning environment.

(3) Cognitive congruence is the ability of the tutor to provide explanations and other feedback (particularly within the context of assessments) which is understandable to the students. This includes the avoidance of jargon and the definition of correct technical terms using language easily understood by the students. Cognitive congruence is influenced by both social congruence and expertise use.

(4) Tutorial group functioning encompasses efforts by the tutor to create a learning environment which encourages a co-operative environment amongst the students, brings in elements of social congruence, and allows students to ask questions and explore subject matter in ways conducive to student engagement.

(5) Intrinsic interest can be influenced by the tutor through expertise use and effective tutorial group functioning. This is especially important in compulsory courses where intrinsic interest may be quite low. Creating a positive tutorial group environment acts to increase the intrinsic interest of the student and reinforced by the tutor's expertise use.

(6) Finally, self-study time represents the students' own efforts outside the tutorial in learning and understanding the subject matter. Whilst assessments will contribute to positive self-study time, the tutor's encouragement of students through social and cognitive congruence which may act to increase the student's intrinsic interest in the subject may also increase the student's commitment to self-study time.

(Carter & Yam 2013, pp. 59-60)
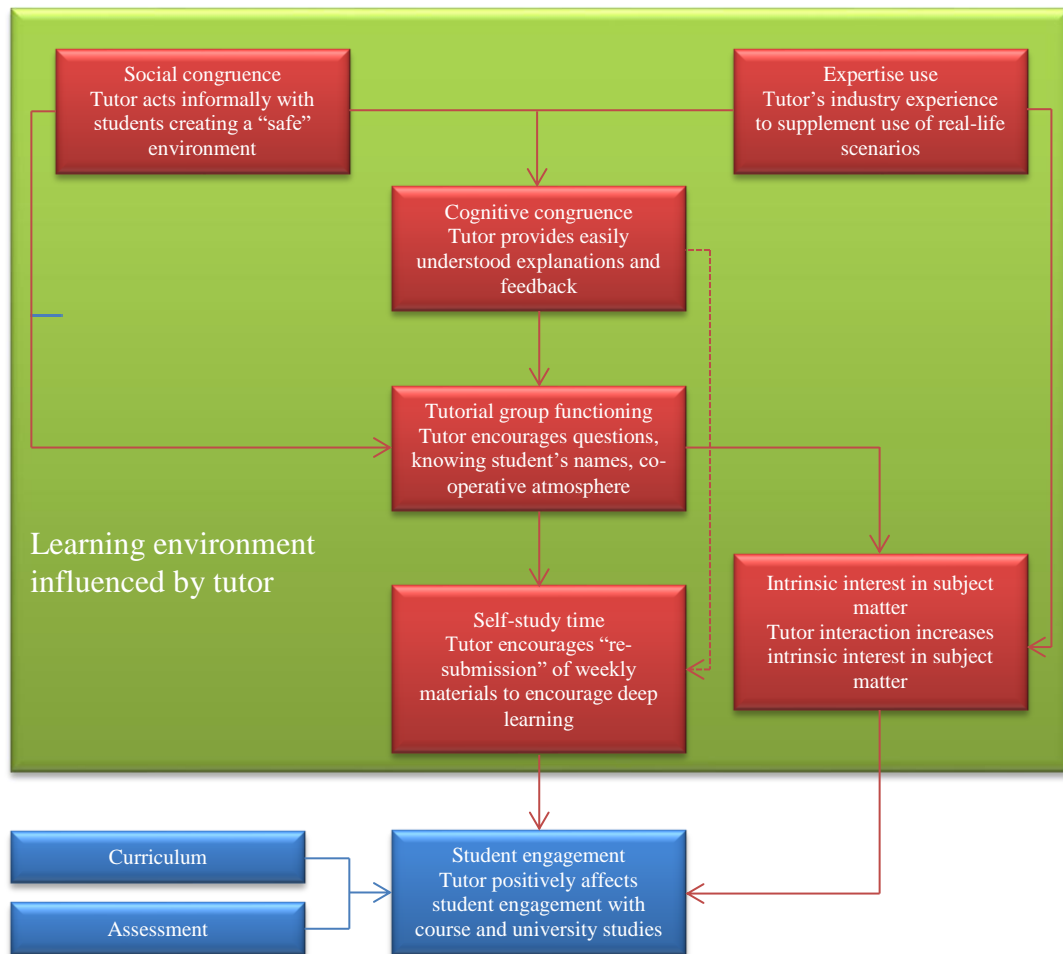
Figure 3.2. A model of tutor performance and effect on student engagement
(Schmidt & Moust 1995; Adapted by Cater & Yam 2013, p. 60)

This model explained the following positive relationships between tutor performances and student achievements:

* *Private tutoring knowledge:* Tutors usually use their informal acts and expertise skills to provide easily understandable knowledge explanation and assessment feedback for students (Cater & Yam 2013). Thus, tutors should be able to revise low level students' learning performances and maintain medium level students' learning performances as well as to advance high level students' learning performances.

* *Tutors' knowledge deliveries:* According to Cater and Yam (2013), the informal pedagogical engagement of tutors creates non-threatening knowledge delivery environment for students. In addition to delivering easily understandable tutoring lessons, tutors also encourage students to ask tutoring lesson questions while providing comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback.

* Students' knowledge acquisitions: Cater and Yam (2013) asserted that due to tutor performances, students acquire tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment as well as acquiring tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably. Additionally, because of tutors' learning encouragement, students increase subject matter explorations and receive deeper learning opportunities in private tutoring classes.

Consequently, the Moust's theory of tutor performance model (1995) could be used to construct Research Question 3, 5 and 6 in the conceptual model.

3.1.4. Cameron's Theory of the Household Registration System for Education

According to Cameron (2012), under the government's rules of residence in some countries like China and Vietnam, people who have their household registrations in an area will receive an education in the same area. Hence, children who have their household registrations in rural areas must enroll in rural area schools and cannot access the schools in urban areas. However, if schools in urban areas have extra places and parents in rural areas wish to enroll their children in such urban area schools, they will be charged higher tuition fees, as stated below:

> *Several studies have examined education of rural-urban migrants in China, where a household registration system (**hukou**, with similar origins to the **hokhau** system in Vietnam) has limited access to urban schools for non-registered migrants. Rural or urban hukou is inherited from parents regardless of place of birth, and children with rural hukou could not access urban schools unless the school had a 'guest' student quota, in which case guest students were usually charged higher fees. Wu (2011) uses national representative data from 2005 to examine the effects of the hukou system, using an endogenous switching model to control for the selection bias that might arise because people of rural origin can sometimes attain urban hukou through enrolling in education. Wu finds that the hukou system enlarges educational inequalities beyond those that would exist due to differences in wealth, parental education, and so on. People of rural hukou are substantially disadvantaged in terms of years of schooling, and the disadvantage was consistent over time.*

> (Cameron 2012, p. 12)

Generally, urban schools usually receive more funding allocations from governments than rural schools because students in urban schools often achieve higher academic performances than students in rural schools (Azam 2016; Wang & Bray 2016; Zhang & Bray 2018). As a consequence, urban schools more readily receive teachers' professional contributions and parents' supports than rural schools, and they always maximize these competitive advantages to maintain their high education rankings in the national education system (Wright 2012; Zhang & Bray 2018). Therefore, there have been many inequalities between the education in urban areas and rural areas (Cardak & Ulubaşoğlu 2007; Jones 2015). Meanwhile, as argued by Wang and Bray (2016), private tutoring is very similar to mainstream schooling in the education system, because this global phenomenon can be considered as a shadow education of the regular education system (Bray & Kwo 2014). Consequently, private tutoring in urban and rural areas is affected as follows:

Private tutoring is increasing in urban areas as a result of some following reasons: (i) The existence of a parental belief that conducting private tutoring in urban schools will create some competitive advantages for students (Azam 2016; Zhang & Bray 2018); (ii) Successful academic achievements in urban school exams provide students many opportunities to enter their desired higher education institutions (Azam 2016; Wang & Bray 2016; Zhang & Bray 2018); (iii) Parents may realize the decrease in the education quality of mainstream schooling in some rural areas and decide to compensate for this shortage by encouraging their children to enroll in private tutoring classes in urban areas (Dang 2013; Azam 2016; Zhang & Bray 2018).

On the contrary, private tutoring in rural areas is often less developed than in urban areas (Jones 2015; Azam 2016; Zhang & Bray 2018). As Jones (2015) explains, students in rural areas are socially discriminated against because of their remote and isolated residences. Consequently, they are short of appropriate educational services and support from rural schools (Jones 2015). Moreover, parents in rural areas are usually low income workers and some of them might scarcely afford covering private tutoring expenditures for their children (Azam 2016).

To sum up, Cameron's (2012) theory of the household registration system for education should be used to build Research Question 4 in the conceptual model.

3.2. Conceptual Model of the Study

RQ1. Government's regulations on private tutoring
- Discouraging and prohibiting private tutoring
- Recognising and regulating private tutoring

Fielden and LaRocque's theory of government regulations in private education

RQ2. Private tutoring fees
- Financial burdening for parents

Bray et al.'s theory of private tutoring fees model

RQ3. Private tutoring knowledge
- Revising low level students' learning performances
- Maintaining medium level students' learning performances
- Advancing high level students' learning performances

Moust's theory of tutor performance model

RQ4. Private tutoring locations
- More developing in urban areas
- Less developing in rural areas

Cameron's theory of the household registration system for education

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING
- **Cultural factors**
- **Social factors**
- **Economic factors**
- **Educational factors**
- **Psychological factors**

RQ5. Tutors' knowledge deliveries
- Creating the non-threatening knowledge delivery environment
- Delivering easily understandable tutoring lessons
- Encouraging students to ask tutoring lesson questions
- Providing comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback

Moust's theory of tutor performance model

RQ6. Students' knowledge acquisitions
- Acquiring tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment
- Acquiring tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably
- Increasing subject matter explorations
- Receiving deeper learning opportunities

Moust's theory of tutor performance model

Figure 3.3. Conceptual model of the Study

(Fielden & LaRocque 2008, pp. 4&5; Cameron 2012, p. 12; Schmidt & Moust 1995, adapted by Cater & Yam 2013, p. 60; Bray et al. 2016, p. 297)

The conceptual model of the study is demonstrated in Figure 3.3. Additionally, full explanation of variables and related items in the conceptual model is shown below.

3.2.1. Explanation of Variables and Related Items

The variables of the research conceptual model are as follows:

An effector variable (or dependent variable) is represented as ***PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING*** with four broad traditional explanatory variables (or independent variables): ***Cultural factors, Economic factors, Educational factors*** and ***Psychological factors*** as mentioned in the literature review.

Six contemporary explanatory variables (or independent variables) are addressed as:

*1. **Government's regulations on private tutoring*** (with two items: *Discouraging and prohibiting private tutoring; Recognising and regulating private tutoring*) (Fielden & LaRocque 2008, pp. 4 & 5);

*2. **Private tutoring fees*** (with an item: *Financial burdening for parents*) (Bray et al., 2016, p. 297);

*3. **Private tutoring knowledge*** (with three items: *Revising low level students' learning performances; Maintaining medium level students' learning performances* and *Advancing high level students' learning performances*) (Carter & Yam 2013, pp. 59 & 60);

*4. **Private tutoring locations*** (with two items: *More developing in urban areas* and *Less developing in rural areas*) (Cameron 2012, p. 12);

*5. **Tutors' knowledge deliveries*** (with four items: *Creating the non-threatening knowledge delivery environment; Delivering easily understandable tutoring lessons*; *Encouraging students to ask tutoring lesson questions* and *Providing comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback*) (Carter & Yam 2013, pp. 59 & 60); and

*6. **Students' knowledge acquisitions*** (with four items: *Acquiring tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment; Acquiring tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably; Increasing subject matter explorations* and *Receiving deeper learning opportunities*) (Carter & Yam 2013, pp. 59 & 60).

All of six independent variables with each related items above were used critically in the questionnaire designing process as specified in ***Appendix 5, 6*** and ***7***.

3.2.2. Research Questions versus Variables and Related Items

Research questions were created due to the contemporary factors available; thus they should be involved in variables and related items in the conceptual model above as specified in Table 3.1 as follows:

Table 3.1. Research Questions versus Variables and Related Items

Research Questions	Variables and related Items
RQ1. How do the government's regulations on private tutoring influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Government's regulations on private tutoring* +Discouraging and prohibiting private tutoring +Recognising and regulating private tutoring (Fielden & LaRocque 2008, pp. 4 & 5)
RQ2. How do private tutoring fees influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Private tutoring fees* + Financial burdening for parents (Bray et al., 2016, p. 297)
RQ3. How does private tutoring knowledge influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Private tutoring knowledge* + Revising low level students' learning performances + Maintaining medium level students' learning performances + Advancing high level students' learning performances (Carter & Yam 2013, pp. 59 & 60)
RQ4. How do private tutoring locations influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Private tutoring locations* + More developing in urban areas + Less developing in rural areas (Cameron 2012, p. 12)
RQ5. How do tutors' knowledge deliveries influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Tutors' knowledge deliveries* + Creating the non-threatening knowledge delivery environment + Delivering easily understandable tutoring lessons + Encouraging students to ask tutoring lesson questions

	+ Providing comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback (Carter & Yam 2013, pp. 59 & 60)
RQ6. How do students' knowledge acquisitions influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	***Students' knowledge acquisitions*** + Acquiring tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment + Acquiring tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably + Increasing subject matter explorations + Receiving deeper learning opportunities (Carter & Yam 2013, pp. 59 & 60)

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

To sum up, these four recent theories above played their own important roles in organising theoretical frameworks and creating the six research questions in the conceptual model of the study. The researcher did not discriminate which theory should be able to produce more or less research question(s) than others, as all the theories applied have been involving in private tutoring. These theoretical frameworks, the conceptual model and the related research questions encouraged the researcher to write the appropriate research methodology for the study in the next chapter below.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The significance of this chapter is that it provides the reader with an overview of the theoretical as well as the practical issues of case study research as the research methodology of the thesis. The research philosophy, as well as some definitions and organising frameworks of case study research are demonstrated as theoretical issues. As a result, quite specifically, the reasons for choosing case study research as the appropriate research method to write the thesis are classified as both theoretical and practical issues. Additionally, the role of the qualitative researcher is clarified with the detailed research plan. Moreover, the researcher's role, research design, population and sampling methods, data collection methods and data analysis techniques are suggested as practical issues of case study research.

4.1. Research Philosophy

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019, p. 130), research philosophy can be defined as 'a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge'. In the field of business and management, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019, p. 144 & p. 145) continue to point out the following five major research philosophies in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1. Comparison of five Research Philosophies in Business and Management Research

Research Philosophy	Ontology (nature of reality or being)	Epistemology (what constitutes acceptable knowledge)	Axiology (role of values)	Typical methods
Positivism	Real, external, independent One true reality (universalism) Granular (things) Ordered	Scientific method Observable and measurable facts Law-like generalisations Numbers Causal explanation and prediction as	Value-free research Researcher is detached, neutral and independent of what is researched Researcher maintains	Typically deductive, highly structured, large samples, measurement, typically quantitative

		contribution	*objective stance*	*methods of analysis, but a range of data can be analysed*
Critical realism	*Stratified/layered (the empirical, the actual and the real) External, independent Intransient Objective structures Causal mechanisms*	*Epistemological relativism Knowledge historically situated and transient Facts are social constructions Historical causal explanation as contribution*	*Value-laden research Researcher acknowledges bias by world views, cultural experience and upbringing Researcher tries to minimise bias and errors Researcher is as objective as possible*	*Retroductive, in-depth historically situated analysis of pre-existing structures and emerging agency. Range of methods and data types to fit subject matter*
Interpretivism	*Complex, rich Socially constructed through culture and language Multiple meanings, interpretations, realities Flux of processes, experiences, practices*	*Theories and concepts too simplistic Focus on narratives, stories, perceptions and interpretations New understandings and worldviews as contribution*	*Value-bound research Researchers are part of what is researched, subjective Researcher interpretations key to contribution Researcher reflexive*	*Typically inductive. Small samples, in depth investigations, qualitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be interpreted*
Postmodernism	*Nominal Complex, rich Socially constructed through power relations Some meanings, interpretations, realities are dominated and silenced by others Flux of processes,*	*What counts as 'truth' and 'knowledge' is decided by dominant ideologies Focus on absences, silences and oppressed/ repressed meanings, interpretations and*	*Value-constituted research Researcher and research embedded in power relations Some research narratives are repressed and silenced at the expense*	*Typically deconstructive – reading texts and realities against themselves In-depth investigations of anomalies,*

	experiences, practices	voices Exposure of power relations and challenge of dominant views as contribution	of others Researcher radically reflexive	silences and absences Range of data types, typically qualitative methods of analysis
Pragmatism	Complex, rich, external 'Reality' is the practical consequences of ideas Flux of processes, experiences and practices	Practical meaning of knowledge in specific contexts 'True' theories and knowledge are those that enable successful action Focus on problems, practices and relevance Problem solving and informed future practice as contribution	Value-driven research Research initiated and sustained by researcher's doubts and beliefs Researcher reflexive	Following research problem and research question Range of methods: mixed, multiple, qualitative, quantitative, action research Emphasis on practical solutions and outcomes

(Source: Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019, p. 144 & 145)

4.1.1. Interpretivism as a Research Philosophy of the Thesis

After considering carefully all five research philosophies in business and management research in Table 4.1 above, it is strongly argued that the candidate should use interpretivism as the research philosophy to conduct this Doctoral research. As demonstrated by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019, p. 148), 'interpretivism emphasises that humans are different from physical phenomena because they create meanings' and therefore, 'the purpose of interpretivist research is to create new, richer understandings and interpretations of social worlds and contexts.' (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019, p. 149) Thus, the philosophical beliefs and assumptions in the candidate's thesis are expressed below.

4.1.2. Ontology of Interpretivism

As stated by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019, p. 133), 'ontology refers to assumptions about the nature of reality' and 'therefore determines how you see the world of business and management and, therefore, your choice of what to research for your research project.' Thus, the ontological assumption of the research is that the candidate had clearly understood that private tutoring has been very complicated, sensitive and controversial so far (Ashley et al. 2014; Azam 2016; Bray & Kwok 2003; Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray, Kwo & Jokíc 2015; Brehm & Silova 2014; Mercy & Dambson 2014; Open Society Institute 2006). Hence, the researcher only chose parents as a stakeholder to do research, and only investigated the six contemporary factors that influence their perceptions of private tutoring with Vietnam as a case study. The thesis, therefore, expressed complex research with rich data within social, cultural and foreign language perspectives. Additionally, multiple meanings from respondents were analysed and interpreted to gather the research realities. Finally, multiple processes, experiences and practices of informants were acquired to argue, discuss, justify and clarify within the research issues (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019).

4.1.3. Epistemology of Interpretivism

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019, p. 133), as paraphrased by Burrell and Morgan (2016) claim that 'epistemology refers to assumptions about knowledge, what constitutes acceptable, valid and legitimate knowledge, and how we can communicate knowledge to others'. Hence, epistemological assumptions explain that private tutoring knowledge is still underdeveloped, and therefore more research should be undertaken to explore further knowledge (Bray et al. 2016). Surprisingly, although knowledge of various private tutoring stakeholders has been identified, knowledge of the involvement of parents in private tutoring has been still little reflected (Ireson & Rushforth 2014; Wang & Bray 2016). Consequently, the candidate sought to close the research gap by undertaking this thesis as a small contribution to current knowledge of private tutoring. Hence, both the theoretical frameworks and the conceptual model of the thesis were expressed simplistically. Meanwhile, the researcher tried to explore narratives which based on the real and true stories of private tutoring from the Vietnamese parents as research informants. Through these verbal evidences, factors

influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring were demonstrated by the interpretations of themselves. Consequently, new understandings about the research issues were found out as the new knowledge contributions of the thesis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019).

4.1.4. Axiology of Interpretivism

As explained by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019, p. 134), 'axiology refers to the role of values and ethics' of the research process. Indeed, axiological assumptions demonstrate that when inviting parents as participants to undertake the research project, the candidate concentrates on both values and ethics that they could bring via the research process. Indeed, the research process gathered information about a lot of values for the literature because parents deliver not only economic and educational values but also cultural and psychological values to the society whilst encouraging their children to enrol in private tutoring classes (Dang 2007; Dang 2011; Dang 2013; Bray et al. 2016; Bray & Kwo 2014; Ireson & Rushforth 2014; and Wang & Bray 2016). In addition, the ethical issues of the research process such as considering parents as human research forced the researcher to follow exactly all the ethical requirements of the University of Southern Queensland. Thus, the candidate played a very important role in this qualitative and subjective research (Creswell & Creswell 2018). In other words, the researcher must actively reflect what research issues have been happening in the worldviews, interpret findings and conduct discussions to provide knowledge contributions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019).

4.1.5. Typical Methods of Interpretivism

As suggested by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019), the writer applied the inductive research techniques to undertake the research. He built up the research categories and themes within the six research questions from the bottom up by organizing the collected data into information units. Alternatively, the candidate moved backwards and forwards between the created themes and the collected database until he established the comprehensive themes for the coding and analyzing processes (Creswell & Creswell 2018).

Additionally, the researcher chose only small samples of total seventy-two parents as participants in both three urban and three rural areas in Vietnam for the in-

depth investigations. As a consequence, a range of qualitative data were analysed, interpreted and discussed for writing the final thesis report (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019).

However, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019, p. 149) pointed out that 'interpretivism is explicitly subjectivist.' Hence, the interpretivist has usually to face some research challenges such as entering the respondents' social world and understanding their world from their viewpoints. As a result, if the interpretivist is able to conduct the research well, he or she might reflect his or her research under the unique context with interactions of particular individuals at a given time (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2019).

4.2. Definitions of Case Study Research

There have been some definitions of case study research in the literature that might confuse the reader because of the different philosophical viewpoints of some recent scholars and academics (Harrison et al. 2017) as follows:

Stake (1995, p. xi) defines case study research as 'the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances'. Clearly, Stake concentrates on the case to explore 'what is studied' rather than focuses on the method to find out 'how it is studied' (Harrison et al. 2017, p. 6).

Alternatively, Merriam (2009, p. 40) defines case study research broadly as 'an in depth description and analysis of a bounded system'. Merriam expresses the bounded system of the case 'as being the object of the study' and the investigation of the research issues 'should be descriptive and heuristic in nature' (Harrison et al. 2017, p. 6).

In addition, Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 103) simply defines case study research as 'an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment'. As pointed out by Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 103), case study researchers should master 'the key requisites' in the research settings (Harrison et al. 2017, p. 6).

Therefore, in order to synthesize as many different components and approaches in case study research from various viewpoints of scholars and academics, Harrison et al. (2017, p. 12) examine 'common characteristics of case study research' in the following Table 4.2:

Table 4.2. Case study elements and descriptors

Element	Description
The case	*Object of the case study identified as the entity of interest or unit of analysis* *Program, individual, group, social situation, organization, event, phenomena, or process*
A bounded system	*Bounded by time, space, and activity* *Encompasses a system of connections* *Bounding applies frames to manage contextual variables* *Boundaries between the case and context can be blurred*
Studied in context	*Studied in its real life setting or natural environment* *Context is significant to understanding the case* *Contextual variables include political, economic, social, cultural, historical, and/or organizational factors*
In-depth study	*Chosen for intensive analysis of an issue* *Fieldwork is intrinsic to the process of the inquiry* *Subjectivity a consistent thread—varies in depth and engagement depending on the philosophical orientation of the research, purpose, and methods* *Reflexive techniques pivotal to credibility and research process*
Selecting the case	*Based on the purpose and conditions of the study* *Involves decisions about people, settings, events, phenomena, social processes* *Scope: single, within case and multiple case sampling* *Broad: capture ordinary, unique, varied and/or accessible aspects*

	Methods: specified criteria, methodical and purposive; replication logic: theoretical or literal replication (YIN, 2014)
Multiple sources of evidence	*Multiple sources of evidence for comprehensive depth and breadth of inquiry* *Methods of data collection: interviews, observations, focus groups, artifact and document review, questionnaires and/or surveys* *Methods of analysis: vary and depend on data collection methods and cases; need to be systematic and rigorous* *Triangulation highly valued and commonly employed*
Case study design	*Descriptive, exploratory, explanatory, illustrative, evaluative* *Single or multiple cases* *Embedded or holistic (YIN, 2014)* *Particularistic, heuristic, descriptive (MERRIAM, 1998, 2009)* *Intrinsic, instrumental, and collective (STAKE, 1995, 2006)*

(Source: Harrison et al. 2017, p. 13 & 14)

Relying on elements and descriptors of case study research above, Creswell et al. (2007, p. 245; as quoted by Harrison et al. 2017, p. 14) demonstrate that a case study can be considered as 'a methodology, a type of design in qualitative research, an object of study and a product of the inquiry' and suggest the following significant full, breadth and depth definition of case study research:

'Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports) and reports a case description and case-based themes' (Creswell et al. 2007, p. 245; as cited by Harrison et al. 2017, p. 14).

4.3. Organizing Frameworks of Case Study Research

As the thesis relates to case study research, Handcock and Algozzine (2017, p. 4) suggest that this kind of research should be considered in some flexible 'organizing frameworks'. Alternatively, in terms of research findings, the researcher would like to demonstrate the 'descriptive research', because he chose and studied seventy-two Vietnamese parents who were samples of parents in both urban and rural areas of North Vietnam, Central Vietnam and South Vietnam to describe their perceptions of private tutoring (Handcock & Algozzine 2017, p. 4). In addition, the author should conduct the 'applied research' or 'problem-based research' as he intended to examine the current contemporary factors that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring to contribute more knowledge to existing theories of private tutoring phenomenon (Handcock & Algozzine 2017, p. 5). Finally, the candidate would endeavour to use 'qualitative research' to describe the influences of contemporary factors on parents' perceptions from the verbal data collection process as the appropriateness of case study research (Handcock & Algozzine 2017, p. 5).

4.4. Reasons for Choosing Case Study Research as the Appropriate Research Method of the Thesis

4.4.1. Theoretical Reasons

Theoretically, case study research has been used widely in the 1960's, and applied in educational research since the 1970's (Merriam 2009; Simons 2009; Stake 1995; as quoted by Harrison et al. 2017). Methods of case study research have been 'used to explore factors such as participants' perspectives and the influence of socio-political contexts on curriculum successes and failures' (Simons 2009; as cited by Harrison et al. 2017, p. 4). Additionally, as shown by Anthony and Jack (2009); Flyvbjerg (2011); George and Bennett (2005); Luck, Jackson and Usher (2006); Merriam (2009); Stake (2006) and Yin (2014), 'case study research has grown in sophistication and is viewed as a valid form of inquiry to explore a broad scope of complex issues, particularly when human behavior and social interactions are central to understanding topics of interest' (as cited by Harrison et al. 2017, p. 4 & p. 5). Finally, Harrison et al. (2017, p. 5) summarise that: 'Over the last 50 years, case study has been re-established as a credible, valid research design that facilitates the exploration of complex issues'.

4.4.2. Practical Reasons

Practically, according to Handcock and Algozzine (2017, p. 6), case study research should be applied for this research project due to the following reasons:

(i)   The research topic: ***An investigation into contemporary factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring services: A case study in Vietnam*** addressed six research questions. All of these six research questions concentrate on exploring and describing six contemporary factors that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring with Vietnam as a case study.

(ii)   There have been significant amounts of previous research literature that support using case study methods to address similar research questions on private tutoring topic (Bray 2003; Bray 2009; Open Society Institute 2006). For instance: Bray (2003) examines five case studies of government responses of private tutoring in Mauritius, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and Republic of China; Open Society Institute (2006) provide overviews and country reports in nine case studies of Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine; Bray (2009) continues to discover the private tutoring experiences of three case studies of countries in more depth: Korea, Mauritius and France.

(iii)   The current context of Vietnam and the timeframe for the research definitely support case study approaches (Bray & Kwo 2014). Indeed, Bray and Kwo (2014) recognise that the private tutoring phenomenon has been increasing dramatically in the Asia-Pacific region, including Vietnam at present. Therefore, the candidate organised the appropriate timeframes to undertake qualitative techniques as the case study methods in Vietnam.

(iv)   Under the investigation, all the qualitative data available to answer the research questions focused on discovering the contemporary factors that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring services (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014).

(v)   As demonstrated in ***Section 4.7. Population and Sampling Methods*** below, population and sampling procedures were feasible (Creswell 2014;

Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014), as the researcher used three qualitative research approaches (brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews) to investigate the contemporary factors that influenced parents' perceptions of private tutoring services in three urban areas and three rural areas as the samples of North Vietnam, Central Vietnam and South Vietnam. Moreover, these procedures were clearly described in the research plan below.

(vi)   Generally, the potential biases for the researcher were able to be controlled effectively (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014). For example: in the sampling method, the researcher chose twelve parents of twelve students from grade 1 to grade 12. This method guaranteed that the data collection processes were definitely fair among all participants; and no informants as samples of student's parents from grade 1 to grade 12 were omitted. Furthermore, the seventy-two parents were representatives in both urban and rural areas of all three territories of Vietnam: North Vietnam, Central Vietnam and South Vietnam. These respondents were come from six urban and rural areas out of sixty-three urban and rural areas of Vietnam currently.

(vii)   As specified in *Section 4.8. Data Collection Techniques* below, the data collection strategies, including brainstorming sessions, focused group discussions and in-depth individual interviews, were appropriate for the purpose of the research, as they are three popular qualitative research methods for case study research. Moreover, these data collection strategies were also consistent with the purpose of the research, because all three popular qualitative research methods above were applied for participants in both urban and rural areas of all three territories of Vietnam (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014).

(viii)   The expectations of technical adequacy of the research project that related to validity, credibility, reliability and generalizability were manageable effectively. For instance:

• Validity:

The researcher asked his local friends help him to choose appropriate participants in each urban and rural area within each of three territories of Vietnam. At the time of the research, his friends were local well-trained and skilled educators and senior academics in Vietnam. As a result, these local educators and academics provided the candidate with the suggested lists of possible and voluntary respondents with their full names and local addresses as good sample groups in the required urban and rural areas to ensure that he would receive genuine interview responses from these informants (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014).

- Credibility:

The researcher employed the triangulation strategy for the research project from multiple perspectives. For example, parents as participants in different locations (such as urban areas and rural areas) and different territories (like North Vietnam, Central Vietnam and South Vietnam) took part in focus group discussions; respondents in different areas and territories above participated in in-depth individual interviews as designed; the same interview questions for respondents in different areas and territories above were asked. Next, the writer collected primary qualitative results from different participants' viewpoints. Finally, the candidate compared and contrasted the results (if possible) for analysing and finding the final results (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014).

In addition, the researcher asked participants questions in inverse formats to detect alternative responses from respondents for the research questions, as well as exclude their inappropriate answers to strengthen the credibility of the research project (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014).

- Reliability:

The researcher refuted the inappropriate responses and attempted to acquire reliable verbal data from respondents. Additionally, he tried to use comprehensive qualitative data sources in the thesis to increase the

reliability of the private tutoring phenomenon. Therefore, the candidate always maintained the data comparison process constantly to compare and contrast the factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring in different geographical areas as well as different territories in Vietnam. Finally, he used the table system to support the *compare and contrast* phases effectively (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014).

- Generalizability:

The researcher was not confident that his research findings of investigating contemporary factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring services as a case study in Vietnam could be generalised to do other case study research, because this research focused on a qualitative investigation rather than a statistical survey. Additionally, the extremely multi-faceted complications of private tutoring have so far modified this worldwide phenomenon to be more challenging for scholars, educators and academics. Nonetheless, the candidate has still hoped that his research conceptual model could be applied for other case studies. The reasons for this were that the application of the candidate's research to other case studies should be considered under the similarities between contemporary factors, geographical locations (including urban and rural areas), territories, parents and the national and local contexts (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014).

(ix) As mentioned in *Section 4.9. Data Analysis Techniques* below, the data analysis strategies (such as categorising, coding, cross-checking, etc.) were appropriate and consistent with the purpose of the research (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014). For example: all the responses of participants were categorised in each name of urban or rural areas. These responses were also coded appropriately. When undertaking the analysis, the verbal data were cross-checked to specify the similarities and differences, etc.

(x) As suggested in a series of chapters in the rest of the thesis, the answers to the research questions and conclusions were derived from the findings and

discussions. Moreover, these findings supported the theory expansions of private tutoring under parents' perspectives as well as improving the participations of various stakeholders into private tutoring phenomenon in practice (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Handcock and Algozzine 2017; Neuman 2014).

4.5. Case Study Research Design

Exploratory research is the appropriate approach to undertake this research project in Vietnam, as it can be used to diagnose the research problem as well as screen available alternatives and discuss new ideas, if detected (Zikmund et al. 2013). As a case study, appropriate qualitative research methods were used to explore factors that influence the Vietnamese parents' perceptions of private tutoring services, consisting of brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Doody & Noonan 2013; Neuman 2011; Neuman 2014; Nielsen and Lyhne 2016; Ock et al. 2014; Shirey 2011; Tortorella, Viana & Fettermann 2015) as presented and explained in Figure 4.1 below.
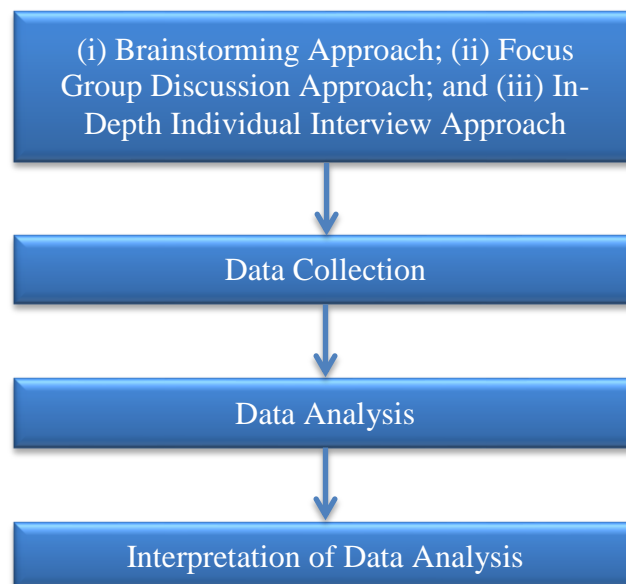
Figure 4.1. Qualitative Research Design of the Study

(Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Doody & Noonan 2013; Neuman 2011; Neuman 2014; Nielsen and Lyhne 2016; Ock et al. 2014; Shirey 2011; Tortorella, Viana & Fettermann 2015)

4.5.1. Brainstorming

According to Boddy (2012, p. 7), brainstorming was initially proposed by advertising executive Alex Osborn in the 1940s 'as a way of quickly generating multiple creative ideas' to solve specific business problems. Shirey (2011) confirms that regardless of being used alone or combined with other research methodologies, brainstorming could be the ignition step of the innovation process in social sciences. She continues to draw out the following definition of brainstorming:

> *Brainstorming is a group creativity technique used to generate ideas and facilitate problem solving. A brainstorming session typically occurs in a panel format and includes a leader (or facilitator), recorder, and 10 to 12 panel members. The session may begin with a larger group, which then breaks into smaller groups to discuss the question of interest. The leader maintains the rapid flow of ideas focusing the discussion and eliciting full group participation. The recorder captures the discussion, freeing the leader from the often conflicting task of having to document the group's ideas. Panel members contribute their ideas regarding the discussion question and validate that their comments are accurately captured.*

<div align="right">(Shirey 2011, p. 497)</div>

Yazdani and Moghaddam (2012) explain that in the brainstorming method, groups of participants are required to express their ideas, viewpoints and opinions to a researcher about a research problem in a short given time. Thus, Shirey (2011, p. 497) describes brainstorming comically as 'using the brain to storm a creative problem using a commando style attack that resolves a common conundrum.' As a consequence, the respondents' ideas, viewpoints and opinions might be different and under different expressions; however any repeated ones will be excluded in the researcher's data collection folders. Therefore, brainstorming techniques usually help informants to reason critically and think creatively about the research phenomenon (Hoffman & Zimbelman 2012). Hence, Litcanu et al. (2015, p. 388) point out some following benefits of brainstorming:

- o *quick and easy to obtain new ideas and solutions;*
- o *reduced costs for making use of the method;*
- o *wide applicability in almost all areas;*

- *stimulates active participation and creates the possibility of contagion of ideas;*
- *develops creativity, spontaneity, self-confidence through deferred assessment process;*
- *develops the ability to work in teams.*

Additionally, Fang (2013, p. 8) points out that Osborn (1953) offered four rules for an effective brainstorming process: 'Focus on quantity; Withhold criticism; Welcome unusual ideas; and Combine and Improve ideas'. To clarify these rules, Haddou, Camilleri and Zaraté (2014, p. 273) suggest that Osborn (1957) demonstrated the following detailed explanations:

- *Criticism is ruled out*: This rule recommends that any criticism for participants should not occur in any brainstorming sessions to ensure that the interviewer can generate all the verbal ideas without having any troubles.

- *Freewheeling is welcome*: Any ideas, even unusual or wild ideas of respondents, should be welcomed. Participants could feel free to talk about any verbal ideas that they believe in with no fearfulness of derision.

- *Quantity is wanted:* The researcher should try his/her best to collect the maximum number of brainstorming verbal ideas from the informants. The greater number of participant ideas is gathered up, the higher probability of successes in the brainstorming sessions is found.

- *Combination and improvement are sought:* The candidate always encourages respondents to integrate into others' verbal ideas to combine them or improve them if possible.

However, Shirey (2011, p. 499) discovered two main limitations of brainstorming sessions: They are 'perceived lack of participant preparation for brainstorming' and 'lack of advanced tools or creative approaches to complement the brainstorming process.' Hence, Shirey (2011, p. 499) suggests some solutions to boost the brainstorming sessions as follows:

(i) **Select a relevant question:**

The candidate introduced the research problem in his private tutoring research topic, such as: Mentioning the complications of private tutoring at present; Reviewing the traditional factors which affect parents' perceptions of private tutoring previously, and; Explaining the appearance of factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring services to participants.

He started the brainstorming sessions only after ensuring that all respondents understood clearly the research problem of private tutoring for discussions.

The researcher transferred six research sub-factors into six brainstorming questions.

He also modified six brainstorming questions for informants to generate their direct ideas with the strongly hope that important things happened soon.

(ii)   ***Invite appropriate participants***

After moving to researched urban and rural areas of Vietnam, the researcher invited a group of twelve parents as planned previously in each area to participate in the brainstorming sessions.

(iii) ***Create the right environment***

With the permissions of participants in the six research areas, the candidate selected six houses in three urban and three rural areas as research sites and invited groups of participants to come to the meeting and join the brainstorming sessions in the scheduled time. The researcher was responsible to provide some refreshments such as snacks, drinks and fruits for organising the brainstorming sessions.

He initiated each brainstorming session by introducing himself and asked each respondent to introduce himself/herself to the group to help each participant to know new people. Next, he talked to the participants about their children's studies in schools before transferring to the private tutoring topic. This transition made the informants felt free and comfortable to talk about private tutoring later.

(iv)   ***Plan the brainstorming session's structure and processes***

The researcher announced each group of participants in each area about the private tutoring research topic and the six research questions for brainstorming sessions at least one week before the activities occurred.

The candidate also planned the mind mapping techniques himself to support, generate and combine the ideas from the participants.

He always encouraged the respondents to contribute their own ideas about private tutoring to make the brainstorming sessions fun and relaxed.

(v)   ***Identify desired outcomes***

The researcher tried to express the outcomes of each brainstorming session in a clear and descriptive way. He also reflected on 'what could have been done better' in previous brainstorming sessions and prepared possible changes for the next brainstorming sessions.

<div align="right">(Shirey 2011, p. 499)</div>

4.5.2. Focus Group Discussions

Ock et al. (2014, p. 2) defined a focus group discussion as 'a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment'. Alternatively, Kidd and Marshall (2000, p. 294) defined a focus group discussion as one where 'participants relate their experiences and reactions among presumed peers with whom they are likely to share some common frame of reference.' In other words, the knowledge and experiences of participants in focus group discussions are explored in verbal communications about an important issue (Kitzinger 1994). Greenwood, Ellmers and Holley (2014) confirm that the main characteristic of focus group discussions is that respondents have interactions between or among them within the focus group. This unique element encourages each participant to comment on both the advantages and the disadvantages of others' points of view (Kidd & Marshall 2000). Moreover, informants might pose questions of or support others' responses to enhance understanding about the research problem within the focus group (Liamputtong 2011).

According to Neuman (2014, p. 472), although having some advantages, focus group discussion techniques also present some disadvantages that should be considered carefully as below:

Table 4.3. Advantages and Limitations of Focus Groups

Advantages	Limitations
The natural setting allows people to express opinions/ideas freely.	*A "polarization effect" exists (attitudes become more extreme after group discussion).*
Open expression among members of social groups who are marginalized is encouraged.	*Only one or a few topics can be discussed in one focus group session.*
People tend to feel empowered, especially in action-oriented research projects.	*A moderator may unknowingly limit open, free expression of group members.*
	Focus groups can produce fewer ideas

Survey researchers have a window into how people talk about survey topics.	*than individual interviews.*
	Focus group studies rarely report all details of study design/procedure.
The interpretation of quantitative survey results is facilitated.	*Researchers cannot reconcile the differences that arise between*
Participants may query one another and explain their answers to one another.	*individual-only and focus group-context responses.*

(Source: Neuman 2014, p. 472)

Likewise, Tortorella, Viana and Fettermann (2015, p. 232) also pointed out some similar advantages and disadvantages of focus group discussions for researchers as follows:

Table 4.4. Advantages and Limitations of Focus Groups' method

Advantages	*Disadvantages*
They provide richness and flexibility in data collection	*Preparing a site for its implementation*
	Ensuring the reliability in the
Gain in spontaneity generated from the interaction among participants	*transcription process before the analysis*
	Difficulty in gathering groups
Fast, economical and efficient for obtaining information	*Moderator's bias may influence the results*
Ability to explore topics and generate hypotheses	*One or more participants can monopolize the discussion*
Speed in delivering results	*Considers the elements that make up the context*

(Source: Tortorella, Viana & Fettermann 2015, p. 232)

Bradbury-Jones, Sambrook and Irvine (2009) explain that focus group techniques gather experiences of each participant in the group and create understandings of related concepts. Therefore, findings from focus group discussions could be used to develop theoretical frameworks and conceptual issues of (i) Government's regulations on private tutoring; (ii) Private tutoring fees; (iii) Private tutoring knowledge; (iv) Private tutoring locations; (v) Tutors' knowledge deliveries; and (vi) Students' knowledge acquisitions, such as how the participants understood these factors, how the respondents experienced them, and informants' opinions

about benefits and challenges of joining the focus group discussions. In other words, if the candidate has ensured that the focus group discussions are well-structured and analysed systematically, this qualitative technique will help him to stimulate conversations relating to private tutoring among participants naturally and new findings might be ascertained (Bradbury-Jones, Sambrook, & Irvine, 2009).

In summary, as demonstrated by Goodman et al. (2016), focus group discussions display data from both single individuals and individuals from large groups. The interaction among members of the group generates the possible new insights of the research phenomenon. Additionally, the individual stories of each member in the focus group also help the researcher understand other unknown aspects of the phenomenon's nature (Hagan & Donovan 2013).

4.5.3. Interviews

Frels and Onwuegbuzie (2013) argued that researchers usually use interviews as a common qualitative approach to gather rich and meaningful verbal data. Likewise, as mentioned by McLees (2013), interviews are very popular in qualitative research methods. Therefore, according to Zikmund et al. (2010, p. 150), an in-depth interview is defined as 'a one-on-one interview between a professional researcher and a research respondent conducted about some relevant business or social topic'.

Pretto (2011) outlined that qualitative interviews should be unstructured (or non-directive) and organized by open-ended questions to support both the researcher and the interviewee. The interviewee is encouraged to talk about the specific topic of the research problem, whilst the researcher listens to the interviewee carefully to collect the verbal data about the research. In addition, Pretto (2011) emphasized that there should be a specific and mutual relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee to ensure that the interview occurs completely and honestly. In order to do this well, the researcher should avoid talking too much about unnecessary information and interrupting the participants' opinions. In contrast, the researcher should also avoid expressing anything after gathering the informant's narratives to avoid slowing down the respondent's responses and discourage talking later through the interview. Therefore, the candidate should concentrate on the interview and express his neutrality as well as his empathy to attract the interviewee's responses in the communication. Finally, he should pay

attention to the listening and interactive skills when using qualitative interviews to identify research issues from the narrators' words and phrases (Pretto 2011). Specifically, Nielsen and Lyhne (2016, p. 60) specify some main characteristics of a classical qualitative interview in Table 4.5:

Table 4.5. Some main elements of classical qualitative interview

Elements	Classical qualitative interview (Kvale 1997)
The process of the interview	*The purpose and structure are defined and controlled by the researcher. Depending upon the researcher's need for control over the information collection, the process can be more or less flexible*
Contribution and prospects of the interview	*The qualitative interview provides a solid and vital information source for research. This may be constituted by technical knowledge, expert knowledge, local knowledge, and/or everyday knowledge*
Interpretation of the interview	*The information achieved might be validated by the interviewee. The researcher will do the interpretation based upon her wisdom and training*

(Source: Nielsen and Lyhne 2016, p. 60)

Moreover, Carr (2010, p. 126) proposed six key principles for analyzing qualitative interview data successfully as follows:

Table 4.6. Proposed principles for the analysis of qualitative interview data

Principles	Key Questions
Context	*How do the contexts in which people speak influence what they say?* *How does the context of the interview inflect interviewees' reports?*
Contextualization	*How do people build context through linguistic interaction?* *How do interview participants build context in the course of an interview?*
Interaction	*How does the relationship between speakers affect what is said?*

	How does the relationship between the interviewee, the interviewer, and other relevant parties shape interview data?
Convention	*How do linguistic conventions — or genres — influence what people say? Are interviewees speaking within the conventions of a specific genre (like a therapeutic genre) during the course of an interview?*
Intertextuality	*How is a person's speech on one occasion related to the same or similar speech on another occasion? How are the interviewee's statements connected to other occasions in which similar statements were made by the interviewee or others?*
Stakes and Strategies	*What are people trying to do by saying particular things? How do the stakes and strategic intentions of interview participants shape interview data?*

(Source: Carr 2010, p. 126)

In addition, Doody and Noonan (2013, p. 29) argued that there are many advantages and some disadvantages of interview approaches as follows:

Table 4.7. Advantages and disadvantages of interviews as a method of collecting data

Advantages	Disadvantages
* They are useful to gain insight and context. *** They help participants describe what is important to them.** *** They are useful in generating quotes and stories.** *** They enable the researcher to develop a rapport.** *** They give the researcher the opportunity to observe as well as listen.** *** They enable more complex questions to be asked.**	** They may seem intrusive to the participant.* ** They are time-consuming, not only in terms of conducting them but also in relation to arranging them, travelling to the venue, post-interview transcription and analysis of the data.* ** They can be expensive compared with other methods.* ** Interviews on a personal and/or intimate subject can evoke strong feelings and these feelings need to be handled with great sensitivity.*

*** The researcher can explain the purpose of the research and answer any questions the participant may have about the study.**	* They are susceptible to bias, which may include:
*** The researcher can probe the participant's responses and seek further clarification.**	- The participant's desire to please the researcher.
*** Participants can seek clarification of a question.**	- Saying what they think/feel the researcher wishes to hear, such as giving an official point of view rather than their personal view.
*** They help the participant to give detailed responses.**	- The desire to create a good impression may lead to participants not answering honestly.
*** Can explore participants' reasons for acting in a certain way or their interpretations of events.**	- There is a tendency to say something rather than nothing if the participant cannot answer a question or has nothing to say on a topic.
*** They are more appropriate for certain groups, such as those with reading or writing difficulties.**	- The researcher's views can influence the participant's responses by expressing surprise or disapproval.
*** Interviews can be a rewarding for participants as they stimulate self-exploration and discovery.**	
*** Personal benefit: the telling of one's story.**	

(Source: Doody & Noonan 2013, p. 29)

As demonstrated by McLees (2013), interview techniques give informants opportunities to present their narrative reports and points of view about the issues. The researcher's interview skills help interviewees to be dynamically interactive, and create their initial mutual trust. However, the interviewer must spend time to know the respondents, organize a convenient time and meeting place for him/her and the invited participants, as well as to prepare questionnaires for the interviews (McLees 2013).

To sum up, as suggested by Pretto (2011, p. 79), the candidate should try to be a 'natural-born listener' in order to be an 'authentic qualitative interviewer', because he speaks Vietnamese as well as undertook the interviews in the

Vietnamese language with the Vietnamese parents in Vietnam and provided the later transcriptions in English, as follows:

- The researcher should try to make the narrators feel comfortable by respecting their silences in hesitating scenarios. He could try to interpret the interviewees' attitudes rather than force them to speak up the sensitive information.

- If the Vietnamese parents really do not want to discuss any issues of the research topic, the writer might write some notes of the parents' perceptions of such discomforts and take other notes of the word absences from them. More importantly, the candidate would try to identify the reasons for these foreseeable moments before and after the interview questions were asked.

- The candidate could also conduct some informal style interviews within the process (such as speaking slang, imitating both the Vietnamese urban and rural accents when interacting with the local Vietnamese parents, etc) to create close relationships with the narrators as well as explore more opportunities to discover and deepen the research issues.

4.6. The Role of the Researcher

Creswell (2014) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) explained that because qualitative researchers relate to descriptive and interpretative research, thus the candidate needs to express his own professional experience intensively with the research respondents. Hence, some issues that concern the researcher's role of doing private tutoring research were demonstrated below.

4.6.1. Background and Experience of the Researcher concerning Private Tutoring

The researcher was born and grew up as a local Vietnamese citizen in Vietnam. Thus, he experienced at all the education levels in his home country: kindergarten school, primary school, secondary school and upper-secondary school. Since 1985, when the researcher and his friends began to study in Grade 1, his parents and his school friends' parents required them to enrol in many private tutoring subjects and attended many private tutoring classes in Hanoi, Vietnam. Most of these private tutoring subjects were the important subjects such as Mathematics,

Physics, Chemistry, Vietnamese Literatures, History, Geography, English, French, Russian, etc which would be examinable in the primary school graduate examinations, secondary school graduate examinations and upper-secondary school graduate examinations as well as in the entrance university and college examinations. The private tutoring classes were held in students' regular schools or in private tutoring educational centres at nights and at the weekends by the same teachers who taught these students in regular school in weekdays. These teachers helped students to revise theoretical knowledge that they studied previously and practised doing many types of past exam papers for real exam preparations. In twelve years of fundamental studies, the researcher's parents and his school friends' parents invested a lot of their money in such private tutoring classes with the hope that we students will pass the entrance exams in the next education levels. Therefore, the researcher has extensive experience and understanding about the basic issues in both theory and practice of the private tutoring phenomenon in Vietnam.

4.6.2. Research Supports for the Researcher

The researcher has many friends in Vietnam whose children have enrolled in private tutoring classes as he and his friends did many years ago. Moreover, he also has many friends who have been working in the Vietnamese education industry such as the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam as well as local Departments of Education and Training and various educational public and private sectors throughout Vietnam. These friends helped the researcher to find suitable participants, organize the brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews and seek secondary data sources in private tutoring services in Vietnam.

Therefore, the researcher, through the introductions of his friends, sought appropriate respondents in three urban cities such as Hanoi, Danang and Ho Chi Minh City and three rural provinces like Caobang, Quangbinh and Camau to prepare conducting interviews. In the initial meetings with prospective participants, the researcher introduced about himself and the relationship between him and his friends who the informants know well to gain their trust. Next, he explained about the requirements of his research as well as the procedures of interviews and requested assistance from these respondents. After receiving the agreement of prospective participants to undertake interviews, he made

appointments with the informants for brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews.

4.6.3. Research Plan of the Researcher

The researcher came back to Vietnam and visited three main urban cities (Hanoi, Danang and Ho Chi Minh City) and three rural provinces (Caobang, Quangbinh and Camau) to organize meetings with appropriate participants in these cities and provinces, undertook the brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews and collected the primary data. He incurred some expenses like the return airfare to Vietnam, the train/coach tickets to three main cities and three provinces as the research sites within Vietnam; and some small expenses to do interviews (such as offering some drinks and refreshments for focus groups in participants' houses where the interviews were conducted; buying some souvenirs/gifts as presents for respondents who joined the in-depth individual interviews, the rent of a motorbike and a helmet to travel to interview sites, etc). This research plan is summarised in the Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8. Research Plan of the Candidate

Time Periods	Research Activities
First week of February 2019	Met twelve participants in a participant's house in Hanoi (an urban area in North Vietnam). Organised brainstorming, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews to collect the primary data by audio recording and note takings. Transcribed participants' responses into Vietnamese and English manually by myself.
Second week of February 2019	Met twelve participants in a participant's house in Caobang (a rural area in North Vietnam). Organised brainstorming, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews to collect the primary data by audio recording and note takings. Transcribed participants' responses into Vietnamese and English manually by myself.
Third week of February 2019	Met twelve participants in a participant's house in Quangbinh (a rural area in Central Vietnam). Organised brainstorming, focus group discussions and in-depth

	individual interviews to collect the primary data by audio recording and note takings. Transcribed participants' responses into Vietnamese and English manually by myself.
Fourth week of February 2019	Met twelve participants in a participant's house in Danang (an urban area in Central Vietnam). Organised brainstorming, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews to collect the primary data by audio recording and note takings. Transcribed participants' responses into Vietnamese and English manually by myself.
First week of March 2019	Met twelve participants in a participant's house in Ho Chi Minh (an urban area in South Vietnam). Organised brainstorming, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews to collect the primary data by audio recording and note takings. Transcribed participants' responses into Vietnamese and English manually by myself.
Second week of March 2019	Met twelve participants in a participant's house in Camau (a rural area in South Vietnam). Organised brainstorming, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews to collect the primary data by audio recording and note takings. Transcribed participants' responses into Vietnamese and English manually by myself.
Third and fourth weeks of March 2019	Started doing Qualitative Data Analysis for the urban and rural areas of North Vietnam.
First and second weeks of April 2019	Started doing Qualitative Data Analysis for the urban and rural areas of Central Vietnam.
Third and fourth weeks of April 2019	Started doing Qualitative Data Analysis for the urban and rural areas of South Vietnam.
May – July 2019	Revised **Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2:**

	Literature Review, **Chapter 3: Theoretical Frameworks and a Conceptual Model of the Study, Chapter 4: Research Methodology** and wrote **Chapter 5: Descriptive Characteristics of Participants** of the final Thesis. Sent these Chapters to my supervisors for feedback and developed them where necessary.
August 2019	Wrote **Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion: Government's regulations on private tutoring.** Sent this Chapter to my supervisors for feedback and revised it where necessary.
September 2019	Wrote **Chapter 7: Findings and Discussion: Private tutoring fees.** Sent this Chapter to my supervisors for feedback and revised it where necessary.
October 2019	Wrote **Chapter 8: Findings and Discussion: Private tutoring knowledge.** Sent this Chapter to my supervisors for feedback and revised it where necessary.
Novermber 2019	Wrote **Chapter 9: Findings and Discussion: Private tutoring locations.** Sent this Chapter to my supervisors for feedback and revised it where necessary.
December 2019	Wrote **Chapter 10: Findings and Discussion: Tutors' knowledge deliveries.** Sent this Chapter to my supervisors for feedback and revised it where necessary.
January 2020	Wrote **Chapter 11: Findings and Discussion: Students' knowledge acquisitions.** Sent this Chapter to my supervisors for feedback and revised it where necessary.
February 2020	Wrote **Chapter 12: Conclusion.** Sent this Chapter to my supervisors for feedback and revised it where necessary.
March-July 2020	Continued revising all chapters as well as organising **References** and **Appendices** of the thesis. Corrected spelling and grammatical errors if detected.
August 2020	Submitted the final thesis for examinations.

(Created originally by the researcher)

In order to completely follow the Ethical Research Requirements of University of Southern Queensland Research Committee, the researcher intended to organize focus groups in six appropriate participants' houses as the research sites with their prior permissions for undertaking interviews. The reason was because the researcher would like to ensure that the privacy and confidentiality of all participants in the research project were protected. Furthermore, six groups of Vietnamese participants tended to contribute to the interviews comfortably if they had opportunities to answer the research questions in a crowded atmosphere. Additionally, in-depth individual interviews also should be organized in the private residences of informants. It is because, if a single interviewee answers the research questions at his or her own home, he or she will be more confident about himself or herself and may provide responses more deeply and truthfully.

The researcher prepared accurate and concise three types of questions for interviews: one for brainstorming sessions, another one for focus group discussions and the last one for in-depth individual interviews. Nevertheless, regardless of conducting brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions or in-depth individual interviews, the researcher should undertake unstructured interviews and ask open-ended interview questions clearly and listen carefully to responses from interviewees (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

As mentioned above, it is strongly believed that the private tutoring phenomenon still has been one of the most complicated, sensitive and controversial issues in the education systems of many countries so far, including Vietnam (Dang 2007; Dang 2011; Dang 2013). Thus, despite preparing some research tools such as a camera and a recorder to record the interviews, the researcher certainly faced the truth that the issue of video-recording all the interviews were not allowed from all of respondents due to unforeseeable consequences. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam, on the behalf of the Vietnamese government, issued the regulations relating to private tutoring throughout Vietnam. Hence, the respondents were afraid that both their physical images and their sensitive responses to the candidate would be recorded and revealed to the public and therefore they might incur troubles from the local authorities. Fortunately, most of the informants allowed the researcher to audio-record their verbal responses. Nonetheless, these participants required the writer to delete all their verbal responses after completing his research project and did not reveal their

confidential and private information to the third party. The rest of the participants only allowed the researcher to take notes of their responses. Consequently, the researcher had to take notes and type all the participants' responses immediately after each interview by his laptop and save this primary data properly in the research folders. Finally, the researcher wrote up the comments about all of these activities in his/her research diary or notebooks (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

4.7. Research Population and Sampling Methods

4.7.1. Research Population

As clarified clearly in the thesis title, the research population was the Vietnamese parents who have been residing in Vietnam and had their children currently enrolled in private tutoring classes in Vietnam.

Bayley et al. (2014) explained that a sampling method of selecting respondents within a population usually brings the high potential for validity for the research, as the participants would be representative of the population. Additionally, Che, Frey and Lau (2014) explain that the researcher can use population-based sampling methods to determine the numbers of participants in each urban or rural area which should be sampled. Furthermore, the population-based sampling methods are highly effective as the sampling frames are clearly indicated and data are systematically recorded (Bayley et al. 2014). Therefore, this study used the population-based sampling methods with the Vietnamese parents who have their children enrolled in private tutoring classes in Vietnam. The sampling frames include North Vietnam, Central Vietnam and South Vietnam.
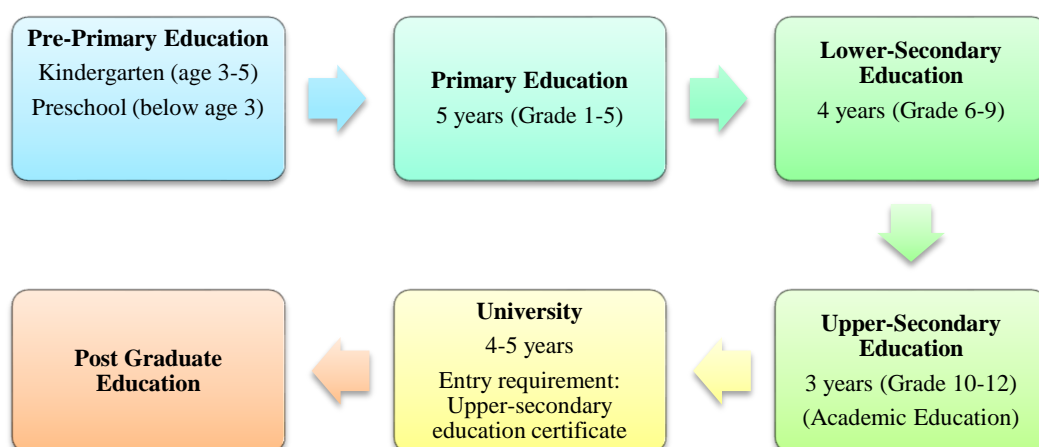
Figure 4.2. The Academic System of Vietnam's Education System Structure

(Source: London 2011, p. 20)

As shown in Figure 4.2, the Academic System of Vietnam's Education System Structure consists of six stages, starting from Pre-primary Education level and finishing at Post Graduate Education level (London 2011). Dang (2011) and Dang (2013) confirm that the private tutoring services in Vietnam have been increasing, mainly in the three educational levels: Primary, Lower-Secondary and Upper-Secondary. Thus, this thesis only examined the following three levels in which the private tutoring service activities occur very popularly as the fundamental education levels in Vietnam: Primary Education (Grade 1-5), Lower-Secondary Education (Grade 6-9) and Upper-Secondary Education (Grade 10-12).

4.7.2. Sampling Methods

The researcher asked his friends in Vietnam to help him to choose seventy-two Vietnamese parents with names and contact details to participate in six brainstorming sessions and focus group discussions. Further, the candidate also asked eighteen participants from this group to take part in eighteen individual in-depth interviews. Their children were students who were attending from grade 1 to grade 12 respectively at regular schools and also enrolling in private tutoring classes in both urban and rural areas of Vietnam as demonstrated below:

Table 4.9. Example of a sampled Focus Group Discussion

Participant		Description
Parent (as P1)	1	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 1 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent (as P2)	2	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 2 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent (as P3)	3	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 3 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent (as P4)	4	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 4 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent (as P5)	5	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 5 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent (as P6)	6	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 6 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent (as P7)	7	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 7 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam

Parent 8 (as P8)	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 8 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent 9 (as P9)	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 9 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent 10 (as P10)	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 10 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent 11 (as P11)	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 11 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam
Parent 12 (as P12)	Parent of a student who was attending Grade 12 at a regular school as well as enrolling in private tutoring class(es) in Vietnam

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

These participants included: twenty-four parents from Hanoi and Caobang (North Vietnam), another twenty-four parents from Danang and Quangbinh (Central Vietnam), and the last twenty-four parents from Ho Chi Minh City and Camau (South Vietnam). The participants in these cities and provinces were samples of three urban and three rural areas of Vietnam.
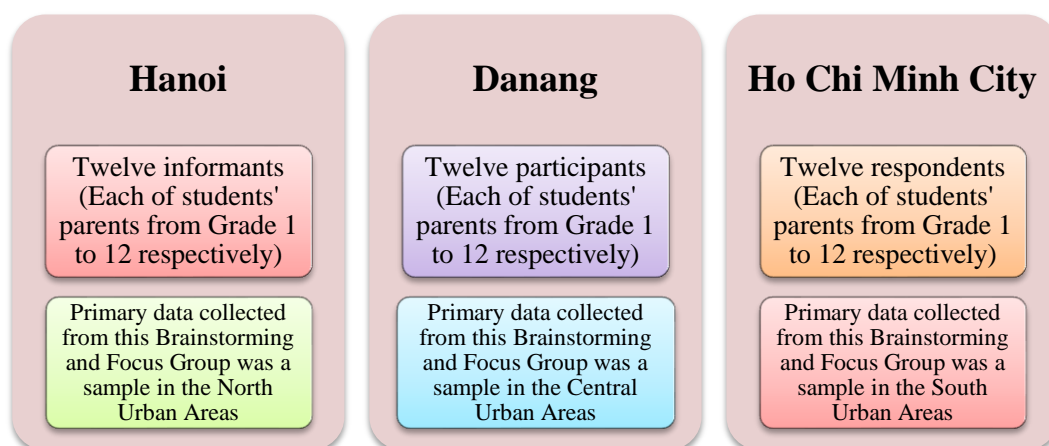
Figure 4.3. Population and Sampling methods for Brainstorming Sessions and Focus Group Discussions in the sampled Vietnamese Urban Areas

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Firstly, as suggested in Figure 4.3, the researcher chose thirty-six Vietnamese parents to participate in three brainstorming sessions and three focus group discussions. Their children were students who were attending from grade 1 to grade 12 respectively at compulsory regular schools in urban areas of Vietnam. These participants included: twelve parents from Hanoi (North Vietnam), another twelve parents from Danang (Central Vietnam), and the last twelve parents from Ho Chi Minh City (South Vietnam). This method guaranteed that the candidate collected the primary data and gained the findings from three huge cities in the

urban areas of Vietnam. The participants in these cities were samples of three urban areas of Vietnam.

Caobang	Quangbinh	Camau
Twelve informants (Each of students' parents from Grade 1 to 12 respectively)	Twelve participants (Each of students' parents from Grade 1 to 12 respectively)	Twelve respondents (Each of students' parents from Grade 1 to 12 respectively)
Primary data collected from this Brainstorming and Focus Group was a sample in the North Rural Areas	Primary data collected from this Brainstorming and Focus Group was a sample in the Central Rural Areas	Primary data collected from this Brainstorming and Focus Group was a sample in the South Rural Areas

Figure 4.4. Population and Sampling methods for Brainstorming Sessions and Focus Group Discussions in the sampled Vietnamese Rural Areas

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Similarly, as shown in Figure 4.4, the candidate selected another thirty-six Vietnamese parents to take part in three brainstorming sessions and three focus group discussions. Their children were students attending from grade 1 to grade 12 respectively at compulsory regular schools in rural areas of Vietnam. These participants included: twelve parents from Caobang (North Vietnam), another twelve parents from Quangbinh (Central Vietnam), and the last twelve parents from Camau (the South Vietnam). Again, this method also guaranteed that the candidate definitely collected the primary data and gained the findings from three provinces in the rural areas of Vietnam. The participants in these provinces were samples of three rural areas of Vietnam.

Additionally, the candidate also asked three voluntary informants to participate in in-depth individual interviews in each urban and rural area as follows:

Hanoi	Danang	Ho Chi Minh City
• Three informants (Each of students' parents from Primary school level (Grade 1 to 5), Secondary school level (Grade 6 to 9) and High school level (Grade 10 to 12) respectively) • Primary data collected from these In-Depth Individual Interviews was a sample in the North Urban Areas	• Three participants (Each of students' parents from Primary school level (Grade 1 to 5), Secondary school level (Grade 6 to 9) and High school level (Grade 10 to 12) respectively) • Primary data collected from these In-Depth Individual Interviews was a sample in the Central Urban Areas	• Three respondents (Each of students' parents from Primary school level (Grade 1 to 5), Secondary school level (Grade 6 to 9) and High school level (Grade 10 to 12) respectively) • Primary data collected from these In-Depth Individual Interviews was a sample in the South Urban Areas

Figure 4.5. Population and Sampling methods for In-Depth Individual Interviews in the sampled Vietnamese Urban Areas

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Next, as suggested in Figure 4.5, the interviewer chose three appropriate respondents from the twelve parents from Hanoi, another three respondents from the twelve parents from Danang, and the last three appropriate respondents from the twelve parents from Ho Chi Minh City to take nine in-depth individual interviews for the participants in the urban areas. Among each three informants, one participant was a parent of a student in Primary School level (Grade 1 to 5); another respondent was a parent of a student in Secondary School level (Grade 6 to 9); and the last participant was a parent of a student in High School level (Grade 10 to 12).

Caobang	Quangbinh	Camau
• Three informants (Each of students' parents from Primary school level (Grade 1 to 5), Secondary school level (Grade 6 to 9) and High school level (Grade 10 to 12) respectively) • Primary data collected from these In-Depth Individual Interviews was a sample in the North Rural Areas	• Three informants (Each of students' parents from Primary school level (Grade 1 to 5), Secondary school level (Grade 6 to 9) and High school level (Grade 10 to 12) respectively) • Primary data collected from these In-Depth Individual Interviews was a sample in the Central Rural Areas	• Three informants (Each of students' parents from Primary school level (Grade 1 to 5), Secondary school level (Grade 6 to 9) and High school level (Grade 10 to 12) respectively) • Primary data collected from these In-Depth Individual Interviews was a sample in the South Rural Areas

Figure 4.6. Population and Sampling methods for In-Depth Individual Interviews in the sampled Vietnamese Rural Areas

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Likewise, as demonstrated in Figure 4.6, nine respondents were selected in three rural provinces (Three in Caobang; three in Quangbinh and three in Camau) to attend nine in-depth individual interviews as the samples of rural areas of Vietnam. These informants provided the candidate detailed responses for his interview questions.

The researcher's reasons for choosing only 72 parents of six cities and provinces for conducting different interviews with different methods are simple. There have been total of 63 cities and provinces in Vietnam at present. The author chose 12 participants as parents of 12 students from grade 1 to grade 12 in a city or a province out of 63 cities and provinces for undertaking the qualitative research. If he intended to interview more than 72 participants in more than research locations (for example, interviewing approximate 756 participants in all 63 cities and provinces in Vietnam), he would have to face at least two disadvantages: First, sooner or latter he would see the saturation of the data collection in his research. This research saturation starts occurring when the researcher realizes that some participants provide the same responses for the same interview questions. The more same responses for the same interview questions that the researcher collect, the less meaningful data that he can collect for the data analysis process as the more research saturations occur (Crewell & Creswell 2018, Neuman 2014). Second, the author definitely has to spend more wasted time and expenses to collect the response data of 756 participants because of the response saturation of participants. Meanwhile, he could be able to avoid, or at least minimize this potential saturation, by simply interview 72 participants in 3 urban and 3 rural areas with various research techniques.

The criteria which was applied for choosing locations and sampled parents has reflected the researcher's own experiences. For selecting research locations, he had decided to choose Hanoi, Danang and Ho Chi Minh City as three urban areas because they are three biggest cities in North, Central and South Vietnam. Hence, private tutoring services have been developing rapidly in these areas. In contrast, Caobang, Quangbinh and Camau were chosen as three rural areas with less developed services in private tutoring, because they are three isolated and remoted areas.

The criteria for choosing sampled parents were more complicated and expressed as follows: Firstly, twelve participants who are parents of students enrolled in

private tutoring from grade 1 to grade 12 had been selected in each area, regardless of their genders, ages, occupations, education levels, salaries, etc. For calculation, twelve participants per brainstorming session multiplied by six brainstorming sessions in six areas would be seventy-two participants. Next, after finishing the brainstorming sessions, all the same seventy-two participants had been invited to continue undertaking six focus group discussions in six areas. Finally, for in-depth individual interviews, one participant who is a parent of a primary school student enrolled in private tutoring, another participant who is a parent of a lower-secondary school student enrolled in private tutoring, and the third participant who is a parent of an upper-secondary school student enrolled in private tutoring had been selected in each area, regardless of, again, their genders, ages, occupations, education levels, salaries, etc. Thus, three participants in each area multiplied by six areas equal eighteen participants to undertake eighteen in-depth individual interviews. Overall, the purpose of the research is ensuring that parents of students who were enrolled in private tutoring from grade 1 to grade 12 would have the fair opportunities to take part in the brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews in three urban areas and three rural areas.

The author did not directly choose his sample instead of relying on helps of his friends. He had applied the *snowball sampling technique* (Neuman 2014) for utilising the roles of his friends to invite these participants involving in this research project. Through the introductions of his friends, the researcher had sought appropriate respondents in three urban cities such as Hanoi, Danang and Ho Chi Minh City and three rural provinces like Caobang, Quangbinh and Camau to prepare conducting brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews. All the participants have had the current active relationships with his friends (e.g. his friends and participants are workmates in a company, neighbours in an apartment, relatives in a family, etc. Such relationships guaranteed that he would be able to find the valid and reliable participants for the research. His friends confirmed with him of confidential personal information necessarily of the participants for validating the selected samples in each research area (e.g. the full names of participants and their children, the grades which their children currently studied, the names and the education levels of schools where the participants' children currently studied,

etc.). Moreover, these would also help him to ensure about the identification of each participant in the chosen areas. Alternatively, his friends will help him to minimize the risks of selecting the inappropriate participants and/or the inappropriate areas.

In the initial meetings with prospective participants, the researcher introduced about himself and the relationships between him and his friends who the informants had known very well previously to gain the trusts from them. Next, he explained about the requirements of his PhD research as well as the procedures of interviews, and requested the assistances from these respondents. After receiving the agreements of prospective participants to undertake interviews, he had made appointments to the informants for the research. All participants had been convinced with his research strategies, and therefore, they should be able to organize their convenient times, dates and places for him to undertake the research. Further, they had protected the researcher when he arrived in their local areas and guided him to do the necessary preparations to ensure that all the research would have been successfully conducted. In other words, local participants had helped the author to minimize the possible risks when he arrived in the selected areas.

The researcher should try to make the narrators felt comfortable by respecting their silences in hesitating scenarios. He could try to interpret the interviewees' attitudes rather than forced them to speak up the sensitive information. When the Vietnamese parents really did not want to discuss any issues of the research topic, the writer might write some notes of the parents' perceptions of such discomforts and took other notes of the word absences from them. More importantly, the candidate would try to identify the reasons for these foreseeable moments before and after the focus group questions are asked. He could also conduct some informal styles within the interview processes (such as speaking slangs, imitating both the Vietnamese urban and rural accents when interacting with the local Vietnamese parents, etc) to create the close relationships with the narrators as well as explore more opportunities to discover and deepen the research issues.

The researcher had transcribed all the verbal data from the audio-recorders and translated all the Vietnamese data into English by only himself. All the participants would be invited to review and/or edit the transcribed documents if they wished. The data transfer process had been managed safely by the researcher.

If a participant would like to change a comment that affected responses of someone else in the focus group, the candidate would simply tell him/her and other participants that in his research interviews, there is no wrong answers and comments. Any participant could share his/her ideas, opinions and viewpoints, regardless of these were for and against, or different from others' ideas, opinions and viewpoints. Moreover, all participants' personal details and their own ideas, opinions and viewpoints were confidential. Hence, all participants should have nothing to be worried that their answers may affect someone else's responses in the research.

The researcher intended to organize the interviewees in private places like private homes of participants in Hanoi, Caobang (North Vietnam); Quangbinh, Danang (Central Vietnam); and Ho Chi Minh City, Camau (South Vietnam) as they were the best places for undertaking discussions. The reason was might be because groups of Vietnamese participants tended to contribute to the discussions comfortably if they had opportunities to answer the focus group questions in the warmly atmospheres of small and private places.

The researcher had incurred some expenses to do the research (such as offering some drinks and refreshments for interviews in participants' private homes, where the data collections had been conducted (Approximately 200AUD for buying drinks and refreshments for each research site is multiplied by 6 research sites equals 1200AUD). Additonally, the researcher had also incurred some small expenses for buying some souvenirs/gifts as presents for respondents who joined the in-depth individual interviews (A souvenir/gift is worth approximately 20AUD for an individual multiplied by 3 individuals in each location and multiplied by 6 locations equal 360AUD). Indeed, the drinks and refreshments were not inducements for respondents to participate in the research project. They joined the research project because they simply would like to tell the researcher their true stories about private tutoring in Vietnam from their viewpoints.

Finally, the author's ideas of sampling methods have come from the four theoretical frameworks and a conceptual model that have been demonstrated in Chapter 3. First, the theory of Fielden & LaRocque (2008) of the government's regulations on private tutoring suggested the researcher paid attentions to partirticipants who supported discouraging and prohibiting private tutoring and partirticipants who agreed recognising and regulating private tutoring in Vietnam.

Second, the theory of Bray et al. (2016) of private tutoring fees helped the candidate separated the samplings of participants based on their urban or rural residential addresses to experience the financial burdenings which parents in each areas had to incur. Third, the theory of Cameron (2012) of private tutoring locations supported the author broadening the sampling geographical areas in North, Central and South Vietnam to verify the facts that private tutoring is usually more developing in urban areas and less developing in rural areas. Fourth, the theory of Carter and Yam (2013) of the interactions among tutors, knowledge and students raised the researcher for sampling participants whose children were facing three issues: (i) exploring the roles of private tutoring knowledge in revising low level students' learning performances, maintaining medium level students' learning performances and advancing high level students' learning performances; (ii) identifying issues of tutors' knowledge deliveries such as creating the non-threatening knowledge delivery environment, delivering easily understandable tutoring lessons, encouraging students to ask tutoring lesson questions and providing comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback; and (iii) reflecting issues of students' knowledge acquisitions like acquiring tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment, acquiring tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably, increasing subject matter explorations and receiving deeper learning opportunities. The conceptual model of the study also brought an overview of participant sampling methods for the author.

4.8. Data Collection Techniques

Doody and Noonan (2013) explain that there are three types of interviews available for researchers who would like to collect qualitative data: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews. Each of these techniques is critically presented for considerations below.

4.8.1. Structured Interviews

As demonstrated by Corbetta (2003), in structured interviews, the researcher creates a structured questionnaire, and this set of interview questions are adhered to the same interviews. Thus, structured interviews allow the researcher to do the same three things with the respondents: The same interview questions, the same words in each question, and the same order in the list of interview questions. Hence, using structured interviews helps the researcher to use the data collection time effectively, minimise his/her subjectivity and bias errors, control the

interview process strictly, and ensure that the data coding and data analysing processes uses compare and contrast techniques more easily (Holloway & Wheeler 2010). Holloway and Wheeler (2010) advise that structured interviews are best used in collecting cultural-socio-demographic data. As a consequence, the candidate used structured interviews in the data collections of the thesis because he would like to describe the participants' characteristics in the private tutoring phenomenon in Vietnam. The collection of the similarities and differences of the Vietnamese participants' characteristics from the structured interviews is displayed in Chapter 5.

4.8.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

Holloway and Wheeler (2010) pointed out that semi-structured interviews are very common in qualitative studies because this technique allows researchers to create pre-determined interview questions to clarify research issues. Alternatively, these questions may detect new concepts, collect richer qualitative data, make the data more valid and be convenient when analysing (Dearnley 2005). Semi-structured interviews should be used to design open-ended questions flexibly to explore arising issues under conversational interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee (Berg 2009), whilst still encouraging the researcher re-orders the questions, varies wording in each question and asks further questions if necessary (Power, Campbe & Kilcoyne 2010). Nevertheless, Doody and Noonan (2013) advise that novice researchers should not use semi-structured interviews, as early-career researchers may not have enough qualitative skills and techniques to identify when and where to ask conversational questions and probe answers from respondents. As a result, an inexperienced interviewer might omit gathering some relevant and even important qualitative data. Thus, the candidate sometimes chose semi-structured interviews to do his own research.

4.8.3. Unstructured Interviews

Finally, Holloway and Wheeler (2010) stated that in unstructured interviews, the researcher initially creates the broad and open-ended questions to ask the participant. Depending on the respondent's responses, the scholar continues to ask him/her the next subsequent questions. Alternatively, the researcher starts unstructured interviews with interview themes rather than specific interview questions. This technique explores the informant's thoughts and interests in depth and gathers rich qualitative data (Ryan, Coughlan & Cronin 2009).

As described by Doody and Noonan (2013), the candidate understood very clearly that undertaking unstructured interviews was time-consuming and difficult as:

- The data analysis from unstructured interviews was very complex: Many similar responses from different participants who have resided in different urban and rural areas made the researcher spend significant time on listening on the audio recordings, writing transcriptions in Vietnamese and translating them into English, coding the important themes and related core issues, and analysing them for finding the similarities and differences of the research issues.

- The writer must carefully consider what questions to ask and how to interpret them appropriately. He should know when to encourage the respondent tell his/her stories and how to collect responses quickly.

- Additionally, he must listen to the participant actively and take notes quickly on any new and interesting data when detected. This requirement forces the candidate to be a good communicator and possess good interview and technical skills.

- Research bias in the unstructured interviews might occur because the candidate was a novice researcher who was attempting to finish his Doctoral candidature.

Fortunately, the candidate had tried to read a significant amount of interview technique materials to understand the complicated requirements of each kind of interview and to ensure that he could successfully conduct the unstructured interviews for his research. Moreover, he also ensured that he was a good communicator who could master the necessary interview techniques when performing unstructured interviews, because both the respondents and he spoke Vietnamese language in the interview processes. Therefore, he was sufficiently confident about his communication skills in Vietnamese and Vietnamese – English translation skills to overcome the challenges in the unstructured interviews above.

On the contrary, Ryan, Coughlan and Cronin (2009) propose the following strengths of unstructured interviews:

- Unstructured interviews do not the restrict research issues to be explored and interview questions to be asked. Hence, the candidate has a number of opportunities to design a series of appropriate questions within unstructured

interviews to adapt the various Vietnamese customs and cultural issues when arriving and conducting qualitative research with different Vietnamese participants in both urban and rural areas in Vietnam.

- Unstructured interviews could be applied usefully for the private tutoring topic in Vietnam, as this research topic has been little known at present. To the best knowledge of the candidate at the time of writing this thesis, there have been only a small number of significant studies about private tutoring in Vietnam as presented in Section 2.5 of Chapter 2 so far. Hence, the researcher tried to further these private tutoring research topics by exploring this from the perspective of Vietnamese parents.

After considering both advantages and disadvantages of unstructured interviews above, the candidate made his own decision by selecting unstructured interviews as the main technique to performing his qualitative research.

Furthermore, the researcher formulated some types of questions to encourage the respondents to share and interpret their experiences, such as ***descriptive questions, structural questions,*** and ***contrast questions*** (Neuman 2014, p. 465) as presented in Figure 4.7 below.
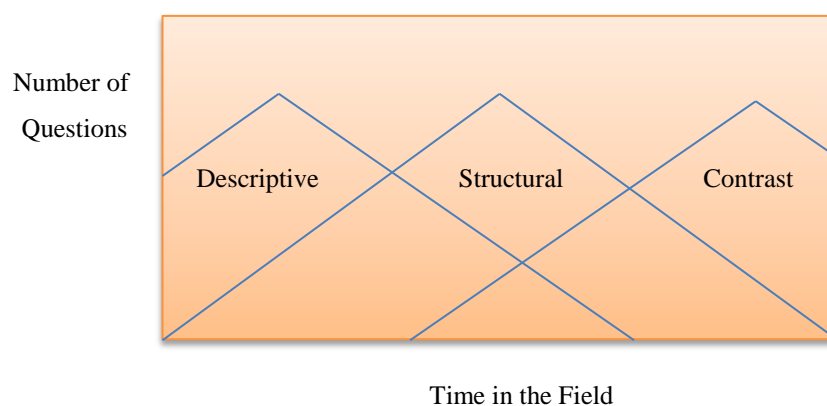
Figure 4.7. Types of Questions in Field Research Interviews

(Source: Neuman 2014, p. 466)

The reasons for choosing these kinds of interview questions were because descriptive, structural and contrast questions should be used to 'learn about, understand, or describe a group of interacting people' as field research (Neuman 2014, p. 433). Alternatively, field research interviews should be considered as '*unstructured, depth, ethnographic, open ended, informal,* and *long.* Generally, they involve one or more people being present, occur in the field, and are informal and nondirective', as applied in the study (Neuman 2014, p. 461). Therefore, these three kinds of discussion and interview questions of field research could be very

flexibly used for the case study research in the thesis and had been created as follows:

4.8.4. Descriptive Questions

The researcher asked descriptive questions when he would like to explore contextual issues about private tutoring in Vietnam, know more about participants or know details about the time and locations of private tutoring (Neuman 2014). For instance, the candidate asked respondents questions about the current detailed situations with private tutoring services of the respondents' children, etc. He had confidence about the confidentiality and anonymity of these questions.

4.8.5. Structural Questions

The candidate continued to ask structural questions when he began organising interviews about private tutoring into appropriate categories for analysing verbal data (Neuman 2014). For example, the researcher asked informants questions about the process of using private tutoring services for the participants' children at regular schools and tutoring centres for the sake of determining their understanding of what they had done for their children.

4.8.6. Contrast Questions

Finally, the writer used contrast questions to investigate the similarities and differences among components within research categories or ask respondents to verify such elements among categories (Neuman 2014). For instance, the author asked participants questions about the similarities and differences of using private tutoring services for their children in each compulsory education level, such as the name of subjects that their children have to take, the related tuition fees and the length of time attending classes of their children, etc. (McMurray 2013).

Since all brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews are informal, the candidate made them as convenient as everyday conversations. The interviewer listened carefully to what the respondents said, as well as replied to them to stimulate their flow of thoughts (McMurray 2013). Furthermore, the researcher recorded and took notes very carefully on all the brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews above. Next, he translated all the Vietnamese responses of the Vietnamese participants into English. Finally, he prepared both sample

Vietnamese and English interview questionnaires for respondents and attached them at the end of the research thesis as Appendices.

Additionally, the candidate gathered other important professional data and facts from the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam and other sources as the secondary data to support the findings and discussions (Zikmund et al. 2010). For example, *The Vietnamese Public School Teacher Salary Rankings in 2019* document was extracted from the legal documents of the Vietnamese National Assembly in 2019.

4.9. Data Analysis Techniques

As suggested by Moretti et al. (2011), the data collection stage above provided a richness of qualitative data. Nevertheless, the collected data should be analysed by applying the steps such as sorting, coding, organizing, and identifying to ensure the validity and reliability of the research process. For example, the systematic coding process ensures the validity of the research. Hence, qualitative content analysis could be used to create the verbal material classifications into appropriate categories which reflect similar findings. Therefore, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) defined qualitative content analysis as a 'research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns'. Alternatively, the qualitative content analysis helps the candidate to interpret subjective verbal data in a scientific and meaningful manner (Moretti et al. 2011).

Additionally, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) argued that deductive content analysis could also be used in the research if the researcher would like to validate or extend theoretical framework(s) and conceptual model(s) of private tutoring in the Vietnamese context. In other words, the candidate used both existing theories and prior research of private tutoring to identify contemporary factors as variables and coded them as appropriate categories with related verbal text for analysis. Consequently, Creswell (2014, p. 247) offers qualitative data analysis techniques in qualitative research as follows:
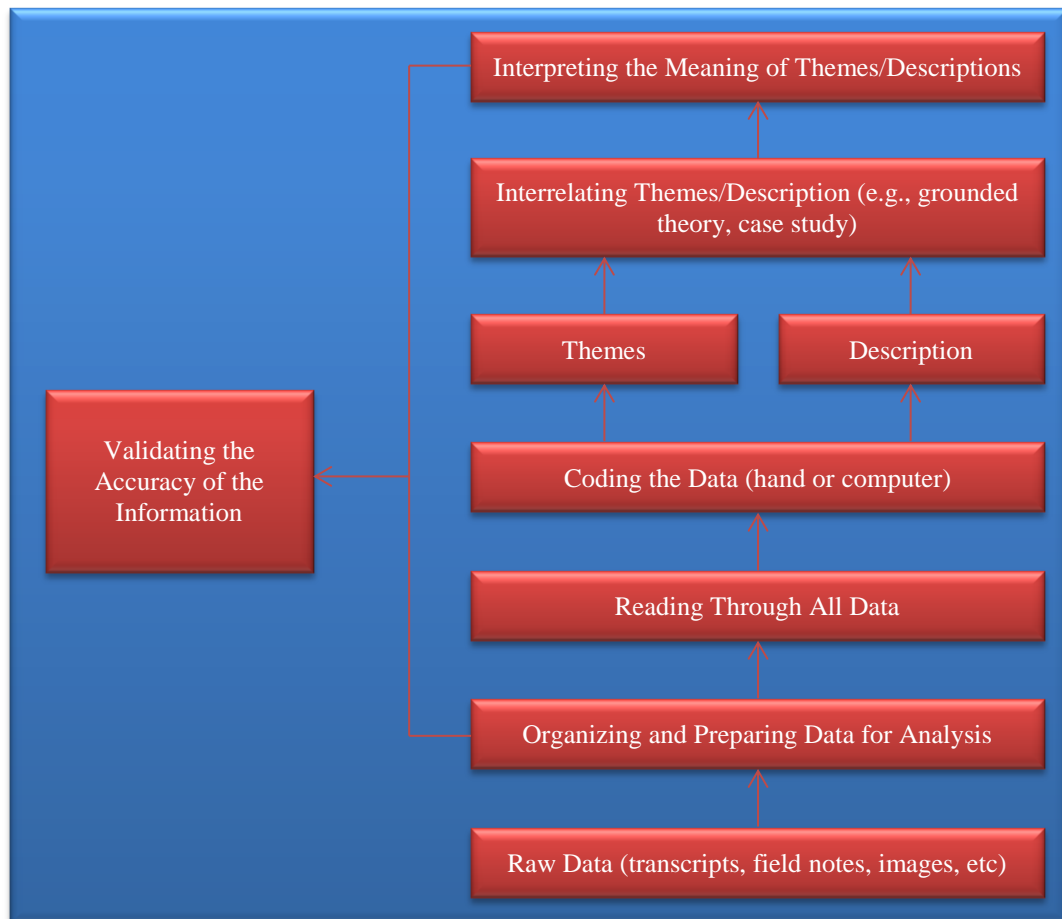
Figure 4.8. Data Analysis in Qualitative Research

(Source: Creswell 2014, p. 247)

Although incurring a time-consuming process, the researcher undertook the data analysis process manually to ensure that all the steps within the whole data analysis were consistent together with the following steps of Figure 4.8 above:

4.9.1. Gathering Raw Data

All gathered raw data, including audio transcripts and notes in Vietnamese were available for the next steps (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

4.9.2. Organising and Preparing Data for Analysis

Firstly, all gathered raw data, including audio transcripts and notes in Vietnamese were transcribed to the written Vietnamese data files. Secondly, all these Vietnamese data files were translated into English raw data files. Next, all the collected English verbal data was sorted into three categories, including the Brainstorming Session Category, the Focus Group Discussion Category and the In-Depth Individual Interview Category. The Brainstorming Session Category simply consisted of six folders of participants in six cities and provinces. However, the Focus Group Discussion Category contained all the folders and

subfolders of focus group discussion participants in three urban and three rural areas. Similarly, the folders and subfolders of in-depth individual interview respondents in these urban cities and rural provinces were included in the In-Depth Individual Interview Category (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018). Practically, all the data categories above were labelled with alphabetical and numerical orders as follows:

For the Brainstorming Session Category:

The brainstorming session folders in three urban cities (Hanoi, Danang and Ho Chi Minh City) were respectively labelled as A, B and C. Likewise, three rural provinces (Caobang, Quangbinh and Camau) were respectively labelled as D, E and F in the brainstorming session folders.

For the Focus Group Discussion Category:

The focus group discussion folders in three urban cities (Hanoi, Danang and Ho Chi Minh City) were respectively labelled as G, H and I. Likewise, three rural provinces (Caobang, Quangbinh and Camau) were respectively labelled as J, K and L in the focus group discussion folders.

For the In-Depth Individual Interview Category:

The in-depth individual interview folders in three urban cities (Hanoi, Danang and Ho Chi Minh City) were respectively labelled as M, N and O. Similarly, three rural provinces (Caobang, Quangbinh and Camau) were respectively labelled as P, Q and R in the in-depth individual interviews folders.

To sum up, the labelling procedures of the Brainstorming Session, Focus Group Discussion and the In-Depth Individual Interview Categories was displayed in Table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10. The Labelling Procedures of the Brainstorming Session, Focus Group Discussion and the In-Depth Individual Interview Categories

Researched cities and provinces	The brainstorming session folders were labelled as	The focus group discussion folders were labelled as	The in-depth individual interview folders were labelled as
Hanoi	A	G	M
Danang	B	H	N
Ho Chi Minh City	C	I	O
Caobang	D	J	P
Quangbinh	E	K	Q

Camau	F	L	R

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

The subfolders that contained informant responses to the Research Questions were labelled as follows:

For the brainstorming session folder in Hanoi (It was labelled as A):

Discussion response files that contained all the perceived issues for factor ***Government's regulations on private tutoring*** of the participants in Hanoi were labelled as subfolder A1.

Discussion response files that contained all the perceived issues for factor ***Private tutoring fees*** of the participants in Hanoi were labelled as subfolder A2.

Discussion response files that contained all the perceived issues for factor ***Private tutoring knowledge*** of the participants in Hanoi were labelled as subfolder A3.

Discussion response files that contained all the perceived issues for factor ***Private tutoring locations*** of the participants in Hanoi were labelled as subfolder A4.

Discussion response files that contained all the perceived issues for factor ***Tutors' knowledge deliveries*** of the participants in Hanoi were labelled as subfolder A5.

Discussion response files that contained all the perceived issues for factor ***Students' knowledge acquisitions*** of the participants in Hanoi were labelled as subfolder A6.

In summary, the labelling procedures of the Brainstorming Session response files were demonstrated in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11. The Labelling Procedures of the Brainstorming Session response files

Informant response subfolders in	Government's regulations on private tutoring	Private tutoring fees	Private tutoring knowledge	Private tutoring locations	Tutors' knowledge deliveries	Students' knowledge acquisitions
Hanoi	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6
Danang	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6
Ho Chi Minh City	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Caobang	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6
Quangbinh	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
Camau	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Similarly, the same labelling process of Focus Group Discussion response files in the rest cities and provinces were presented as follows:

Table 4.12. The Labelling Procedures of the Focus Group Discussion response files

Informant response subfolders in	Government's regulations on private tutoring	Private tutoring fees	Private tutoring knowledge	Private tutoring locations	Tutors' knowledge deliveries	Students' knowledge acquisitions
Hanoi	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6
Danang	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6
Ho Chi Minh City	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6
Caobang	J1	J2	J3	J4	J5	J6
Quangbinh	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6
Camau	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	L6

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Therefore, the similar labelling process of In-Depth Individual Interview response files in the urban and rural areas was demonstrated as follows:

Table 4.13. The Labelling Procedures of the In-Depth Individual Interview response files

Informant response subfolders in	Government's regulations on private tutoring	Private tutoring fees	Private tutoring knowledge	Private tutoring locations	Tutors' knowledge deliveries	Students' knowledge acquisitions
Hanoi	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Danang	N1	N2	N3	N4	N5	N6
Ho Chi Minh City	O1	O2	O3	O4	O5	O6
Caobang	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
Quangbinh	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Camau	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

The labelling processes above were created by the candidate to guarantee that he definitely collected all necessary data in all three techniques: brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews without missing any categorised responses. Moreover, these processes also helped the

writer to avoid confusions between data collected in both urban cities and rural provinces.

4.9.3. Reading Through All Data

The candidate read through all categorised data to ensure that he understood the overall meaning of the data as well as feeling a general sense of responses from participants in categories, urban and rural areas. Next, the writer looked for the general ideas of from respondents in each urban city and rural province (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018). Where necessary, the researcher wrote notes or made questions in the margins of written data files to explore the new issues, if possible, from the responses of each informant (McMurray 2013, p. 70).

4.9.4. Coding the Verbal Data

As mentioned above, all the coding processes were undertaken manually by the researcher. According to Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 56; as quoted by Neuman 2014, p. 480 & 481):

> *Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes usually are attached to "chunks" of varying size—words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting.*

Ranney et al. (2015) explain that the researcher may conduct some of the following steps for the coding process:

Firstly, the candidate created a codebook for his research. In this codebook, a list of specific and organised codes was demonstrated. Theoretically, one code referred to one idea or concept with respondents' words or phrases. Thus, each code was defined and explained fully with related examples. The coding structure in the codebook served the writer as a guide to code many transcript sets consistently and reliably. Nevertheless, the researcher always maintained, revised and updated the codebook flexibly to guarantee that the modification and clarification of coding categories were also flexible in the research progresses (Ranney et al. 2015).

Secondly, the candidate selected the appropriate coding techniques for his codebook. As specified by Neuman (2014), some kinds of coding were applied in the thesis as follows:

Open Coding

Neuman (2014, p. 481) explained that open coding is 'the first coding of qualitative data that examines the data to condense them into preliminary analytic categories or codes'. Thus, the writer condensed the mass of collected data into six categories corresponding with six research questions consistently, and created initial codes for the main themes of each category respectively (Neuman 2014).

Axial Coding

Axial coding is 'a second stage of coding of qualitative data during which the researcher organizes the codes, links them, and discovers key analytic categories' (Neuman 2014, p. 482). Hence, the candidate focused on the coded main themes and explored new issues where possible to identify key conceptual ideas which had been clustered together. Moreover, he might ask himself questions about: The causes and effects in each category; the processes for each category; and the strategies among categories. This technique linked concepts and themes as well as deepening thinking about connections between new questions and related evidences (Neuman 2014).

Selective Coding

Selective coding is 'the last stage in coding qualitative data that examines previous codes to identify and select data that will support the conceptual coding categories that were developed.' (Neuman 2014, p. 484) Hence, the researcher totally reviewed all previous data and related codes to select appropriate themes and issues. Further, he compared and contrasted main themes and core issues that have been identified to choose the most reflective ones and prepared to demonstrate the findings (Neuman 2014).

To sum up, the writer conducted the coding process by applying each coding category for the appropriate data sources. Depending on the transcript contents involving in the research questions, he usually chunked large responses with various codes, and split other responses into smaller ones with a few codes (Ranney et al. 2015). All the coded data was contained in appropriate file folders as mentioned above.

4.9.5. Interrelating Themes and Descriptions

Creswell (2014) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) confirmed that the data coding process above had created the main themes and core issues for further analysis. Thus, the main themes should be demonstrated clearly with full descriptions. The candidate, therefore, used specific techniques such as created subthemes, sub-

issues, illustrations, and direct quotations from participants to interrelate themes and descriptions. Moreover, he also used figures and tables to describe participants' responses. These themes and related descriptions interrelated with the case study of private tutoring in Vietnam.

4.9.6. Interpreting the Meaning of Themes and Descriptions

As stated above, the candidate identified and examined all themes and issues in each unit of analysis which involved in each of six research questions. Additionally, he compared and contrasted the response of each of participants for each of the interview questions. Thus, he reflected what he found out from the answers of respondents in appropriate logical interpretation procedures. Furthermore, he asked questions where possible to explore the new issues, if possible, from the responses of each informant (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

4.9.7. Validating the Accuracy of the Information

Creswell (2014) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) explained that the researcher needs to validate his findings to confirm that his findings are relevant and accurate according to his viewpoints, those of his research respondents and to the readers of the thesis. Thus, the candidate could apply some validity strategies for his thesis as follows:

- The writer triangulated various data from participants in both the urban and rural areas of North, Centre and South Vietnam to seek similar and different evidences from these primary sources of information to argue, discuss, justify and clarify responses for building the main themes and core issues (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

- He asked some voluntary and experienced informants in private tutoring to check and comment on his interpretations from the research findings and discussions until these respondents agreed that these chapters were accurate (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

- He used many detailed descriptions to reflect the findings. Through his writing skills, readers should be able to understand how participants shared their own experiences about private tutoring in Vietnam. Hence, each theme and related issues were realistic in the Vietnamese context (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

- He clarified any bias in the findings where possible. Alternatively, as a native Vietnamese speaker, the researcher interpreted his findings with the viewpoints of the local perspectives, such as the Vietnamese Confucian culture, history of education, and socio-economic characteristics, etc. Such honest narratives under the Vietnamese context should resonate and impress readers well (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

- He demonstrated negative and discrepant responses that affected the themes and issues of the research. By arguing contrary narratives, the candidate proved that no research evidence was perfect in any theme or issue. However, such contradictory evidence made the research findings realistic and valid (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

- He spent a long time period (6 years part time, included 3.5 years part time in Vietnam) to do his research. This prolonged time helped the writer to deepen his understanding of various theoretical issues of the private tutoring phenomenon internationally. Moreover, spending more time on undertaking the research also motivated the candidate to explore more details about participants and research sites in both urban and local areas. Consequently, the experiences that the researcher gained from interacting with respondents in their living areas created accurate and valid research findings (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

4.9.8. Checking the Realiability of the Information

Additionally, Creswell (2014) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) required that the researcher also have to check the reliability of his research methods. Hence, the candidate undertook the following reliability checking procedures:

- Checked the transcripts in both Vietnamese and English to ensure that no errors in translations or in techniques were found.

- Checked the code book to ensure that no errors in code definitions and code meanings were found.

- Cross-checked the codes in both the urban and rural areas of North, Centre and South Vietnam to ensure that no code repetitions and confusions had occurred.

4.10. Political and Ethical issues

4.10.1. Political Issues

Despite preparing research tools such as a camera and a recorder to record the brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews, the candidate definitely faced the truth that the issue of video recording all these discussions and interviews had not been allowed from all of respondents due to their avoidance of unforeseeable consequences from political issues. Fortunately, most of the informants agreed to allow the candidate to audio-record their brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews. When some of respondents agreed to answer interview questions without video or audio recording, the interviewer had to type all the participants' responses immediately in each interview in his laptop and saved this primary data properly in the research folders. Finally, the researcher also wrote up the comments about all of these activities in his research diary or notebook.

4.10.2. Ethical Issues

Like most of ethical requirements of the studies in social sciences and humanities, some ethical issues in the study might be: (i) All the personal information of informants should also be anonymous and confidential; (ii) The interview questions only focus on exploring the responses for the research questions. The interviewer is not allowed to ask any questions that involve the privacy of the correspondents; (iii) The candidate will take the appropriate duty of care of the participants who might be pregnant, dependent on medical care, or suffering illness to avoid possible risks; (iv) The interviewer should be able to pay attention to Vietnamese customs and cultures when conducting the interviews with them to ensure that all the respondents are well respected and treated equally, as all the informants are currently residing in Vietnam (Human Research Ethics Committee of University of Southern Queensland 2014).

In summary, findings for each Research Question in all the Finding and Discussion chapters below were also classified as themes, categories and coded from the meaning units, which also were called as units of analysis (Ock et al. 2014; Persson et al. 2014). The detailed coding tables and related full explanations were demonstrated in each chapter of Findings and Discussion. After

finishing this data analysis process, the researcher started writing the Findings and Discussion chapters to answer each of research questions in his Doctoral thesis.

CHAPTER 5

DESCRIPTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS IN PRIVATE TUTORING SERVICES

This chapter introduces some fundamental characteristics of Vietnamese parents in their children's private tutoring enrolments through the utilization of descriptive statistics as the result of structured interviews undertaken. Such fundamental characteristics include the social and economic background of parents as well as the private tutoring attendance background of their children.

5.1. Social background of participants

Table 5.1 shows the descriptive social background data for the urban and rural parental samples in Vietnam.

Table 5.1. Social background of urban and rural parents

	Urban parents		Rural parents		Total	
	N = 36	*%*	**N = 36**	*%*	**N = 72**	*%*
Sex						
Male	20	*55.6*	23	*63.9*	43	*59.7*
Female	16	*44.4*	13	*36.1*	29	*40.3*
Family status						
Married parent	33	*91.7*	35	*97.2*	68	*94.4*
Single parent	3	*8.3*	1	*2.8*	4	*5.6*
Widower	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age						
18 - 29 years old	1	*2.8*	3	*8.3*	4	*5.6*
30 - 39 years old	11	*30.6*	18	*50*	29	*40.3*
40 – 49 years old	15	*41.7*	10	*27.8*	25	*34.7*
50 – 59 years old	9	*25*	5	*13.9*	14	*19.4*
60 years old +	-	-	-	-	-	-

Parents' education						
Primary school	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower-Secondary school	-	-	-	-	-	-
Upper-secondary school	-	-	9	*25*	9	*12.5*
Vocational college	-	-	2	*5.6*	2	*2.8*
University bachelor	28	*77.8*	22	*61.1*	50	*69.4*
University masters	6	*16.7*	3	*8.3*	9	*12.5*
University PhD	2	*5.6*	-	-	2	*2.8*
Parents' occupation						
Unemployed	-	-	-	-	-	-
Farmer	-	-	3	*8.3*	3	*4.2*
Fisher	-	-	7	*19.4*	7	*9.7*
Private staff	12	*33.3*	8	*22.2*	20	*27.8*
Public officer	10	*27.8*	6	*16.7*	16	*22.2*
Teacher	1	*2.8*	-	-	1	*1.4*
Sales person	5	*13.9*	4	*11.1*	9	*12.5*
Technical expert	4	*11.1*	2	*5.6*	6	*8.3*
Manufacturing labour	2	*5.6*	5	*13.9*	7	*9.7*
Other	2	*5.6*	1	*2.8*	3	*4.2*
No. of their						

children enrolled in private tutoring						
One child	12	*33.3*	11	*30.6*	23	*31.9*
Two children	24	*66.7*	25	*69.4*	49	*68.1*
More than two children	-	-	-	-	-	-

(Source: Researcher's demographic data analysis results)

According to Table 5.1, 59.7% of the total sample in both urban and rural areas is male participants and 40.3% is female ones. Among them, 20 male and 16 female parents come from urban areas, while the numbers of male and female parents who come from rural areas are 23 and 13, respectively. For their family status, 94.4% of participants are married parents, and only 5.6% of them are single ones.

The lowest age range of participants is 18 to 29 years old with 5.6%, while the highest one of participants is 50 to 59 years old with 19.4%. The popular age ranges of participants are 30 to 39 years old (40.3%) and 40 to 49 years old (34.7%) of the total sample.

In term of parents' education, the most popular degree holders are bachelor level with 69.4% of participants, including 28 urban and 22 rural parents. There are 12.5% (9 parents) of participants holding masters degrees, whilst only 2 urban parents own PhD degrees. Although 2 rural parents have vocational college diplomas, the lowest education level is 9 other rural participants with only upper-secondary school graduate certificates.

For parents' occupation, no one is unemployed. Farming and fishing occupations are only belong to rural participants with 4.2% (3 parents) and 9.7% (7 parents) respectively of the total sample size. The most popular occupations in both urban and rural areas are private staff and public officer, accounting for 27.8% and 22.2% of participants. Sales person (12.5%) and technical expert (8.3%) are two other popular occupations of participants in urban and rural areas. Meanwhile, the percentage of rural participants in manufacturing labour works is higher than the percentage of urban participants in the same occupation (13.9% compared to 5.6%). 4.2% of urban and rural participants (3 parents) have other occupations, and only 1 urban participant have a teaching job.

Finally, the numbers of participants' children enrolled in private tutoring are varied. The number of parents having one child enrolled in private tutoring is 23 (accounting for 31.9%), consisting of 12 urban and 11 rural ones. Meanwhile, 49 parents (representing 68.1%) are the most popular number of parents having two children enrolled in private tutoring with 24 urban and 25 rural people. There are no parents of the research sample having more than two children enrolled in private tutoring. Due to the variations of the numbers of participants' children enrolled in private tutoring, characteristics of the private tutoring attendance background of participants' children are also varied in section 5.3 below.

5.2. Economic background of participants

Table 5.2 indicates the basic economic background of urban and rural parents through their monthly income and private tutoring payment for their children.

Table 5.2. Economic background of urban and rural parents

	Urban parents		Rural parents		Total	
	N = 36	*%*	**N = 36**	*%*	**N = 72**	*%*
Monthly income of parents and their families (VND)						
Less than 10,000,000	1	*2.8*	6	*16.7*	7	*9.7*
10,000,000-15,000,000	7	*19.4*	16	*44.4*	23	*31.9*
15,000,001-20,000,000	12	*33.3*	9	*25*	21	*29.2*
20,000,001-25,000,000	8	*22.2*	4	*11.1*	12	*16.7*
25,000,001-30,000,000	5	*13.9*	1	*2.8*	6	*8.3*
More than 30,000,000	3	*8.3*	-	-	3	*4.2*

Monthly tutoring payment of parents and their families (VND)						
Less than 1,000,000	2	*5.6*	9	*25.0*	11	*15.3*
1,000,000-2,000,000	5	*13.9*	17	*47.2*	22	*30.6*
2,000,001-3,000,000	12	*33.3*	8	*22.2*	20	*27.8*
3,000,001-4,000,000	10	*27.8*	2	*5.6*	12	*16.7*
4,000,001-5,000,000	4	*11.1*	-	-	4	*5.6*
More than 5,000,000	3	*8.3*	-	-	3	*4.2*

(Source: Researcher's demographic data analysis results)

As shown in Table 5.2, the monthly income range of less than 10,000,000 VND represents only 9.7% of participants with 1 urban and 6 rural parents. The most prevalent monthly income ranges of parents and their family are 10,000,000 to 15,000,000 VND, 15,000,001 to 20,000,000 VND and 20,000,001 to 25,000,000 VND with the percentages of participants are respectively 31.9% (7 urban and 16 rural parents), 29.2% (12 urban and 9 rural parents) and 16.7% (8 urban and 4 rural parents). The percentage of 16.7% is for the range of 25,000,001 to 30,000,000 VND monthly income with 5 urban and only 1 rural participants. Finaly, only 3 urban parents and none of rural parents have the range of more than 30,000,000 VND monthly income.

For the monthly tutoring payment of parents and their families, the range of less than 1,000,000 VND accounts for 15.3% of participants with 2 urban and 9 rural parents. The most prevalent monthly tutoring payment ranges of parents and their

family are 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 VND and 2,000,001 to 3,000,000 VND with the percentages of participants are respectively 30.6% (5 urban and 17 rural parents) and 27.8% (12 urban and 8 rural parents). The percentage of 16.7% is for the range of 3,000,001 to 4,000,000 VND monthly tutoring payment with 10 urban and only 2 rural participants. Lastly, the two ranges of 4,000,001 to 5,000,000 VND and more than 5,000,000 VND monthly tutoring payment are for the urban participants only with the percentages of 5.6% (4 parents) and 4.2% (3 parents).

5.3. Private tutoring attendance background of participants' children

Table 5.3 demonstrates the private tutoring attendance background of urban and rural parents' children.

Table 5.3. Private tutoring attendance background of urban and rural parents' children

	Urban parents (N = 36) having			Rural parents (N = 36) having			Total parents (N = 72) having		
	1 child	**2 children**	**%**	**1 child**	**2 children**	**%**	**1 child**	**2 children**	**%**
Mode of regular schools their children attended									
Public regular school	10	23	*91.7*	11	25	*100*	21	48	*95.8*
Private regular school	2	1	*8.3*	-	-	-	2	1	*4.2*
Mode of their children's tutoring enrolment									
With the same teacher from the same public regular school	10	23	*91.7*	11	25	*100*	21	48	*95.8*
With the different teacher from the same public regular school	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
With the different teacher from the different	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

public regular school								
With the same teacher from the same private regular school	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
With the different teacher from the same private regular school	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
With the different teacher from the different private regular school	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
With professional tutor (retired professor, lecturer and teacher; university student) of professional tutoring companies	6	4	*27.8*	3	2	*13.9*	9	6	*20.8*
With foreign tutor in Vietnam	2	1	*8.3*	-	-	-	2	1	*4.2*
With professional online tutoring centre	14	10	*66.7*	9	5	*38.9*	23	15	*52.8*
No. of hours their children attending private tutoring weekly									
Less than 5 hours	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 to less than 10 hours	3	2	*13.9*	4	5	*25*	7	7	*19.4*
10 to less than 15 hours	10	8	*50*	10	6	*44.4*	20	14	*47.2*
15 to 20 hours	7	6	*36.1*	6	5	*30.6*	13	11	*33.3*
More than 20 hours	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Types of tutoring their children enrolled									
Individual (one-to-one)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Small group (2 to 5 students)	3	2	*13.9*	-	-	-	3	2	*6.9*
Large group (6 to 12 students)	7	4	*30.6*	5	3	*22.2*	12	7	*26.4*
Class style (13 or more students)	10	23	*91.7*	11	25	*100*	21	48	*95.8*
No. of tutoring subjects their children enrolled									
Mathematics	12	24	*100*	11	25	*100*	36	36	*100*
Vietnamese	12	24	*100*	11	25	*100*	36	36	*100*
English	12	24	*100*	11	25	*100*	36	36	*100*
Physics	10	9	*52.8*	8	7	*41.7*	18	16	*47.2*
Chemistry	10	7	*47.2*	7	6	*36.1*	17	13	*41.7*
Biology	4	2	*16.7*	1	1	*5.6*	5	3	*11.1*
Geography	5	3	*22.2*	5	4	*25*	10	7	*23.6*
History	4	3	*19.4*	3	2	*13.9*	7	5	*16.7*
Drawing	1	-	*2.8*	-	-	-	1	-	*1.4*
Music	1	-	*2.8*	-	-	-	1	-	*1.4*

(Source: Researcher's demographic data analysis results)

As specified in Table 5.3, the modes of regular schools that participants' children attended include public regular schools and private regular schools. In urban areas, 10 one child's parents and 23 two children's parents (91.7%) enrol their children in public regular schools. Meanwhile, all rural parents, consisting of 11 one child's parents and 25 two children's parents (100%), send their children in public regular schools. There are no rural parents and only 3 urban parents (8.3%) sending their children in private regular schools, including 2 one child's parents and 1 two children's parents.

For the modes of participants' children's tutoring enrolment, most of urban parents having their children enrolled in public regular schools (91.7%) and all of rural parents (100%) also send their children to private tutoring services with the same teachers from the same public regular schools. As reported by both urban and rural parents, none of them send their children to private tutoring with the different teachers from the same or different public regular schools. These urban and rural parents also do not send their children to private tutoring with the same

or different teachers from the same private regular schools, or with the different teachers from the different private regular schools.

Nevertheless, the significant amounts of parents, regardless in urban or rural areas, attempt to enrol their children in other types of private tutoring outside public and private regular schools, as some parents send their children to more than one private tutoring services for gaining more specific academic knowledge. For examples, 6 one child's parents and 4 two children's parents (27.8%) in urban areas and 3 one child's parents and 2 two children's parents (13.9%) in rural areas enrol their children with professional tutors (retired professors, lecturers and teachers; university students) of professional tutoring companies. Meanwhile, only 3 urban parents (8.3%), consisting of 2 one child's parents and 1 two children's parents encourage their children to study with foreign tutors in Vietnam. Interestingly, 14 one child's parents and 10 two children's parents (66.7%) in urban areas and 9 one child's parents and 5 two children's parents (38.9%) in rural areas enrol their children with professional online tutoring centres.

In term of the numbers of hours participants' children attending private tutoring weekly, no parents reported that their children attended private tutoring less than 5 hours or more than 20 hours per week. The most popular number of hours participants' children attending private tutoring weekly is the range of 10 to less than 15 hours per week, with the percentages of 50% (10 one child's parents and 8 two children's parents) in urban areas and 44.4% (10 one child's parents and 6 two children's parents) in rural areas. The percentages of participants' children attending private tutoring from 15 to 20 hours per week are 36.1% in urban areas and 30.6% in rural areas, whist these percentages of participants' children attending private tutoring from 5 to less than 10 hours per week are only 13.9% in urban areas and 25.0% in rural areas.

For the types of tutoring participants' children enrolled, no parents announced that the children undertaking individual (one-on-one) tutoring services. There are only 5 urban parents (3 one child's parents and 2 two children's parents) (13.9%) send their children to small group (2 to 5 students) tutoring, while 11 urban parents (30.6%) and 8 rural parents (22.2%) enrol their children in the large group (6 to 12 students) tutoring. The most prevalent type of tutoring participants' children enrolled is the class style (13 or more students) with most of urban

parents having their children enrolled in public regular schools (91.7%) and all of rural parents (100%).

Finally, the numbers of tutoring subjects participants' children enrolled in private tutoring services are varied. Notably, all urban and rural parents (100%) enrol their children in three tutoring subjects: Mathematics, Vietnamese and English. Physics and chemistry are two natural science tutoring subjects with respectively 52.8% urban and 41.7% rural parents and 47.2% urban and 36.1% rural parents enrolled, whilst 16.7% urban and 5.6% rural parents send their children to biology tutoring classes. The social science tutoring subjects like geography and history are enrolled by 22.2% urban and 25.0% rural parents and 19.4% urban and 13.9% rural parents respectively. There are only 1 one child's parent and 1 another one child's parent in urban areas sending their children to drawing and music tutoring classes.

5.4. The maps of six locations selected in Vietnam and brief introductions of fundamental education levels in the Vietnamese education system for the empirical study

The maps of three urban and three rural areas chosen in Vietnam for the empirical study are available from Appendix 2 to Appendix 8. In addition, the brief introductions of fundamental education levels of the country are demonstrated to help international readers gain some understandings about the locations where the empirical study was conducted.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1: HOW THE GOVERNMENT'S REGULATIONS ON PRIVATE TUTORING INFLUENCE PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING

This chapter indicates the findings and discussion of the first research question: How the government's regulations on private tutoring influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring. The findings include: (i) *Document No. 10176/TH* and *Document No. 7291/BGDDT-GDTrH* regulations are likely to broaden opportunities for disguised private tutoring phenomenon for students rather than minimize it because the boards of educational administrators and their formal schools could intentionally enforce regulations untruthfully; (ii) *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT* regulation is generally ineffective in terms of organising private tutoring classes inside and outside formal schools, prohibiting teachers from offering private tutoring services and loosening private tutoring management procedures; and (iii) Private tutoring services should be prohibited for teachers with less than 5 year work experience and for principals and vice-principals of mainstream schools. Some discussions about full-day schooling and private tutoring in Vietnam might have influenced parental perceptions are demonstrated. Parental perceptions of regulations on private tutoring in some other countries are additionally discussed. The research limitation in the chapter is also mentioned.

6.1. Findings

Figure 6.1 highlights the model of current Vietnamese government's regulations influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring. Indeed, there has not been so far any legal documentation to completely ban private tutoring activities in Vietnam (Le, 2018). However, in order to regulate private tutoring activities sufficiently, **Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)**, on the behalf of the Vietnamese government, issued *Document No. 10176/TH, Dated 7th November 2000, Guiding the 2 Shift per Day Teaching Activities of Primary Schools* and *Document No. 7291/BGDDT-GDTrH, Dated 1st November 2010, Guiding the 2 Shift per Day Teaching Activities of Secondary and Upper-Secondary Schools*

(MOET 2000; MOET 2010). The contents of these legal documents indicated the guidance of operating *the 2 shifts per day teaching activities* which are also called as *the Full Day Schooling* regulations for primary (grade 1 to 5), secondary (grade 6 to 9) and upper-secondary (grade 10 to 12) students for the sake of reducing the private tutoring enrolments of students in these school levels and increasing more time to organise art, sport and other outdoor physical activities for students (MOET, 2000; MOET, 2010).
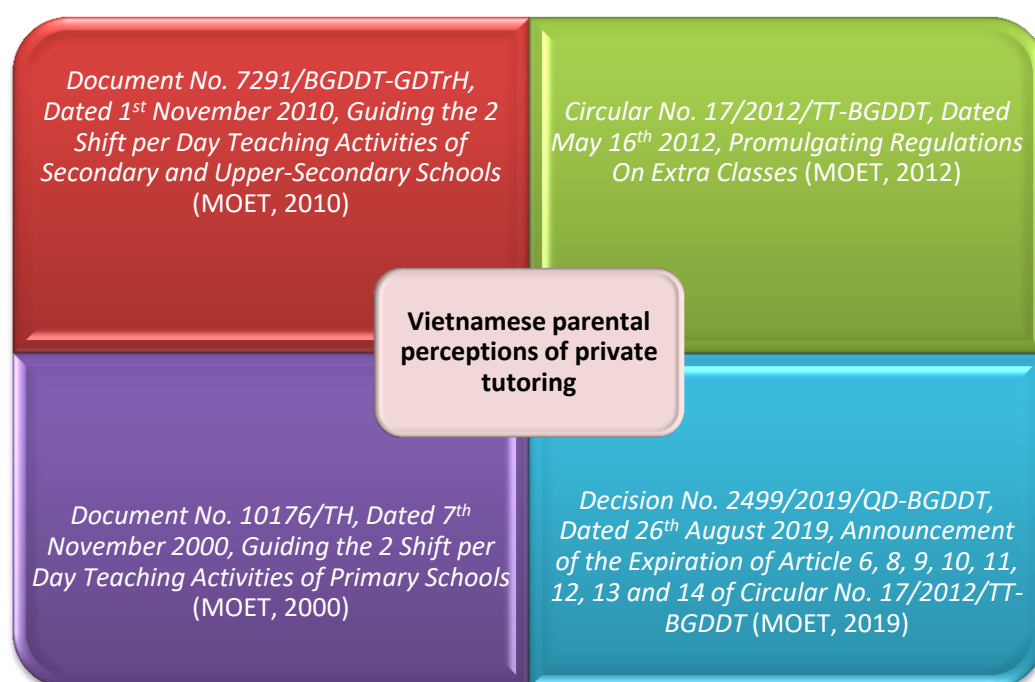
Figure 6.1. Current Vietnamese government's regulations influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring

(Sources: MOET, 2000; MOET, 2010; MOET, 2012; MOET, 2019)

Additionally, MOET continued to issue *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT, Dated May 16th 2012, Promulgating Regulations On Extra Classes* (MOET, 2012) to ensure the effectiveness in regulating private tutoring. Article 3 and 4 of this Circular are very important for many stakeholders, including parents, as the former one specifies general rules for private tutoring classes, while the latter one indicates cases which are not allowed to provide tutoring services.

Nevertheless, *Decision No. 2499/2019/QD-BGDDT, Dated 26th August 2019, Announcement of the Expiration of Article 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 of Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT* since 1st July 2016 due to the legal basis

expiration of this Circular as specified in *Section 3, Article 74, Investment Law, Dated 26th November 2014* (MOET, 2019) indicated clearly that the Articles above of *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT* were expired. Therefore, in holding extra class activities, only *Article 5. Holding internal extra classes* which refers to organising private tutoring classes within public schools is currently still validated. Any organised private tutoring class activities outside public schools, or relates to *Article 6. Holding external extra classes*, are unlawful. Unfortunately, despite the expiration of many Articles in *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT* since 1st July 2016, so far most of Vietnamese private tutoring centres, regardless of internal or external formal schools, still have been operating under the full enforcement of *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT*.

6.1.1. Parental opinions on regulations in Document No. 10176/TH and Document No. 7291/BGDDT-GDTrH

The brainstorming sessions provide participants' responses of some prominent regulations of the Vietnamese government on private tutoring which relate to their perceptions of private tutoring. Generally, all of informants agreed with the intention to regulate strictly and narrow the development of private tutoring services of the Vietnamese government. Unfortunately, most of the participants confirmed that some regulations of the government on private tutoring have been enforced untruthfully, such as *Document No. 10176/TH, Document No. 7291/BGDDT-GDTrH* and *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT*.

Many Vietnamese parents demonstrated that the regulations of *the 2 shifts per day teaching activities,* which are also called as *the Full Day Schooling* regulations of Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam have been optional rather than compulsory. According to *Document No. 10176/TH* and *Document No. 7291/BGDDT-GDTrH,* the 2 shifts per day teaching activities for formal primary, secondary and upper-secondary schools should be only organized in the demanded schools, agreed voluntarily by parents and approved by the local authorities (MOET, 2000; MOET, 2010). Therefore, in parental viewpoints, *the Full Day Schooling* regulations have suddenly created more chances for a disguised private tutoring phenomenon in the formal primary, secondary and upper-secondary schools as specified below.

6.1.1.1. Avoiding applying the optional Full Day Schooling regulations to organize private tutoring classes

Fourteen parents of grade 6 to grade 9 students revealed that a significant amount of secondary schools, particularly secondary schools in big city areas, have tried to avoid applying the optional full day schooling rule for their students for the purpose of organizing private tutoring classes. Alternatively, students only have to study either morning shifts or afternoon shifts in secondary schools. And these schools could utilize the classrooms of the second haft school-day for organizing private tutoring services for many of their own students because they understand that according to *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT*, schools are not allowed to organize private tutoring classes for (i) students who undertake full day schooling, and (ii) primary school students.

To avoid criticisms of parents and the society, the leaders of formal primary, secondary and upper-secondary schools usually express various reasons for this unenforceability as majeure circumstances. One parent explained the reason for this unusual decision:

> *The principal of my son's secondary school informed parents that all students from grade 6 to grade 9 are at the ages of complicated psychological human development. Students at these ages really need a study and play balance. Therefore, he insisted that if students are allowed to attend full day schooling, it is likely that the school may encounter unforeseeable problems in teaching and learning activities.*

> (ID Number: P7; in Folders: A1, G1 and M1)

Some other parents demonstrated that the boards of administrators in some secondary and upper-secondary schools even blamed that parents required them to organize students to study the first half day in schools only and leave the second half day for students to undertake private tutoring classes outside the schools or other physical or recreational activities, and they cannot refuse such legitimate requests.

> *Some boards of school administrators are against us by displaying evidences such as our school comments and request letters and signed application forms to prove that we parents required them to provide only a half day schooling for our children, as we would want our children to spend the second half day for other purposes like undertaking private tutoring classes or participating physical or*

recreational activities. They tried to modify our right decisions in their illegal purposes.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P10; in Folders: C1, I1 and O1)</div>

6.1.1.2. Applying the Full Day Schooling regulations as required, but expressing the disguised private tutoring

Surprisingly, even when many participants confirmed that most of primary schools as well as a significant amount of secondary and upper-secondary schools in Vietnam have followed the full day schooling rule as required, parents have still showed that these schools also express the disguised private tutoring phenomenon through the school timetables and content curricula for their own students.

Some parents explained that in primary school level, students often study 7 sessions (45 minutes per session) a day, including 4 sessions in the morning shift and 3 sessions in the afternoon shift. However, instead of teaching both theoretical and practical issues of a lesson for primary school students in either the morning shifts or the afternoon shifts, the boards of administrators in schools often intentionally required students to learn a lesson in both shifts as if following the Full Day Schooling regulations. For example, in the morning school shift, students have to study theoretical issues of the subjects, and do practical exercises in the afternoon shift. After completing the basic level, students must continue transferring to the medium level and then the advanced level with the same learning procedures. These study procedures, according to parents' points of view, have been considered to be the disguised private tutoring phenomenon.

> *As required by the teacher, my daughter and her classmates have to study Mathematics and Vietnamese language in the morning and do practical exercises in the afternoon every day at school. Our children must study like robots without doing any other educational activities. Can you imagine how are primary students fed up with, or even feel scarce with a learning environment like robots? My daughter told me that she felt that she must study in the formal class in the morning shift and conduct the private tutoring class in the afternoon shift of the same formal school.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P3; in Folders: B1, H1 and N1)</div>

6.1.1.3. Charging additional school fees as hidden private tutoring fees when applying the Full Day Schooling rule

As argued by fifty-six parents, if MOET requires schools to organize the Full Day Schooling to deliver the approved national curriculum programs for students, the teachers' salaries and other educational and managerial expenses for the second half school-day should be paid by the government's budget. Unfortunately, all schools are authorized to claim parents the fees for their children's second half school-day. Meanwhile, there have not been any legal documents of MOET up to now to regulate the fees of the second half school-day. As a consequence, schools automatically charge various fee rates based on some factors such as academic reputations, rankings in the national school system, academic quality of teachers, schools located in urban or rural areas, etc. One parent of a primary student listed:

> *Primary schools charged us with various prices for the second half school day of our children, depending on their reputations, educational quality or school locations: It could be 50,000 VND, 100,000 VND, 150,000 VND or even 200,000 VND per calendar month (Approximately 3.2 AUD, 6.4 AUD, 9.61 AUD or even 12.81 AUD per calendar month at the time of writing).*

(ID Number: P2; in Folders: A1 and G1)

Twenty-two parents of secondary students complained that secondary schools charged them the fees of the second half school-day for three subjects from 300,000 VND, 400,000 VND to 600,000VND/month/student. Similarly, sixteen parents of upper-secondary students also pointed out that the fees of upper-secondary schools are the highest for 5 to 6 subjects: It might be 500,000 VND, 600,000 VND to 1,000,000 VND/month/student.

As a result, many parents in primary, secondary and upper-secondary schools agreed that the teaching and learning methods for the second half school-day in the Full Day Schooling system in Vietnam could be considered as compulsory disguised private tutoring phenomenon with the fees as hidden private tutoring fees.

6.1.1.4. Full Day Schooling regulations are considered as supporting private tutoring, but Full Day Schooling classrooms' quality is even less than real private tutoring classrooms' quality

Many parents demonstrated that Full Day Schooling regulations, frankly speaking, have been considered as supporting private tutoring. Nonetheless, Full Day Schooling classrooms' quality is even less than real private tutoring classrooms' quality because the numbers of students are usually overwhelmed. As the Full Day Schooling classrooms are formal two-shifts, hence the numbers of attended students are always too crowded. As a result, students' knowledge acquisitions are seriously affected because the teachers should not be able to deliver knowledge to each student sufficiently and effectively in the too crowded learning atmosphere, as the complaint of a parent:

> *My son told me that he has to study English in his second learning shifts on every Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in the school. But you know, there were still 53 students in the English class, as the same as the total number of students in the morning shift. How can the English teacher teach communication skills for 53 students such as listening and speaking sufficiently and effectively if practising one by one?*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P5; in Folders: A1, G1 and M1)</div>

6.1.1.5. Full Day Schooling regulations force students to enroll in external private tutoring centres

Some parents clarified that in the afternoon shift, teachers repeated a lot of knowledge which they had already delivered to students in the morning shift in the same teaching day. This teaching method makes some students feel boring as they have to spend more time to study nothing new. Hence, parents have to enroll their children in external private tutoring centres, although their children attend the Full Day Schooling in the formal schools as required. Parents understand clearly that their children were forced to undertake more private tutoring internally, but they have to do that if they would like to guarantee their children's future academic successes.

> *Our children complained to us that they had acquired little knowledge in the second shift of Full Day Schooling. Some kids even told us that in the afternoon shift, the teachers repeated a heap of knowledge which they had already delivered to students in the morning shift. Thus, we parents have to organize groups of our children from 5 to 10 and hire external private tutors or send them to external private*

tutoring centres at the weekends to acquire more important knowledge. We know that our children have to sacrifice their hobbies and physical activities in the weekends to gather successes in their studies. Both our kids and us were forced to do that.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P11; in Folders: C1, I1 and O1)</div>

6.1.1.6. Formal schools modified Full Day Schooling regulations to force students to attend their classes fully despite students' willingness

Some parents pointed out that many government schools avoided the issue of their schools to be considered organizing private tutoring by delivering the first half of formal curriculum contents of the teaching day in the morning shift and the second half in the afternoon shift. Thus, formal schools students will lose opportunities to acquire formal school knowledge without attending two shift learning days. In other words, students have no choice except attending the full day schooling as requested, regardless of their willingness or availability.

For several school years, at the beginning of each school year we parents often asked our kids' teachers that whether we can stop enrolling our kids in the second half of the Full Day Schooling or not. However, all teachers answered No, because they explained that the national curriculum contents of the teaching day are delivered in both morning and afternoon shifts. If our kids are off in any shifts, they will lose opportunities to acquire the important national knowledge from the schools.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P9; in Folders: D1, J1 and P1)</div>

6.1.2. Parental discussions on regulations in Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT

In Focus Group Discussions, parents provided their responses about the ineffectiveness in applying *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT* for regulating private tutoring activities in public schools by analysing some following Articles of the *Circular*.

6.1.2.1. Untruthful enforcement in organising private tutoring classes inside formal schools

As specified in *Article 5 Holding internal extra classes*, *Section 1* requires that parents who wish to enroll their children in internal private tutoring classes of formal schools must write their commitments, sign in the application forms and have responsibilities to undertake their commitments. All the participants responded that they had followed exactly all the requirements from the formal schools to complete their children's private tutoring enrolments successfully. However, parents promptly detected later that most of regular school teachers, could be on the behalf of school leaders, had previously created the heavy pressures on their children's daily learning in classes by their actions and attitudes, such as (i) Reminding the announcements of private tutoring class enrolments for students and parents in semester meetings between teachers and parents; (ii) Giving students application forms for their children's private tutoring attendances and requiring them to tell their parents sign and write commitments in; (iii) Blackmailing students by oral threats (e.g. announcing students' low test results sarcastically and publicly in the mainstream classes to make low performance students get shameful, etc) and/or actions (e.g. check students' homework more frequently; provide too harsh marks and strict comments in students' test and exam papers, etc); and (iv) Expressing unfriendly attitudes (e.g. always express a cold attitude for low achievement students, etc).

> *My daughter told me that her teacher reminded all students many times in her class that they were required to ask their parents for permissions of private tutoring enrolments in the school. Even we parents were reminded about our children's private tutoring enrolments in the school if requested when we discussed with the teachers in school regular meetings.*
>
> (ID Number: P10; in Folders: E1 and K1)
>
> *My kid gave me a typewriting copy of Application Form for Private Tutoring at School and asked me to fill in some blank spaces such as Parent's Full Name, Occupation, Residential Address and sign it. I was extremely surprised because some sections of the form are the same for every student, such as the reasons for enrolling in private tutoring, the commitments of student, the commitments of parents. In my opinion, these sections should be blank for students and parents to*

fill in, as each student and parent has their own reasons for enrolling in private tutoring classes.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P8; in Folders: F1 and L1)</div>

All of these actions above, in the Vietnamese parents' viewpoints within the research, are for the purpose of forcing parents to enroll their children in formal schools' private tutoring classes as soon as possible. As a consequence, in order to avoid further troubles for their children in public schools, all participants, regardless of their willingness or unwillingness, are forced to send their children to private tutoring classes in formal schools by signing and writing commitments in the application forms. Consequently, whenever the local education inspectors come and check the legality of the private tutoring process in any school, the principals will provide them fully legal evidences of parents' permissions for students' private tutoring enrolments.

In *Sections 2, 3* and *4* of *Article 5 Holding internal extra classes* display that the principals of regular schools have all the rights and responsibilities in assessing students' application forms in private tutoring enrolments and teachers' application forms in teaching private tutoring classes as well as organizing and managing all private tutoring activities in his/her formal school. Nonetheless, many participants pointed out that some negative problems also may arise from these *Sections* as follows:

(i) Most of principals were very easy in assessing the suitability of teachers to be school tutors. Alternatively, any teachers who teach important subjects (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, English, French, Vietnamese, etc) could also be school tutors with the approval of the principal.

(ii) Many principals and the board of administrators in schools ignored the following legal statement in *Section 2* of *Article 5*: '…categorize him/her to an appropriate group of students by his/her learning capacity, assign teachers and hold extra classes according to each group of students' (MOET, 2012). In fact, after receiving and approving students' private tutoring application forms, principals usually assign the same teachers who are currently teaching students in the mainstream classes to be the tutors of them without organizing them in different learning capacity groups. The purpose of this ignorance is for making students feel comfortable of no discriminations and attracting more students enroll in schools' private tutoring classes.

> *We parents understand clearly that teachers never categorize their formal school students in different learning capacity groups in any private tutoring classes. If teachers do so, they will make students feel very comfortable as well as attract more students to enroll in private tutoring classes, because students know that they will not receive any discrimination in private tutoring classes of their formal school teachers.*
>
> (ID Number: P12; in Folders: A1, G1 and M1)

(iii) Most of principals and the board of administrators in schools extremely support the private tutoring service development in their regular schools as these educational services bring to them extra incomes and other possible incentives.

> *One of my friends who is a secondary school teacher revealed me that the incomes from private tutoring fees in her school will be divided as follows: 20% for principals and the board of administrators, 5% for accounting, cashier and security staff; 70% for teacher salaries; and 5% for other school operations expenses.*
>
> (ID Number: P12; in Folders: C1 and I1)

As a consequence, principals, board of administrators, teachers and other professional staff in mainstream schools strongly protect their private tutoring services and try to develop them by applying all *Sections* of *Article 5* with their own modifications for students and parents.

6.1.2.2. Untruthful enforcement in organising private tutoring classes outside formal schools

Many respondents demonstrated that *Article 8 Requirements pertaining to teachers* summarizes the requirements for teachers who wish to be tutors. However, as argued by most of parents, teachers have no difficulties in applying for and getting the certificates of private tutoring provision permissions from the local authorities, because all the demanded teachers are usually prepared and qualified fully for these permission certificates in *Article 8*.

> *You know, I'm sure that it is very easy for any teachers to prepare all the necessary procedures for receiving private tutoring class teaching permissions as specified in Article 8 of Circular No. 17. All of them are able to meet basic requirements such as education level standards, sufficient physical fitness, good virtuous character, no criminal*

prosecution, etc as presented in their application forms and support certified documentations.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P10; in Folders: B1 and H1)</div>

Moreover, many parents showed that the ease of *Sections* in *Article 8* without effective verifications from local authorities lead to the convenience for teachers' private tutoring classes outside formal schools as indicated in *Article 6 Holding external extra classes*. After granting private tutoring provision permission certificates, teachers have various opportunities to recruit tutees. They also have to compete with each others to attract and retain tutees. All of them apply *Sections* in *Article 6*, such as private tutoring outside school regulation commitments, security guarantees, permission certificates, list of tutors, timetables, private tutoring fees, etc sufficiently. Additionally, many teachers may also apply other legal sections to force students to enrol in their private tutoring classes as demonstrated below.

6.1.2.3. *Untruthful enforcement in prohibiting teachers from offering private tutoring services*

As complained by many respondents, *Section 1* and *2* of *Article 4 Banned extra classes* respectively display that 'Extra classes shall not be provided for students who have attended curricular classes for 2 sessions per day' and 'Extra classes shall not be provided for elementary students, except for extra-curricular activities: arts, sports, or life skills' (MOET, 2012). In fact, parents of full day schooling students still announced that their children attended private tutoring classes at their teachers' own home in the evenings and the weekends. Meanwhile, all parents of elementary students in the research also admitted that they were offered and advertised by school teachers to send their children to teachers' private tutoring classes.

Although attending 2 shifts per school day already, our children still have to enroll in private tutoring classes at their teachers' own home in the evenings and the weekends.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P7; in Folders: B1 and H1)</div>

We still received offers and advertisements from primary school teachers to send our kids to their private tutoring classes. They intentionally ignored the prohibitions of offering private tutoring services for primary school students.

Similarly, *Section 4* of *Article 4 Banned extra classes* shows clearly that 'A teacher receiving salaries from wage-fund of public service agencies is banned from: a) Holding external extra classes…' (MOET, 2012). Parents, therefore, confirmed that if the regulation stopped there, the messy private tutoring phenomenon in Vietnam like the dramatic increase in the numbers of private tutoring centres and the disguised private tutoring services in all national cities and provinces would probably never occur. Unfortunately, they complained that the *Section 4* of *Article 4*'s regulation continues to suggest that '… unless he/she conducts external extra classes;' (MOET, 2012). Alternatively, teachers in public schools are not allowed to organize private tutoring classes outside their schools (e.g. No teachers' applications for register external private tutoring centres are accepted). Nevertheless, teachers are still allowed to participate in teaching activities in such external private tutoring centres. Undeniably, mainstream school teachers are allowed to teach private tutoring classes both inside and outside public schools. As a result, many teachers hired other people (e.g. their friends, relatives, etc) to submit applications for registering external private tutoring centres in local authorities, while they are still the owners of such registered external private tutoring centres.

> *They easily hire their friends and relatives to apply for the permissions of opening external private tutoring centres. And they are still the owners of these registered external private tutoring centres to continue providing private tutoring services.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P5; in Folders: A1, G1 and M1)</div>

6.1.2.4. Loose procedures for issuance of private tutoring license

Over three-fourth of number of participants agreed that the procedures for private tutoring license issuance are quite loose for public school teachers. In other words, nearly all teachers are able to easily prepare all necessary support documents to meet the legal requirements for private tutoring licenses granted. Particularly, teachers who have huge residential premises with several large enough rooms also satisfy the requirements of private tutoring venues. Consequently, parents commented that public school teachers who currently undertake private tutoring services may feel comfortable with the ease of private tutoring license issuance procedures of MOET.

They can easily prepare all necessary support documents such as their ID cards, professional qualifications, teaching certificates, health check results, financial fund evidences for education purposes, blah blah… to meet the legal requirements of the local authorities. After applying with these full support documents, they are quickly granted private tutoring licenses.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P6; in Folders: F1, L1 and R1)</div>

6.1.2.5. Loose procedures for private tutoring service inspections

Many respondents reflected that when inspecting private tutoring service activities, educational inspectors usually focus on verifying documentary issues in private tutoring applications such as licenses, lists of tutors, tutoring timetables, student private tutoring applications, financial reports, etc, whilst ignoring the most important issue: The list of tutees. According to a lot of parents, the list of tutees in each private tutoring class is an undeniable evidence to prove that a teacher has breached the regulations of *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT* or not.

The investigation is quite simple: The inspector checks both the list of tutees in a private tutoring class and the list of students in a formal classroom, then compare each name of tutees and students. The repetitions of students' names in both of the lists will show clearly that the teacher has breached the regulations or not. However, the problem here is that the inspector forgot it or ignored it when doing his/her inspecting duties?

<div align="right">(ID Number: P12; in Folders: A1, G1 and M1)</div>

6.1.2.6. Loose procedures for private tutoring fee inspections

As clarified by many parents, *Article 7 Collection and management of fees for extra classes* only intervenes in the ceiling and flooring private tutoring fee rates in internal private tutoring centres rather than in external ones. Thus, a significant amount of formal schools had co-operated with external private tutoring centres to organize tutoring classes instead of applying for licenses for their own tutoring class organisations. The purpose of these co-operations is such formal schools should be able to organize internal private tutoring activities in school venues and charge students and their parents the maximum possible fee rates without being controlled by regulations for holding external private tutoring activities. If any problems arise with legal obligations, the responsible party is external private

tutoring centres, despite of private tutoring activities occur in internal formal schools.

> *My son told me that although I enrolled him in an external private tutoring centre, the tutoring venue and classrooms were still located in his formal school's premises. Other parents and I only received the tutoring enrolment notices and fee announcements under the name of that external private tutoring centre. It seems to me and other parents that our children's school and that external private tutoring centre had co-operated to each other to charge us the maximum possible fee rates.*

(ID Number: P9; in Folders: A1 and G1)

6.1.3. Parental suggestions in improving current private tutoring's regulations

In in-depth individual interviews, although admitting that many *Articles* in *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT* were abandoned as clarified in *Decision No. 2499/2019/QD-BGDDT* (MOET, 2019), many participants still did not fully believed that this legal document is enforced truthfully. Therefore, they also proposed some amendments in private tutoring regulations as parental solutions for improving the current Vietnamese government's regulations on private tutoring.

6.1.3.1. Teachers with less than 5 year work experience should not be allowed to provide private tutoring services

Some parents argued that as young teachers are usually fresh graduates with less work experience, thus their quality of private tutoring knowledge deliveries might or might not acceptable by students and parents. Therefore, in order to guarantee the quality of knowledge deliveries in private tutoring classes, MOET should regulate that teachers with less than 5 year work experience should not be allowed to provide private tutoring services. Instead, teachers, particular young ones, should spend 5 years to concentrate on improving and advancing their professional knowledge, skills and reputations.

> *Young teachers should spend approximately 5 years for improving and advancing their professional knowledge, skills and reputations. So, it is necessary for The Ministry of Education and Training to regulate*

that the teachers with less than 5 year work experience should not be allowed to provide private tutoring services.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P6; in Folders: E1, K1 and Q1)</div>

6.1.3.2. Principals and Vice-Principals should not be allowed to provide private tutoring services

Some other parents reflected that Principals and Vice-Principals of the Board of Administrators in some schools also provide private tutoring services both inside and outside schools. Meanwhile, Principals and Vice-Principals of formal schools are public officials and leaders who are responsible for school managerial duties (The National Assembly, 2019). Hence, Principals and Vice-Principals should not be allowed to provide private tutoring services. They should develop the managerial skills and experience to maintain and advance their educational leadership abilities in the Vietnamese schooling system.

> *In my daughter's school, both the Principal and the Vice-Principal are also tutors after formal schooling time. I don't understand how can they take time to maintain and develop their leadership skills if they spend most of their available time for providing private tutoring services?*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P7; in Folders: D1, J1 and P1)</div>

Many parents also revealed that another reason for Principals and Vice-Principals should not be permitted to undertake private tutoring classes because of school tests and examinations. As regulated, Principals and Vice-Principals are members of the Board of School Administrators. Therefore, they are authorized to assess and confirm the contents of periodic and final school tests and exams. Consequently, corruption activities in education might occur if Principals and Vice-Principals reveal the contents of school tests and exams for their tutees in private tutoring sessions.

> *We parents have heard clearly that Principals and Vice-Principals usually know the contents of school tests and exams in advance because their duties are assessing and confirming those from teachers' assessment suggestions. If they are tutors, who know that they will or will not reveal the contents of tests and exams for their tutees? Ministry of Education and Training should prevent them from providing private tutoring services for school students.*

6.2. Discussion

6.2.1. Relationships between full-day schooling regulations and private tutoring regulation issues in affecting Vietnamese parental perceptions

Previous research significantly showed that the existences of both full-day schooling and private tutoring in Vietnam might have influenced various educational stakeholders, consisting of parents. For instance, in Vietnamese full-day schooling, parents and local authorities share the infrastructure and teacher salary expenses for students' learning; while only parents have to pay private tutoring fees for their own children (Tran & Pasquier-Doumer 2019; Bray et. al. 2016). Thus, unsurprisingly, Tran and Pasquier-Doumer (2019) admitted that full-day schooling could be confused with private tutoring classes in Vietnamese public schools as long as they stay parallel together. Moreover, these educational phenomena have also run frequently together when students in wealthy families may attend both. Similarly, Rolleston and Krutikova (2014) also specified that full-day schooling activities have been affected by private tutoring when the number of private tutoring hours for student attendance and homework was included in the instruction hours for students in full-day schooling. Therefore, although full-day schooling was considered to narrow the differences in instructional time for formal students compared to private tutoring, it should not still be able to close the gap as expected. In theory, Tran and Pasquier-Doumer (2019) continued to argue that full-day schooling might be useful to restrict the disadvantages of private tutoring in Vietnam. However, it has been practically a disguised private tutoring through the applied regulations of full-day schooling activities in formal schools. As a consequence, how successfully full-day schooling will be operated in reducing the number of private tutoring classes depends on how effectively full-day schooling's regulations have been applied by the boards of school administrators.

6.2.2. Private tutoring regulation issues in some other countries in affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring

There have been some similar studies about private tutoring regulation issues influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring in some nations. Undeniably,

parents of each different country have expressed various responses as their own perceptions on different governmental private tutoring regulations issues as described below.

Zhang (2019, p. 25 & p. 26) discussed that the Chinese government issued two important legal documents involving private tutoring regulations in February and August 2018, respectively entitled *Notice Issued by the General Offices of Four Ministries including Ministry of Education on a Special Campaign to Rectify Out-of-School Training Institutions in Order to Reduce Extracurricular Study Burden on Primary and Secondary Students* (as Document 1) and *Opinions by the General Office of the State Council on Regulating the Development of Private Tutoring Institutions* (as Document 2). According to Zhang (2019), the Chinese parents have paid attentions to current private tutoring's regulations issues such as: *(i) Venues:* They monitored the regulation enactment of fire safety and venue sizes. Many parents worried about the densely located private tutoring centres in residential buildings in cities. However, they heard that some tutoring centres were inspected and required to close, while some others moved to more invisible venues. Some parents also moved their children to such new venues as they still believed in their private tutoring service quality; *(ii) Content:* Parents demonstrated that they preferred hiring tutors who was in-service and reputational teachers of elite schools, as such teachers are responsible to design examination material and they may deliver these material to tutees, regardless of the possible unfairness for other students. Additionally, the monopoly of tutoring knowledge disappeared because the government has a priority for checking tutoring programs, as well as decreasing tutoring courses for knowledge competitions and disqualifying tutoring companies to host knowledge competitions; *(iii) Staffing:* Parents generally trusted about the tutors' service quality and professionalism so that they were willing to organize tutoring places for tutors if necessary; *(iv) Class Schedule:* Parents were impressive about the synopsis of each course name and the brilliant photos of starring tutors on the websites of tutoring companies, as these may help their children to improve the learning performance and exam preparation (Zhang 2019).

Zhan (2014, p. 498) introduced *the Administrative Regulation on Short-term Private Supplementary Education in Taipei City 2002* (called as *The Regulation*) with 8 chapters as the current regulations of the Taiwanese private tutoring

industry. Taiwanese parents, therefore, have trusted some *Items* of the regulation such as: (i) Tutoring advertisements are not allowed to exaggerate the effectiveness or provide false or misleading information of tutoring courses; (ii) The information transparency help parents be able to understand the private tutoring services clearly and select the most appropriate tutoring centres for their children if required; (iii) The regulation also help parents to protect their consumer rights in the national private tutoring market by tips and commercial contracts (Zhan, 2014).

In Macao, Li & Choi (2014, p. 511) confirmed that the *Regulating Private Supplementary Pedagogic Supporting Centres 1998* and the latter private tutoring legislations of the Macao government showed parents about issues such as tutoring fees, tutoring centre licensing, centre administrator duties, tutor qualifications and duties, catering services, business hours, etc. These legal items made parents perceived the ease of private tutoring service use for their children's learning, as well as lightened the educational duties for their children. Furthermore, parents also perceived the regulation compliance of private tutoring centres since they have established *the Association of Macao Private Supplementary Pedagogic Supporting Centres* to support parents and students in using their services better (Li & Choi 2014, p. 513).

The South Korean government has attempted to issue some new education policies relating to private tutoring (such as initiating specialised schools and accepting non-academic achievements when assessing the university entrance requirements for students, etc) for the sake of reducing the exam-orientation activities as the main reason for private tutoring demands of both students and parents. Nevertheless, parents, unsurprisingly, still have invested their possible resources for their children's private tutoring classes to keep seeking their children's learning improvements. In addition, the offers and acceptances of private tutoring centres for their children's enrolments have not only created the good partnerships between parents and such centres, but also supported them to be against the governmental policy of decreasing in the private tutoring impacts on stakeholders in South Korea. Due to the unchanged exam-oriented mindset of parents about private tutoring, most of private tutoring policies issued by the government have been ineffective (Tan & Yang 2019).

In contrast, the Swedish government issued the education tax reforms in which parents who hire private tutoring services will receive a tax relief for the purposes of establishing and growing the emerging private tutoring market of the nation. This education policy enactment has been considered as a private tutoring marketing strategy, as it has stimulated the parents' demands of hiring private tutors for their children's learning in Sweden (Hallsén & Karlsson 2018).

Likewise, Hon (2010) demonstrated that in Hong Kong, students or parents, on the behalf of their children as students, usually fill in tutor requirement forms as regulated by the educational authorities to indicate their requirements and preferences of prospective tutors. The purpose of this form is to ensure that the private tutoring agents have official evidence to choose the appropriate tutors that meet parents and students' needs. Whereas, in Vietnam, parents understand very clear that the purpose of tutor requirement forms which they have to sign and submit in private tutoring centres in public schools is quite different (Xuan 2011). Alternatively, although tutor requirement forms could be understood as voluntary forms, parents know clearly that when there is any dispute between parents and students with private tutoring centres in public schools, these voluntary forms will be used as evidence to prove that parents and students have been already voluntarily participating in private tutoring services. Therefore, in many parents' viewpoints, voluntary tutor requirement forms are usually used to protect the benefits of private tutoring centres in public schools legally, rather than protect the benefits of parents and students (Xuan 2011).

6.3. Conclusion of Chapter 6

Chapter 6 demonstrates many various responses and interpretations of respondents mentioning how the government's regulations on private tutoring have influenced parental perceptions of private tutoring.

For *Document No. 10176/TH* and *Document No. 7291/BGDDT-GDTrH* involving the 2 shifts per day teaching or Full-Day Schooling activities for formal primary, secondary and upper-secondary schools, participants pointed out that these two regulations is likely to broaden opportunities for disguised private tutoring phenomenon for students of all three education levels rather than minimize it in Vietnam. The reasons for this omission were because the boards of educational administrators and their formal schools could intentionally enforce regulations untruthfully: They may avoid applying the optional Full Day Schooling

regulations to organize their own private tutoring classes, or applying the Full Day Schooling regulations as required, but expressing their disguised private tutoring. When applying the Full Day Schooling rule, public schools charge additional school fees as hidden private tutoring fees. Surprisingly, whilst parents understand that Full Day Schooling regulations are considered as supporting private tutoring, they also perceived that Full Day Schooling classrooms' quality is even less than real private tutoring classrooms' quality. As a result, parents trusted that Full Day Schooling regulations force students to enroll in external private tutoring centres. Nevertheless, formal schools modified Full Day Schooling regulations to force students to attend their classes fully despite of students' willingness.

Moreover, parents demonstrated their responses about the ineffectiveness in applying *Circular No. 17/2012/TT-BGDDT* for regulating private tutoring activities in mainstream schools, such as the untruthful enforcements in organising private tutoring classes inside and outside formal schools as well as in prohibiting teachers from offering private tutoring services. In addition, the respondents also complained about the loose private tutoring management procedures of the Vietnamese government in terms of issuing of private tutoring license, inspecting private tutoring services and fees.

Finally, the informants proposed two solutions for improving current private tutoring's regulations: Private tutoring services should be prohibited: (i) for teachers with less than 5 year work experience to let them have opportunities for improving and advancing their professional knowledge, skills and reputations; and (ii) for Principals and Vice-Principals of mainstream schools to let them focus on their managerial skills and professional duties as well as prohibiting corruption activities in education relating to Principals and Vice-Principals where possible.

Some previous research confirmed that the existences of both full-day schooling and private tutoring in Vietnam might have influenced parental perceptions, such as sharing or paying full tuition fees (Tran & Pasquier-Doumer, 2019; Bray et. al., 2016) and confusing between full-day schooling and private tutoring classes (Tran & Pasquier-Doumer, 2019). More seriously, parents realized that private tutoring has affected full-day schooling activities when the attendance hours and content curriculum of both were mixed up together (Rolleston & Krutikova, 2014). Vietnamese full-day schooling should be used to minimize the disadvantages of

private tutoring in Vietnam, but due to the applied regulations of full-day schooling activities in formal schools it has been a disguised private tutoring (Tran & Pasquier-Doumer, 2019).

Parental perceptions of regulations on private tutoring in some other countries were also discussed. In China, parents have paid attentions to current private tutoring's regulations issues such as venues, content, staffing and class schedule (Zhang, 2019). In Taiwan, parents believed in some regulation items like tutoring advertisements and the information transparency (Zhan, 2014). In Macao, some legal items such as tutoring fees, tutoring centre licensing, centre administrator duties, tutor qualifications and duties, catering services, business hours, etc made parents perceived the ease of private tutoring service use for their children's learning and lightened the educational duties for their children (Li & Choi, 2014). In South Korea, parents still have invested their possible resources for their children's private tutoring in spite of perceiving some new education policies relating to private tutoring from the government due to their unchanged exam-oriented mindset (Tan & Yang, 2019). In Sweden, parents' demands of hiring private tutors for their children's learning were stimulated as the Swedish government issued the education tax reforms in which parents who hire private tutoring services will receive a tax relief (Hallsén & Karlsson, 2018). Finally, Hong Kong parents understand that they have to fill in the tutor requirement forms as a legislative requirement to ensure that the private tutoring agents have official evidence to choose the appropriate tutors that meet parents and students' needs (Hon, 2010). Nonetheless, parents in Vietnam perceived that these voluntary tutor requirement forms are usually used to protect the benefits of private tutoring centres in public schools only (Xuan, 2011).

In summary, although many parents have expected that the Vietnamese government should be able to regulate all the issues of private tutoring efficiently and effectively, some individual parents still have not perceived that the government could control the private tutoring phenomenon well. As justified in the research methodology section, the candidate would like to undertake an exploratory research only in this article to explore complicated issues relating to the government's regulations on private tutoring from parental perspectives. Hence, the researcher omitted applying quantitative research techniques to build hypotheses, select large amounts of population samples and use statistical

techniques to test some possible factors which influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring. Therefore, more quantitative research in the government's regulations on private tutoring influence parental perceptions of private tutoring in the future is needed.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2: HOW PRIVATE TUTORING FEES INFLUENCE PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING

This chapter investigates the effects of private tutoring fees on Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring. The findings show that the rates of private tutoring fees vary in Vietnamese public schools; they are always higher than mainstream school fee rates and many times more expensive, but they might not be required in Vietnamese private schools. Moreover, the specific purposes of parents' investments in private tutoring for their children's studies are varied. Many teachers are also private tutors to augment their incomes and the issue of whether private tutoring fees are the main source of teachers' incomes is often debated. Unfortunately, parents have to pay fees twice: once for public schooling and once for private tutoring for their children's knowledge sessions. Parents are willing to pay tutoring fees as bribes for teachers when necessary to purchase advantages for their children's future exams and in exchange for their children's safety nets. Finally, large amounts of charged tutoring fees motivate public school teachers to continue providing tutoring services and ignoring private tutoring regulations that forbid them to tutor privately. Five specific issues of parental perceptions of private tutoring fees are discussed. The research limitation in the chapter is also outlined.

7.1. Findings

7.1.1. Private tutoring fee rates are varied not only in public regular schools, but also in professional tutoring companies, and online tutoring centres and among individual foreign tutors

Without exception, 100% of both urban and rural participants agreed that private tutoring fees in Vietnam recently have been varied, from reasonable to expensive prices. The tutoring fee charging variations are not only in public regular schools, but also in professional tutoring companies, and online tutoring centres and among individual foreign tutors. These various tutoring fee rates depend on different factors like:

(i)   School teaching quality: Good schools charge higher tutoring fee rates because they 'might invest more money in its teaching quality and educational equipment' (An urban parent);

I think whether the tutoring fees are expensive or not depend on the school teaching quality. The good school might invest more money in its teaching quality and educational equipment, so they have to charge higher tutoring fee rates. That's fair enough!

(ID Number: P1; in Folders: C2 and I2)

(ii)   Teacher/tutor reputations: The fees that teachers/tutors charge could 'demonstrate their advantages and reputations about their own tutoring subjects', thus 'higher reputational tutors will charge higher fee rates' (An urban parent);

The teacher reputations are important in private tutoring classes. Other parents of my son's classmates usually use 'words-of-mouth' to notify each other about the famous and high reputational tutors in schools and private tutoring centres. They also agreed and believed that the various fee rates which tutors charge partly demonstrate their advantages and reputations about their own tutoring subjects. The higher reputational tutors will charge higher fee rates, and vice versa.

(ID Number: P8; in Folders: A2 and G2)

(iii)   School locations: Rural tutoring fees are reasonable and definitely cheaper than in urban tutoring fees, as the living standards in rural areas 'are lower' than the living standards in urban areas (A rural parent);

Because our province is a rural area, so the tutoring fees for school children here are very reasonable and definitely cheaper than in urban areas like Hanoi. Of course, because the living standards here are lower than the living standards in Hanoi.

(ID Number: P3; in Folders: D2 and J2)

(iv)   Mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, Vietnamese, English are considered as important subjects, because they are 'usually examinable subjects in final semester exams, final year exams and final school level exams'. Teachers/tutors 'have to spend more physical energies to careful deliver knowledge of examinable subjects to tutees', thus the tutoring fees

of these are "a little bit higher than tutoring fees of other subjects" (A rural parent).

> *I think there has been an 'unwritten law' that the tutoring fees of important subjects like mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, Vietnamese literatures, English are a little bit higher than tutoring fees of other subjects. Teachers explained to us that because these subjects are usually examinable subjects in final semester exams, final year exams and final school level exams; and they have to spend more physical energies to careful deliver knowledge of examinable subjects to tutees.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P11; in Folders: F2, L2 and R2)</div>

7.1.2. Private tutoring fees are always many times higher than public regular school fees

Speaking candidly, 32 urban and 35 rural parents confirmed that their children's tutoring fees have always been many times higher than formal school fees, 'even higher ten times' (An urban parent). For example, mainstream fees in a student's school were only 150,000 VND or 9.37 AUD monthly, while 1,500,000 VND or 93.71 AUD per month were the tutoring fees for three main tutoring subjects.

> *As I have experienced, the tutoring fees in public schools are always higher, even higher ten times than the mainstream school fees. My son's mainstream fee in his school is only 150,000 dongs per month, but his tutoring fees for three main subjects are 1,500,000 dongs per month.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P6; in Folders: B2 and H2)</div>

Thus, the parents have come to realise that the fees for private tutoring, which were initially thought of as supplementary fees, have actually become the major fees of most students in the Vietnamese regular public schools. On the other hand, public school fees, although also necessary for any school students, are now considered as minor fees from these parents' viewpoints. Therefore, these parents admitted that at present private tutoring fees practically have become more important than public school fees.

7.1.3. Private tutoring fees might not be required in the Vietnamese private regular schools

Interestingly, 30 urban and 34 rural parents agreed that their regular public school children were often required to enroll in private tutoring classes and pay tutoring fees. In contrast, 3 urban parents who enrolled their children in regular private schools observed that in the regular private school environment, tutoring enrolments and tutoring fees were not required for their children. In other words, these 3 urban parents and their regular private school children were simply required to enroll in the private curriculum and paid the private schooling fees only. One of these 3 urban parents clarified that the most persuasive reason for this truth is quite normal and simple: According to the explanation of private school teachers for parents, 'they always deliver the updated and essential knowledge for students in the mainstream classes'; thus parents are not required to enroll in and pay for 'any private tutoring classes' in their children's regular private schools (An urban parent).

> You know, some parents of students in private schools told me that their children do not have to attend private tutoring classes, and of course do not have to pay any fees for those. The private school teachers notify these parents that they always deliver the updated and essential knowledge for students in the mainstream classes, so they don't require students to enroll in any private tutoring classes.

(ID Number: P9; in Folders: C2, I2 and O2)

Therefore, private tutoring services were optional with these 3 parents when they enrolled their children with other types of private tutors outside those regular private schools.

7.1.4. Private tutoring fees have become more and more expensive

Unsurprisingly, 100% of urban and rural parents admitted that when they were tutees approximately 20 to 25 years ago, the tutoring fees in Vietnam were reasonable and acceptable. However, tutoring fees so far have been more and more expensive not only in both urban and rural public regular schools, but also in other tutoring types.

> When I was an upper-secondary school boy over 25 years ago, my parents enrolled me in some tutoring subjects of grade 10 in the school. I remembered that the fees were reasonable, about 1,500 dongs to 2,000 dongs per lesson. But now, when I enroll my daughter in private tutoring at the same grade, the fees are more expensive very

much: on average about 45,000 dongs to 50,000 dongs per lesson and
even more than these fee rates. The tutoring fees at present have been
increasing quickly, so I am very worried about how to pay these fees
for her.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P10; in Folders: A2 and G2)</div>

We clearly see that the private tutoring fees of public schools in our
province have been higher and higher over recent years. You know, we
live in rural areas with low incomes, hence we are very worried about
paying tutoring fees for our children.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P4; in Folders: E2, K2 and Q2)</div>

Therefore, the parents, regardless of whether they live in urban or rural areas, have been worried about how to manage paying their children's tutoring fees on time at the beginning of each calendar month or each semester of their school year.

7.1.5. Specific purposes of parents' investment in private tutoring fees for their children's studies are varied

Interestingly, parents revealed various purposes for paying tutoring fees for their children's knowledge preparation in private tutoring classes. Thirty-five rural and twenty-nine urban parents expected that their children would gain opportunities to pass the national upper-secondary graduation exams and the entrance assessments of local and national high prestigious national universities in Vietnam, e.g. Banking Academy, Academy of Finance, Foreign Trade University or National Economics University.

Many neighbours and colleagues of mine trust that my son will pass
the entrance exam assessments to enter high reputation universities. I
have required my son to apply for Banking Academy, Academy of
Finance, Foreign Trade University or National Economic University
after he graduates the upper-secondary school and passes his
graduation exams. These choices are good for him. I will pay more
money for him to maintain his enrolments in current private tutoring
classes.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P12; in Folders: A2 and G2)</div>

Meanwhile, 3 other urban and 1 rural parents believed that they paid the tutoring fees for their children to feed their aspirations of reaching high or outstanding

levels in academic transcripts and receive the study offer letters from some foreign-invested universities in Vietnam, such as RMIT Vietnam, British University Vietnam, Greenwich University Vietnam, Fulbright University Vietnam, Birmingham City University Vietnam. These parents strongly believed that if they 'enroll children in such universities in Vietnam', they will have opportunities to 'pay less tuition fees' than they have to when they 'send them abroad to study in foreign campuses of the same universities' (An urban parent).

> *We parents are very happy to see that many prestigious foreign universities such as RMIT Vietnam, British University Vietnam, Greenwich University, Fulbright University Vietnam, Birmingham City University Vietnam at present have been recruiting Vietnamese students to study in campuses in Vietnam. If we enroll our children in such universities in Vietnam, we will pay less tuition fees than we have to if we send them abroad to study in foreign campuses of the same universities. So, we decided to invest fees in our children's tutoring subjects like mathematics, physics, chemistry and especially English to support their dreams come true.*

(ID Number: P11; in Folders: B2 and H2)

Ambitiously, 4 other urban parents confirmed that their similar dreams were that their beloved children would have opportunities to win scholarships for studying overseas in worldwide highly ranked universities in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. For instance, 1 parent explained that as she had already won an Australian government's scholarship for international students to study in Melbourne, Australia before, she desired that one day her daughter, like her, could win a similar scholarship to study overseas.

> *I have invested in my daughter's private tutoring because I wish to send her to study in Melbourne, Australia. I studied there as an overseas student 15 years ago, so I understand the educational values of the Australian Higher Education system.*

(ID Number: P7; in Folders: C2 and I2)

7.1.6. Private tutoring fees may be the main source of teachers' incomes

Interestingly, parents debated critically about whether private tutoring fees were the main source of teachers' incomes. Twenty-eight urban parents replied that

from their viewpoints, teachers who teach important subjects in public regular schools for graduation examinations and entrance university assessments, 'especially urban teachers and teachers in the upper-secondary level', may consider private tutoring fees as their main sources of incomes, as there have been a lot of students enrolling in these examinable subjects each semester (An urban parent).

> Everyone knows that many teachers have good living standards, as beside monthly salaries in their public schools, they can earn huge amounts of monthly incomes from their private tutoring activities, especially urban teachers and teachers in the upper-secondary level. They tutor all examinable subjects, from mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology to literature, history, geography and foreign languages.

(ID Number: P11; in Folders: C2 and I2)

The reason for these 28 urban parents' conclusions is that they self-compared the current net salary rankings system of regular public school teachers (The National Assembly, 2019) as specified in Table 7.1 below, and self-contrasted such rankings with their own estimations of the tutoring fees they have paid for their children.

Table 7.1. The 2019 net salary rankings system of public regular school teachers

Net salaries of public kindergarten and primary school teachers (Vietnam Dongs or VND)											
Ranking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Pay rate	1.86	2.06	2.46	2.66	2.86	3.06	3.26	3.46	3.66	3.86	4.06
Basic salary	2771400	3069400	3665400	3963400	4261400	4559400	4857400	5155400	5453400	5751400	6049400
Seniority allowance	0	0	0	237804	340912	455940	582888	721756	763476	920224	1088892
Preferred allowanc	969990	1074290	1282890	1387190	1491490	1595790	1700090	1804390	1908690	2012990	2117720

e (35%)										
Superannuation rate (10.5%)	290997	322287	409836	451952.76	495320.7	539940.24	585811.4	621482	669230.52	718230.66	635187
Net salary	3450393	3821403	4538454	4898637.2	5257569.3	5615249.8	5971679	6338308	6692859.5	7046159.3	7531503

Net salaries of public lower-secondary school teachers (VND)

Ranking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pay rate	2.1	2.41	2.72	3.03	3.34	3.65	3.96	4.27	4.58	4.89
Basic salary	3129000	3590900	4052800	4514700	4976600	5438500	5900400	6362300	6824200	7286100
Seniority allowance	0	0	243168	406323	597192	815775	1062072	1336083	1637808	1967247
Preferred allowance (30%)	938700	1077270	1215840	1354410	1492980	1631550	1770120	1908690	2047260	2185830
Superannuation rate (10.5%)	328545	402577	468208	536748.66	608199.38	682560.06	759830.7	840011	923101.94	765040.5
Net salary	3739155	4265593	4800432	5332361.3	5861380.6	6387489.9	6910689	7430979	7948358.1	8706889.5

Net salaries of public upper-secondary school teachers (VND)

Ranking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Pay rate	2.34	2.67	3	3.33	3.66	3.99	4.32	4.65	4.98
Basic salary	3486600	3978300	4470000	4961700	5453400	5945100	6436800	6928500	7420200
Seniority allowance	0	0	268200	446553	654408	891765	1158624	1454985	1780848

Preferred allowance (30%)	1045 980	1392 405	1564 500	1736 595	1908 690	2080 785	2252 880	2424 975	2597070
Superannuation rate (10.5%)	3660 93	4458 83	5162 38	5896 91.34	6662 42.33	7458 91.02	8286 37.4	9144 82	779121
Net salary	4166 487	4924 823	5518 262	6108 603.7	6695 847.7	7279 994	7861 043	8438 993	9238149

(Source: The National Assembly, 2019)

Indeed, this educational legal document clearly showed that after deducting 10.5% of superannuation rate payable by all public school teachers, the net salaries of public kindergarten and primary school teachers ranking from 1 to 11 are from 3,450,393VND to 7,531,503VND. For rankings 1 to 10, the net salaries of public secondary school teachers are from 3,739,155VND to 8,706,889.5VND. The net salaries of public upper-secondary school teachers from ranking 1 to 9 were from 4,166,487VND to 9,238,149VND. Meanwhile, these 28 urban parents confirmed that depending on tutoring subjects and number of tutees undertaken, a public school teacher may earn on average approximately from 15,000,000VND to 25,000,000VND per calendar month, or even more in urban areas and on average approximately from 10,000,000VND to 15,000,000VND per calendar month in rural areas.

Moreover, 14 rural parents demonstrated that urban public school teachers are more likely to consider private tutoring fees as their main source of incomes as long as the urban tutoring fee rates are expensive and 'usually higher than the tutoring fees in provinces' (A rural parent).

> *But, only teachers in big cities might have opportunities to earn more private tutoring incomes, because the tutoring fees in big cities are usually higher than the tutoring fees in provinces.*
>
> (ID Number: P4; in Folders: E2 and K2)

On the other hand, 5 rural parents wondered whether teachers who taught artistic or sport subjects in public regular schools would hardly consider private tutoring fees as their main sources of income, because fewer students and parents hired those teachers to tutor such subjects.

You know, teachers who teach artistic or sport subjects in regular schools are very difficult to recruit tutees. Artistic teachers may have some opportunities to employ some students who will take artistic exams for small private tutoring classes. Sport teachers are hardly to do so, because although sports are compulsory for all level schools, they are still not broadly examinable subjects, except for some sport universities.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P7; in Folders: F2, L2 and R2)</div>

Additionally, 10 rural parents agreed that rural public school teachers were less likely to consider private tutoring fees as their main sources of income, as 'the amounts of private tutoring enrolled students here are not many for teachers; and of course, the incomes that they've earned are less…' (A rural parent).

In our province, the private tutoring activities are not broadly like in Hanoi. The amounts of private tutoring enrolled students here are not many for teachers; and of course, the incomes that they've earned are less than in Hanoi very much.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P4; in Folders: D2 and J2)</div>

To sum up, both groups of parents who agreed or disagreed whether private tutoring fees are the main source of teachers' incomes also admitted that the correct answer depended on the numbers of tutees who were taught by these teachers/tutors. Alternatively, the more students enroll in private tutoring subjects, the more fees teachers may collect as their main sources of incomes after deducting related expenses, and vice versa.

7.1.7. Parents have to pay fees twice for their children's only one knowledge session: The fees for public schooling and the fees for private tutoring

As described by 13 urban and 19 rural parents, children complained to their parents that in private tutoring classes, teachers repeated a lot of knowledge that they had previously delivered to students in public schools. Indeed, these parents checked both their children's private tutoring and formal school notebooks and found out that there was almost no difference in the knowledge content between them. The only difference, if there was any, related simply to the practical exercises for the same theoretical knowledge. Hence, parents realized that they

had had to 'pay fees twice for only one knowledge session: The fees for public schooling and the fees for private tutoring' (A rural parent).

> *We think that when designing lessons in the textbooks, the textbook's authors have to foresee the timeframe for each lesson to allocate appropriate time for students to complete these lessons. Therefore, both teachers and students should be complete both theoretical and practical issues of the lesson in public school timetable. But in private tutoring classes, teachers still repeated all these theoretical and practical issues which they had already taught students in mainstream curriculum, while charging we parents the tutoring fees. If we were students like our children, we would also feel boring when having to acquire the same knowledge again. And you know, I think good and very good students would not have any desires to explore knowledge, because they may think that there would be nothing new to explore. Meanwhile, teachers still charge us the fees twice for only one knowledge session for our children: The fees for public schooling and the fees for private tutoring.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P8; in Folders: F2, L2 and R2)</div>

7.1.8. Parents are willing to pay private tutoring fees as bribes for teachers when necessary to purchase advantages for their children's future exams

Five urban and nine rural parents attempted to obtain advantages for their children in future exams by using their own relationships to search for individual information from public educational officers who were authorised to produce the content of the mid-semester and final semester test and exam papers of their children's public schools. As soon they learned the authorised teachers' private residential addresses, these parents promptly approached and asked them to enroll their children in his/her private tutoring classes. Both parents and these authorised teachers understood that the purpose of this negotiation was that the children may acquire the knowledge relating to exams in advance from such tutoring classes. In order to express the desire to encourage their children to study with these special tutors, parents orally committed to pay very high tutoring fees for the authorised teachers, regardless of their requirements. Although understanding clearly that these suggestions could be considered as bribes, these parents perceived that the

educational officers were hardly likely to deny these generous suggestions, as these displayed the parents' real enthusiasms and interests in their children's studies.

> *As soon as being announced by my friends that Mr X will be the Chief Examiner of Mathematics subject in my child's school this year, I met other parents who are willing to enroll their children in his private tutoring class to discuss about our children's enrolments. We then came to his house and asked him for enrolling our children in his math tutoring class. Unfortunately, teacher X denied our children's enrolment demand because 'You parents are too late. My math class is now too crowded, about one hundred and fifty something students'. We quickly discussed and decided orally together that each of us would pay the private tutoring fees in double to guarantee a place for our child in his math tutoring class. After listening to one of us suggested the more financial incentives for him, Mr X could not refuse our desire any more. He smiled at us: 'You parents are very enthusiastic and… smart'.*

(ID Number: P10; in Folders: C2, I2 and O2)

7.1.9. Parents are willing to pay private tutoring fees as safety net fees for their children

Three urban parents and one rural parent complained that after participating in private tutoring classes for several months, their children looked thinner and weaker than before. The main reason was that their nutrition was affected because of having small meals in the short time break between full day schooling and private tutoring. Hence, they decided to stop sending their children to private tutoring classes of formal school teachers, while still maintained paying full private tutoring fees for them. They then revealed that although knowing clearly that their children were absent in their private tutoring classes, formal school teachers had no comments about that as they still received the full tutoring fees from the 4 parents. These parents considered these tutoring fees as safety net fees for their children as they could avoid facing private tutoring troubles for their children from teachers. In returns, they have had a valuable time to take care of their children in having meals and rests in weekdays and even weekends to support children's growth.

Last year, I didn't know how to take care of my son: He had to go to full day schooling every weekday. At the weekend, he also had to undertake some private tutoring classes in his teacher's house. He had not had enough time to eat and sleep each day. So, he did not increase in any kilos of his weight; just increased by nearly 2 centimetres in his height. This year, a friend advised me to do a trick: I still kept enrolling my son in private tutoring classes and pay the tutoring fees for teachers as normal, but I only take him to each tutoring class once per week, or even once per fortnight. Luckily, no one queried me about my son. I think they only checked the student list and satisfied with the full tutoring fee payments monthly of my son. So, he has time to take rests and have meals with us at home. Now his health looks better.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P6; in Folders: B2, H2 and N2)</div>

7.1.10. Large amounts of charged private tutoring fees motivate public regular school teachers to continue providing tutoring services and ignoring private tutoring regulations

Thirteen urban and seven rural parents confirmed that the main motivation for formal teachers to keep providing tutoring services is gaining large amounts of incomes from private tutoring fees, as the public school 'salary is not enough for the teacher to cover all living expenses for himself/herself and his/her family monthly' (An urban parent). Hence, these teachers always focus on tutoring their tutees and charging fees from parents, whilst ignoring private tutoring regulations of the Vietnamese government which may apply for them 'to maintain this stable source of income' (An urban parent).

You know, the main salary of a public primary school teacher maybe 3,500,000 dongs per calendar month. This salary is not enough for the teacher to cover all living expenses for himself/herself and his/her family monthly. However, he or she can earn at least 10,000,000 dongs to 20,000,000 dongs per month from teaching some private tutoring classes, and this income is very stable. So, although private tutoring for primary school students are banned, he or she might ignore that and keep teaching such private tutoring classes to maintain this stable source of income.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P3; in Folders: B2, H2 and N2)</div>

7.2. Discussion

7.2.1. Parental ambitions of sending their children to study in foreign universities internally and externally

Many previous studies have shown that parents in many nations often invest in their children's private tutoring for entering local or national universities and colleges in their home countries (Bray 2003; Bray & Kwo 2014; Bray & Lykins 2012). For instance, many parents in China admitted that, economically, they would invest in private tutoring for their children to study internally in order to save a lot of expenses, rather than paying more for their children's study purposes such as sending them overseas to study as international students (Zhang 2019). In contrast, some Vietnamese parents, particularly urban parents and their children, desired to approach the advanced knowledge and study environment of foreign universities and educational institutions in huge urban cities of Vietnam or in Australia, the UK and the US, although many other parents also wished their children could have opportunities to pass the entrance exams in local or national universities and colleges. Unsurprisingly, these parents were willing to pay large amounts of their incomes to cover the tutoring fees for supporting their children's dreams. As a result, many parents in Vietnam and abroad feel themselves under financial pressures of their private tutoring investments for their children in any educational levels in the public schooling system (Bray 2003). Nevertheless, most of families still generally welcome and accept private tutoring, regardless of whether they are rich, middle-income or poor. Rich families might use private tutoring to maintain their social superior class and show off their children's educational styles in public. Meanwhile, middle-income and poor families usually invest in private tutoring with the hope that their children may have opportunities to upgrade their social classes through undertaking exams and entering the next study levels successfully (Bray 2003).

7.2.2. Parental investment in online tutoring

A significant amount of Vietnamese parents enrolled their children in online tutoring services for several reasons: (i) the Vietnamese parents understood the importance and application of the Fourth Industrial Revolution worldwide, including the applied technology in online private tutoring. Thus, they always encouraged their children to access and learn from new information technology

tools; (ii) parents could partly save online private tutoring fees because online tutoring centres frequently offer special discounts in online tutoring for their children as an effective marketing strategy; (iii) parents could also save time in taking their children to tutors' houses or tutoring centres and picking up their children from these tutoring sites to come back home; and (iv) particularly, when the COVID-19 pandemic has been spreading out worldwide (World Health Organization 2020), many Vietnamese parents and students have admitted that the online tutoring method help them avoid the disease transmission risks whilst still guaranteeing their children's learning schedules. For all the reasons above, online tutoring services are quite suitable for Vietnamese parents and their families with limited budgets.

Meanwhile, in the international context, parents in rich households can afford other expensive forms of private tutoring like one tutor-one student, or one tutor with a small group of four or five students. Such private tutoring types are suitable for each individual student. Moreover, these can be organized in students' homes. In contrast, parents in poor households have no choice so that they have to enroll their children in mass private tutoring classes and accept that their children may have to travel long distances to come to the private tutoring centers to study (Bray 2003; Choi & Choi 2016; Dang 2011; Liu & Bray 2017; Mahmud & Bray 2017; Pallegedara 2018; Pallegedara & Mottaleb 2018).

7.2.3. Parental investment readiness in important tutoring subjects

The issue of 100% Vietnamese parents of the researched sample paying tutoring fees for three important tutoring subjects (Mathematics, Vietnamese and English) implies that they really understand the important role of these subjects for their children not only in their current school time, but also in their life time. Indeed, in the school time, students study mathematics to develop their logical skills, whilst Vietnamese and English help them to use language skills in both their mother tongue and a foreign language. Moreover, after graduating to higher education levels, students should be able to apply logical and language skills of these 3 tutoring subjects in any practical scenarios of their daily lives (e.g. calculating their sales and taxes, writing a Vietnamese business contract, orally discussing with foreign customers in English). On the other hand, the Vietnamese parents invested in other important tutoring subjects like physics, chemistry, biology,

geography, history where necessary. However, the main objective of this investment was definitely examination purposes, rather than applying the theoretical knowledge of such subjects into their children's daily lives. Finally, parents also invest in artistic subjects such as drawing and music for their children if they prove that they really love studying those.

In the global context, parents often interpret the rates of return to education as the improvement of earning and living standards in one person's lifetime. Therefore, they strongly believe that the study period of a child in an education system will help him/her to gain a better quality education. In contrast, parents also understand clearly that their children's poor study performance in schools and on exams will definitely lead to lesser employment opportunities and, consequently, lower living standards of their children in the future (Bray & Lykins 2012). For example, as revealed by Statista (2019a), 42% of surveyed French parents agreed that paid private tutoring was not completely more effective than free private tutoring. Nonetheless, 38% of them confirmed that the private tutoring support had a positive impact on their children's school successes (Statista 2019b).

7.2.4. Possible parental determination of whether private tutoring fees are the main source of regular public school teachers' incomes

In Vietnam, salaries of public regular school teachers generally come from two main sources: regular schooling and private tutoring. Unfortunately, teachers, regardless of whether they are in regular public or private schools, for various sensitive reasons, are rarely willing to share their salary information for others. Hence, parents who send their children to regular public school teachers' private tutoring classes should be able to calculate the monthly salaries of these teachers by: (i) checking the current net salary rankings system of regular public school teachers to determine their net salaries as regulated by the Vietnamese National Assembly; (ii) identifying the average private tutoring fees paying for regular public school teachers per student; counting the number of students in the private tutoring classes; then multiplying them together to have the gross tutoring sales; and subtracting related expenses to find the net tutoring sales; (iii) comparing the net salaries in regular schooling and private tutoring to estimate whether private tutoring fees are the main source of regular public school teachers' incomes; and (iv) combining the net salaries in regular schooling and private tutoring to

estimate the total monthly salaries of regular public school teachers. On the other hand, although regular private school teachers also provide private tutoring services outside their schooling environment, it is hard for parents to find their monthly salaries as they do not know the current net salary rankings system of regular private school teachers to compare with their private tutoring incomes. This current private net salary rankings system is usually confidential and only available for the board of directors and shareholders of private education schools or companies.

In the worldwide context, when hiring private tutors for their children, parents hardly pay attentions to the tutors' salaries, as this is a private and confidential issue of tutors and therefore must be respected. Instead, parents in the working and middle classes consider the hiring expenses as an investment in their children's education (Hon 2010). Parents generally compare the private tutoring fees which they have to pay for tutors and the profession incomes that they have to sacrifice if they decide to spend working time to take care of their children or help their children to revise the school lessons (Bray & Kwok 2003). Thus, previous private tutoring research hypothesized that parents aware that if they invest in private tutoring services for their children, such investments will bring the great returns of educational and life opportunities in their children's future. This hypothesis has consequently significantly influenced parents' use of private tutoring services (Jokić et. al. 2013). Figure 7.1 compares and contrasts the differences of parental determination of whether private tutoring fees are the main source of teachers' incomes between the Vietnamese and international contexts.

Vietnamese parental context

International parental context

Only comparing between the private tutoring fees paying for tutors and the incomes which parents have to sacrifice for finding the better solution

Determining if private tutoring fees are the main source of income of public regular school teachers: Possible

Not interested in and always respect the confidentiality of sources of income of public regular school teachers

Determining if private tutoring fees are the main source of income of private regular school teachers: Impossible

Not interested in and always respect the confidentiality of sources of income of private regular school teachers

Figure 7.1. Comparison of the differences of parental determination of whether private tutoring fees are the main source of teachers' incomes between the Vietnamese and international contexts

(Source: summarised by the researcher)

7.2.5. Parental financial burdens of private tutoring fees

The financial burden of private tutoring fees for parents has occurred definitely not only in Vietnam, but also in many other social contexts. For examples, Choi (2013), Elamin, Rizk and Adams (2019) and Endow (2019) revealed that private tutoring fees caused financial burdens for parents in South Korea, Egypt and India. More seriously, Bray et al. (2018) noted that some parents in Cambodia even had to borrow from commercial banks to cover their children's private tutoring fees. In fact, the number of private tutoring subjects multiplied by the number of children undertaking such academic subjects in each household

generally told parents about the heavy financial burden in private tutoring that they have to incur in their families (Bray et al. 2018). However, these financial burdens affect female parents greatly rather than male parents because in households, female parents usually earn less income than male parents; and further, they often conduct the main responsibility of taking care of their children (Choi 2013; Elamin, Rizk & Adams 2019; Endow 2019).

7.3. Conclusion of Chapter 7

The chapter expresses a number of responses for and against justifications of those surveyed relating to how private tutoring fees affect the Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring.

Firstly, the reader is provided an overview of the social-economic background of the participants and their children's private tutoring attendance background. Parents expressed that private tutoring fees are varied in the Vietnamese public schools, depending on school teaching quality, teacher reputations, school locations and the importance of tutoring subjects. These fees are always higher than mainstream school fees many times, making private tutoring fees become major fees; whereas mainstream school fees become minor fees. Interestingly, while public regular school students are often required to enroll in private tutoring and pay fees, these tutoring enrolments and fees might not be required in the Vietnamese private regular schools. However, private tutoring fees so far are more and more expensive in both urban and rural public regular schools; causing most parents of tutees to be worried about these.

Secondly, various purposes of parents' private tutoring fee investments in their children's studies are displayed: (i) passing the graduation exams and the entrance assessments of local and national universities in Vietnam; (ii) receiving study offer letters from some foreign investment universities in Vietnam; and (iii) winning scholarships for studying overseas in worldwide highly ranked universities. According to parents' viewpoints, urban school teachers, especially those who teach important subjects, may consider private tutoring fees as the main source of their incomes. In contrast, these fees are hardly seen as the main source of incomes for artistic or sport subject and rural school teachers.

Next, some noticeable responses are explored: Parents practically have to pay fees twice (the first fees for public schooling and the second fees for private tutoring) for only one knowledge session of their children. Furthermore, they also have to

pay private tutoring fees as bribes or as safety net fees. Finally, private tutoring fees always motivate teachers to provide tutoring services and ignore private tutoring regulations.

In the discussion section, parents reveal some interesting implications of their private tutoring fee investments in their children's studies. First, ambitious Vietnamese parents are willing to send their children to study in foreign universities internally and externally despite of incurring financial pressures of their private tutoring investments. Second, the significant enrolments of online tutoring imply that parents understand and really interested in the development of educational technology. Third, the readiness for parents to invest in important tutoring subjects shows clearly that parents really understand the important role of these subjects for their children not only in their current school time, but also in their life time. Fourth, parents are able to do calculations and comparisons between public regular schooling salaries and private tutoring incomes of their children's public regular school teachers to prove that private tutoring fees could be the main source of public regular school teachers' incomes. Lastly, it is admitted that the parental financial burdens of private tutoring fees has occurred not only in Vietnam, but also in many other countries.

To conclude, the effects of private tutoring fees on the Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring are varied from their different viewpoints and dimensions. These perceptions might contain more sensitive issues if explored more deeply. A current research limitation of this chapter is the shortage of quantitative techniques to measure the influences of private tutoring fees on parental perceptions of private tutoring from the economic viewpoint. Therefore, more quantitative studies about the relationship between private tutoring fees and parental perceptions of private tutoring should be undertaken in future research.

CHAPTER 8

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3: HOW PRIVATE TUTORING KNOWLEDGE INFLUENCE PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING

This chapter investigates the effects of private tutoring knowledge on the Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring. The findings show that in the Vietnamese parents' viewpoints, private tutoring knowledge revises low level tutees' learning performances effectively, maintains medium level tutees' learning performances appropriately and advances high level tutees' learning performances brilliantly. Further, private tutoring knowledge stimulates tutees' language intelligence in social sciences and tutees' logical thinking in natural sciences. However, parents expressed their opinions for and against online private tutoring knowledge in Vietnam by accidentally analyzing its recent advantages and disadvantages. Parental perceptions of private tutoring knowledge in some other countries are discussed. The research limitations in the study are also mentioned.

8.1. Findings

In the brainstorming sessions, many participants pointed out that the flexibility of private tutoring knowledge guarantees them that their children will have opportunities to acquire appropriate lesson contents, depending on their knowledge acquisition abilities.

8.1.1. Private tutoring knowledge revises low level tutees' learning performances effectively

Undeniably, 55 parents, including 42 parents who enrolled their children in natural science subject tutoring classes like mathematics, physics and chemistry confirmed that private tutoring knowledge helped their low level tutees to revise the knowledge which they had already learned effectively, such as 'the teacher introduced (tutees) many easy knowledge of the mathematics subject again and explained related concepts and definitions of theories to (tutees) very carefully. Then, the teacher did some sample exercises and asked (tutees) to do some similar ones' (An urban parent). Some parents were happy when knowing that the private

tutoring knowledge revision helped their children to be confident about the curriculum in regular schools.

My son complained to me that he did not understand much knowledge in mathematics subject in his regular school. I knew that he was not really good at mathematics, so I enrolled him in a mathematics tutoring class. After undertaking a few lessons, he told me that the mathematics knowledge in private tutoring class was easier to understand very much than the knowledge in regular school. He told me that in private tutoring classes, the teacher introduced him many easy knowledge of the mathematics subject again and explained related concepts and definitions of theories to him very carefully. Then, the teacher did some sample exercises and asked him to do some similar ones. I am happy when hearing that my son easily finished those and realised that he should be able to understand mathematics knowledge and know how to do practical exercises.

(ID Number: P6; in Folders: A3, G3 and M3)

8.1.2. Private tutoring knowledge maintains medium level tutees' learning performances appropriately

Forty-seven parents also agreed that private tutoring knowledge should be able to maintain medium level tutees' learning performances. In particular, 24 parents of tutees in social sciences subjects such as Vietnamese literatures, history and geography as well as foreign languages approved that private tutoring knowledge in social sciences make students recall the contents of curriculum taught in regular schools quickly. Moreover, it also helps good students to memorise these contents of curriculum better, such as: literature images, symbols and 'characters' in the Vietnamese literatures with 'more knowledge about… in the lesson which is not available in the textbook' (An urban parent); 'historical events and lessons' in history (A rural parent); 'emerging socio-economic issues' in geography (A rural parent); and 'new words and phrases for maintaining the study passion of good students' in foreign languages, like English language (An urban parent). Therefore, 'new private tutoring knowledge recalls (tutees) to think about what was taught in the formal school and help (tutees) to maintain it as well as start studying more advanced knowledge' (An urban parent).

My son told me that in the formal school, it was difficult for him to write more details about characters such as A Phu and his wife in the Vietnamese literature lesson: "A Phu couple", because the teacher did not have enough time to analyse more details of each character in a lesson. However, in the literature private tutoring class, he was taught more knowledge about the characters in the lesson which is not available in the textbook. This new private tutoring knowledge recall him to think about what was taught in the formal school and help him to maintain it as well as start studying more knowledge.

(ID Number: P12; in Folders: C3, I3 and O3)

In my opinion, private tutoring knowledge should be broader than regular school knowledge. For example, after undertaking private tutoring class in history, my daughter admitted that she had opportunities to learn more historical knowledge, including both historical events and lessons in Vietnam and worldwide.

(ID Number: P10; in Folders: D3 and J3)

My daughter like studying geography, because she desires to get the good exam result of this subject to pass the entrance requirements of Ho Chi Minh University of Social Sciences and Humanities. She complained to me that some socio-economic data in the regular school's geography textbook is out-of-date. However, when enrolling in geography tutoring class, she can access more emerging socio-economic issues with updated data for analysis.

(ID Number: P11; in Folders: F3 and L3)

I think that the knowledge of English language in the formal textbooks is not enough for medium and high level students, like my son. Both our parents and many students realise clearly that the English language knowledge in formal schools is fundamental with basic words and phrases. In contrast, English tutoring knowledge contain more new words and phrases for maintaining the study passion of good students. If students are very good at English, they should be able to acquire more advanced private tutoring knowledge.

(ID Number: P7; in Folders: B3 and H3)

8.1.3. Private tutoring knowledge advances high level tutees' learning performances brilliantly

Twenty-seven respondents, consisting of 10 parents who intend to send their children to study in higher education level abroad were excited to report that private tutoring knowledge helped their children to advance the current knowledge and explore more complicated knowledge in examinable subjects, especially in natural sciences and foreign language subjects. The purposes of these high and outstanding level students and their parents were very ambitious, like 'desired to win a scholarship for studying mathematics abroad', 'study and discuss with many intelligent classmates about mathematic issues in English language' (An urban parent); 'The English private tutoring class… is taught by English native tutors', 'a high quality English language class for high language proficiency level students', 'was taught some technical skills such as skimming and scanning in readings when taking the mock tests', 'ready for undertaking international English tests such as TOELF and IELTS' (An urban parent).

> *My son expressed his passion in mathematics and desired to win a scholarship for studying mathematics abroad. Hence, I enrolled him in a "Maths in English" private tutoring class. He told me that it was excellent for him to study and discuss with many intelligent classmates about mathematic issues in English language. He looked very confident when self-assessed that in the near future he can study mathematics in English with his future foreign classmates abroad if he has an opportunity to go there.*
>
> (ID Number: P10; in Folders: A3 and G3)

> *The English private tutoring class that my daughter was enrolled in are taught by English native tutors. It is a high quality English language class for high language proficiency level students. My daughter has improved all four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking in English. She was taught some technical skills such as skimming and scanning in readings when taking the mock tests. Now she is ready for undertaking international English tests such as TOELF and IELTS.*
>
> (ID Number: P11; in Folders: B3 and H3)

To sum up, the finding statements of private tutoring knowledge for low, medium and high level students is presented in Figure 8.1.

Revising low level students' learning effectively

Maintaining medium level students' learning appropriately

Advancing high level students' learning brilliantly
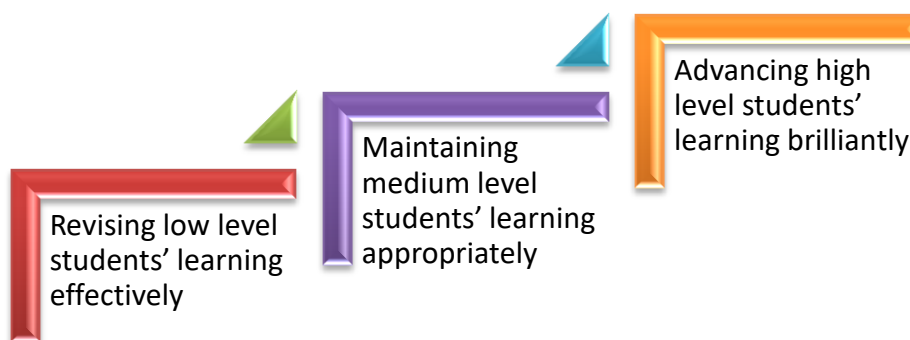
Figure 8.1. Finding statements of private tutoring knowledge for low, medium and high level students' learning performances

(Source: summaried by the researcher)

In focus-group discussions, parents discussed about how private tutoring knowledge stimulates tutees' language intelligence in social sciences and logical thinking in natural sciences. Sixty-three parents were very confident about their comments because they were the ex-tutees generation in their school time. At present, when they have been parents of the current tutees generation, they could be able to experience their beliefs and evaluations of private tutoring knowledge.

8.1.4. Private tutoring knowledge stimulates tutees' language intelligence in social sciences

Forty-six parents confirmed that private tutoring knowledge generally helped their children 'more stimulation to explore or extend their language intelligence in social sciences' subjects like Vietnamese literatures, history and geography (An urban parent). In their opinions, the formal school knowledge of these subjects is not sufficient for students as it is hard to inspire them to explore further knowledge. Hence, parents were forced to enrol their children in private tutoring services to help them acquire the missing knowledge. For examples:

The Vietnamese literature private tutoring knowledge (e.g. 'knowledge and skills of literary works such as poems, short stories, long stories which are not available in the school textbooks') equips their children more Vietnamese language usage skills in daily communication scenarios such as 'to practise in school and family environments' (An urban parent).

I always believe that private tutoring knowledge provide tutees more stimulation to explore or extend their language intelligence in social sciences than formal school knowledge does. You know, for example, a Vietnamese literature private tutoring class may bring more knowledge and skills of literary works such as poems, short stories, long stories which are not available in the school textbooks to our children. Children can use such language skills in tutoring lessons as good examples to practise in school and family environments.

(ID Number: P6; in Folders: A3 and G3)

Meanwhile, the history private tutoring knowledge could stimulate students' language intelligence through 'mind-mapping and timelines and milestones designing techniques' such as how to memorise 'historical events and phenomena' systematically; and how to 'synthesise and analyse' these historical events and phenomena 'logically and coherently' (A rural parent).

I was very impressive when reading some lessons in my daughter's history private tutoring notebook such as Dien Bien Phu campaign in 1954 and Ho Chi Minh campaign in 1975. The historical events and phenomena were often presented systematically by mind-mapping and timelines and milestones designing techniques. Then, these historical events and phenomena were synthesised and analysed logically and coherently. I strongly believe that my daughter and her classmates should be able to learn more history private tutoring knowledge in their history private tutoring class.

(ID Number: P9; in Folders: F3 and L3)

Additionally, the private tutoring knowledge in geography provides more visual electronic devices (such as 'letting students watch some illustrative video clips with fully explanations') to help students broaden their understandings and written and spoken presentation skills of populations, climates, natural resources, socio-economic characteristics, etc of various geographical areas in both nationally and globally (An urban parent).

My son told me that in his geography private tutoring class, the tutor introduced a lesson about socio-economic characteristics of the different Vietnamese geographical locations by letting students watch some illustrative video clips with fully explanations about them. He

was excited when watching about the traditions and customs of the Vietnamese people in North, Central and South Vietnam. He commented that it is easier to study, memorise and present the geography knowledge by acquiring it from lesson video clips in the private tutoring class. He also complained that in his geography formal school class, the teacher only delivered lessons to students orally and students just copied them down into their school notebooks.

(ID Number: P8; in Folders: C3, I3 and O3)

8.1.5. Private tutoring knowledge stimulates tutees' logical thinking in natural sciences

A lot of other parents added that private tutoring knowledge also assisted their children to stimulate the logical thinking in natural sciences such as mathematics, physics and chemistry. Some parents debated that the mathematics private tutoring knowledge always equips important skills for students in their life-time such as observation, visualisation, concentration, memorisation and calculation. Based on these important skills, the mathematics private tutoring knowledge makes difficult mathematical laws and calculations to be more practical and easy-to-learn 'mathematic games' (An urban parent). This set of skills also support students to develop their logical thinking process in schools as well as in other daily life situations.

My daughter enjoyed her mathematics private tutoring class through mathematic games such as counting candies, ducks; adding and subtracting students; and multiplying and dividing soldiers. The smart calculation games with beautiful images and live sounds made her feel excited and concentrated on her lesson from the beginning to the end.

(ID Number: P3; in Folders: A3 and G3)

Some other participants showed that the physics private tutoring knowledge encourage tutees' curiosities and stimulate their exploration abilities from physical experiments undertaken by themselves rather than displaying the boring physical formulas and calculations by the teachers in formal schools. Moreover, the practical exercises in the physics private tutoring classes often train tutees to pay attentions and avoid some possible small mistakes which could lose their marks in the real tests and exams, such as: abbreviating by physical symbols for both known and unknown magnitudes; presenting illustrative draws and formulas;

compulsory changing initial units in appropriate units for calculations; doing calculations for finding the unknown magnitudes; and concluding whether the results are suitable for the practical scenarios (A rural parent).

> *Our children are now luckier and have more opportunities to study physics well than us many years ago. In the physics private tutoring classes, they have chances to do physical experiments step-by-step to understand clearly about the results received and confirm these. In our generation, we just studied physical theories and did exercises in private tutoring without undertaking any experiments. Children also have chances to receive the detailed exercise corrections from the tutors: from writing physical symbols correctly, drawing illustrative pictures, calculating the formulas to find the unknown magnitudes to change units appropriately. They are luckier than us very much!*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P8; in Folders: E3, K3 and Q3)</div>

Similarly, some other respondents reflected that the chemistry private tutoring knowledge help their children to gather their own understandings about important chemical concepts and definitions as well as chemical laws. Furthermore, through doing chemical experiments, tutees should be able to withdraw their own conclusions and comments. They should be also able to apply theoretical knowledge to answer questions and solve problems in practical exercises logically. For instances, tutees should be memorise 'the simple chemical reactions, the electron of atoms', understand 'the periodic table and the patterns of chemical properties' (An urban parent).

> *Last year, many parents like me worried about our children's chemistry studies in the regular schools, because they told us that when they started studying chemistry in grade 8, they had to face new chemical concepts and definitions, so they did not know how to study it, and some of them even feared studying chemistry. However, after I have enrolled my son in the chemistry private tutoring class for over one year, he had become more and more confident in acquiring chemistry knowledge. He showed me that he had improved his understanding about chemical experiments, the simple chemical reactions, the electron of atoms, the periodic table and the patterns of chemical properties.*

In in-depth individual interviews, parents argued for and against about how the online private tutoring knowledge helps their children broad their learning progress.

8.1.6. The supports of parents for online private tutoring knowledge

8.1.6.1. Enrolment is simple and easy

Some parents, particularly parents in urban areas suggested that they enrolled their children in some online private tutoring classes to acquire knowledge online. According to these participants, the online private tutoring enrolment is 'simple and easy' with 'a heap of online private tutoring services available', e.g. "*https://hocmai.vn/*" (An urban parent).

> *You know, the enrolment of online private tutoring services for parents is quite simple and easy. Any parent can search some key words they need such as "mathematics private tutoring", "literatures private tutoring", "English private tutoring", blah blah, then they will find a heap of online private tutoring services available. For me, I enrolled my child in three online tutoring subjects: mathematics, literatures and English on https://hocmai.vn/*

(ID Number: P5; in Folders: A3, G3 and M3)

8.1.6.2. Cheaper fees and special discounts

Once enrolling in online private tutoring services, parents and their children usually receive consultations enthusiastically from tutoring centre staff about information of subjects, timetables, fees, etc. The fees for online private tutoring services 'are often cheaper' than the fees for face-to-face ones. Particularly, parents sometimes receive 'special discount prices' whilst enrolling their children in tutoring subjects (An urban parent).

> *When I phoned the tutoring centre to ask for my child enrolment, the staff there explained to me everything about each tutoring subject I wish very clearly. She made me easily realized that the fees in online private tutoring services are often cheaper than the fees in offline ones. That staff also offered me the special discount prices if I enroll a combo of three tutoring subjects for my kid.*

(ID Number: P7; in Folders: C3, I3 and O3)

8.1.6.3. Saving time for both parents and students

As a consequence, when enrolling in online private tutoring services, parents are able to save their own time as they do not need to take their children to the private tutoring centres or teachers' houses and pick them up after the class completion. Further, their children do not incur 'the time constraints' of online private tutoring services: Students can seat in front of 'internet-connected computers' at home or anywhere they like and start or finish learning the tutoring lessons at any time they wish (An urban parent). They also repeat the lessons as many times as they like until they feel they understand the tutoring knowledge of those lessons fully. If students need a knowledge revision, they can open the lesson video clips at any time to revise these.

> *I can see some advantages of online private tutoring services for me and my kid very clearly: I can save my time because I don't have to take him to tutoring classes and pick him back home. My kid can study with online lessons as many times as he like because he isn't affected by the time constraints in offline tutoring classes. He also can do the same things with his knowledge revisions. All he need is an internet-connected computer at home.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P6; in Folders: B3, H3 and N3)</div>

8.1.6.4. Receiving the assessment results and comments promptly for both parents and students

Like in face-to-face private tutoring classes, students in online private tutoring classes are also required to understand theoretical knowledge, do practical exercises and homework as well as undertake final tests. Both parents and students frequently 'receive the assessment results' and comments from online tutors promptly through their personal 'emails and mobile phone messages'. Therefore, parents should be able to 'monitor' their children's 'private tutoring progress very timely and effectively' (An urban parent).

> *I am very happy after enrolling my kid in online private tutoring classes because I can follow all tutoring lessons and material in progress at any time. After the assessment results of tutees are available, the tutors will send me the results and feedback of my kid through my email and phone messages. Thus, I can monitor my kid's private tutoring progress very timely and effectively.*

8.1.7. The arguments of parents against online private tutoring knowledge

On the other hand, some other parents reflected their worries against online private tutoring knowledge.

8.1.7.1. *Online private tutoring services might be costly for parents in financial hardships*

Firstly, the core requirement of having the internet-connected computers for students to join the online private tutoring services and acquire online private tutoring knowledge might be impossible with 'parents in financial hardships and their limited budget families', such as 'may not be able to afford the sudden investment of internet-connected computers, with the market price of 5 million Vietnamese dongs to 10 million Vietnamese dongs or even more, plus the online private tutoring fees' (A rural parent).

> *I think acquiring online private tutoring knowledge is a good option for our children. However, some parents in financial hardships and their limited budget families may not be able to afford the sudden investment of internet-connected computers, with the market price of 5 million Vietnamese dongs to 10 million Vietnamese dongs or even more, plus the online private tutoring fees. So, in my opinion, if it is possible, parents who have their children enroll in the same tutoring courses should create groups to share the fees with each other. I hope these parent groups should be able to receive the special discounts for buying the online private tutoring service packages from reputational tutoring centres.*

<p align="right">(ID Number: P6; in Folders: F3, L3 and R3)</p>

8.1.7.2. *The learning discipline in the online private tutoring environment is often loosely*

Secondly, the discipline of learning in the online private tutoring environment is more loosely than in offline one: Teachers and tutors are hardly to remind students to study and do exercises and homework. Alternatively, in online private tutoring atmosphere, students do not usually incur the study pressures like in face-to-face private tutoring atmosphere. Hence, some parents worry that not all

students should be able to concentrate on studying in an online private tutoring environment actively. For example, students might be 'tempted by online games and social networks like Facebook'; hence they are 'easily to forget the time schedule of online private tutoring lessons' (An urban parent).

> *I have a bit worries about the online private tutoring environment of my son. Sometimes he is tempted by online games and social networks like Facebook, so he is easily to forget the time schedule of online private tutoring lessons. I tried to advise him to close all the entertainment and social network websites to make sure that he can focus on his online private tutoring lessons and acquire the online private tutoring knowledge better. I also bought him the headphone and required him to wear it when joining the online private tutoring lessons. Hopefully wearing the headphone might help him concentrate on the lessons better.*

> (ID Number: P8; in Folders: A3, G3 and M3)

8.1.7.3. The interactions and engagements in the online private tutoring environment are less actively

Thirdly, parents found out that the 'interactions and engagements between students and teachers/tutors as well as among students' in the online private tutoring environment are also less active than in the offline one. The principal reason for this disadvantage is that tutees are definitely required to follow online tutors' instructions to maximize the success of lesson delivery, rather than 'feel comfortable to actively share their ideas about lessons to each other, and also actively listen to and think about the lesson viewpoints of other students' in the internet tutoring atmosphere (A urban parent).

> *As an ex-student in the secondary education level, I can feel clearly that in the offline private tutoring environment, both teachers and students usually feel comfortable to actively share their ideas about lessons to each other, and also actively listen to and think about the lesson viewpoints of other students. So, it is undeniable to say that the offline private tutoring environment always brings more active interactions and engagements between students and teachers/tutors as well as among students than the online one.*

> (ID Number: P6; in Folders: C3, I3 and O3)

8.2. Discussion

8.2.1. Similar issues of private tutoring knowledge influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring in other contexts

8.2.1.1. Private tutoring knowledge is one of the parental investment objectives

Undeniably, private tutoring knowledge is usually demonstrated in the curriculum system of many tutoring centres. As defined by Kim and Jung (2019), private tutoring curriculum (or shadow education curriculum) is a 'supplementary curriculum out of schooling provided by educational business industries that is intended to improve academic success among individual students in formal education.' (p. 150). Therefore, private tutoring knowledge is collected and contained in such curriculums for the purposes of delivering it by tutors as well as acquiring it by students successfully. Moreover, this tutoring knowledge is the objective for parental investments in various terms such as tutoring class size, quality of private tutors, learning materials, teaching methods, etc. Also, parents are easily to send their feedback or complaints about private tutoring knowledge expressed in the elements above to the tutoring centres as the evaluation of tutoring service consumers (Kim & Jung 2019).

8.2.1.2. Private tutoring knowledge is an alternative to resolve the knowledge problem for parents' tutees

Briant et al. (2019) detected that the parental option of private tutoring is generally caused by the vulnerable trust between parents and the knowledge of the public education system. Hence, parents requested that the technical knowledge in terms of curriculum, pedagogical methods and authentic learning materials should be valid and reliable so that their children will have sufficient learning experiences through it as an expertised educational system. Nevertheless, if parents perceive that such current technical knowledge is insufficient or inadequate for the children; their trust will be definitely eroded. Seriously, if this vulnerability is repeated continuously, their trust might be suspended and they will find a tutoring service as an alternative to resolve the knowledge problem for their children.

8.2.1.3. Private tutoring knowledge reassures worried parents in trusting private tutors and tutoring centres

In the Australian setting, Briant et al. (2019) found out that most of parents are lack of understandings of private tutoring knowledge and pedagogical approaches from tutoring centres. Further, many parents are not experts in these knowledge areas to evaluate those. Therefore, parents basically have to access the available information of tutoring centres to decide enrolling private tutoring courses for their children. Consequently, many Australian parents are not confident to ensure that they will choose the right and appropriate tutoring courses. They have to be reflexive to choose a private tutoring knowledge of a tutor or a tutoring centre that they feel they can trust. However, the testimonials of other parents in Australia who have previously experienced the utility of knowledge of private tutors and tutoring centres for their children reassure such worried parents that they have chosen the good private tutoring service. Moreover, if these seeking parents read the tutoring reports for experienced parents, they will have the strong hope and believe that the private tutoring knowledge of private tutors and tutoring centres will solve the difficulties of their children's learning (Briant et al. 2019).

8.2.1.4. Private tutoring knowledge is expressed in the forms of schoolwork help, school-like program and school-relevant courses

Dooley, Liu and Yin (2018) continued to reveal that for Australian parents, private tutoring knowledge in Australia could be contained in English literacy skills (such as grammatical correctness skills, spelling techniques, technical writing skills, etc) or English literacy instructions (like phonetics analysis, reading comprehensive strategies, academic writing instructions, etc). Therefore, when parents perceive that private literacy tutoring knowledge is simply a product in the educational market, as consumers they should be able to adjust what tutoring knowledge is taught and how this knowledge is taught for their children. Indeed, parents outlined three types of literacy tutoring products and how they adjust these educational products appropriately with their children's studies as follows:

(i)   Schoolwork help

Dooley, Liu and Yin (2018) explained that a parent may ask a tutoring agency for organising a schoolwork help between a private tutor and a child. This service is usually delivered in the customer's premise or another location if the customer wishes. The private tutor instructs the student how to apply the critical thinking techniques and deep theoretical knowledge to deal with the homework of academic subjects in formal schools. Thus, this educational product helps parents

to *'intensify'* the necessary contents of the standard national curriculum of governmental schools for their children (Dooley, Liu & Yin 2018, p. 5).

(ii)   School-like program

The school-like program generally has the larger scope than schoolwork help, as it focuses on various purposes such as providing specific assessments, designing professional study materials, aiming at the revision, maintenance and advancement for students' learning progresses, and reporting all the outcomes to parents. Hence, depending on the parents' requirements, tutors may teach only one student or a small group of students per session (Dooley, Liu & Yin 2018).

Notably, such school-like programs are professional in academic instructions which are closely associated with the national curriculum and assessment programs in mainstream schools. Therefore, this private tutoring knowledge product is not only assisting parents to *'intensify'* the pedagogical content taught in their children's schools, but also suggesting parents to *'expand'* any untaught parts of this pedagogical content for their children (Dooley, Liu & Yin 2018, p. 7).

(iii)   School-relevant courses

According to Dooley, Liu and Yin (2018, p. 8), tutors deliver school-relevant courses to encourage parents to *'circumvent'* what the literacy knowledge has already taught in formal schools by adding more extra literacy knowledge contents for their children, such as literacy knowledge for prestigious school entrance exam, reading comprehensive instructions, etc. The authentic materials for this private literacy tutoring knowledge product are also professional. Moreover, school-relevant courses have the most various sizes: These might be one tutor-one student, or from small groups to large classes.

8.2.1.5. *Private tutoring knowledge compensate the shortages of homework and exam practical skills for parents' tutees*

Similarly, Sriprakash, Proctor and Hu (2016, p. 428 & p. 429) also demonstrated that Australian parents are interested in 'visible pedagogies' of private tutoring knowledge, as such teaching method instructions display the strong frameworks, the internal controls and the flexible transfers of knowledge. Hence, the visible private tutoring knowledge is expressed in the synopsis of subject contents, explicit student assessment modes and rigid student evaluation criteria for reporting to parents. Alternatively, parents consider private tutoring knowledge as

a specific compensation for the invisible curriculum content system of the mainstream schooling such as the shortages of homework and exam practical skills for their children (Sriprakash, Proctor & Hu 2016) as follows:

(i)   Homework

Most of parents admitted that homework do not only help them to understand theoretical knowledge and practical skills that their children have acquired in the regular schools, but also monitor the study progress of their children. Whereas, it is difficult for parents to assess their children's learning without reading and understanding the homework. However, because formal Australian schools are usually lack of available homework for students, parents found out that private tutoring knowledge is extremely important. The reasons are because it not only provides parents the expertise knowledge in academic subjects, but also displays visible pedagogical methods to help them easily engage in their children's studies (Sriprakash, Proctor & Hu 2016).

(ii)   Exam practical skills

More importantly, private tutoring knowledge also demonstrates exam practical skills for Australian parents. Indeed, the specific authentic materials of tutoring centres such as textbooks, workbooks, practice tests and answer sheets always contain modern and updated knowledge which prove parents about the visible pedagogical approaches for their children's learning. As a consequence, parents easily overcome the tension of monitoring their children's learning in formal schools. Further, they also feel that the anxiety burden of their children's study progress is significantly mitigated as the exam practical skills in private tutoring knowledge could assist their children to undertake the mid-term tests and final exams successfully (Sriprakash, Proctor & Hu 2016).

8.2.1.6. Private tutoring knowledge is delivered in the online environment prevalently

Online private tutoring is not new. Indeed, Bray and Kwo (2014) agreed that online or internet tutoring is a type of current private tutoring modes. Nevertheless, the delivery of online private tutoring knowledge has become popular so far because of its several advantages: Tutors and students can interact directly with each other on cameras of the internet tutoring programs from anywhere in the world without meeting in-person. Further, many recorded tutoring video clips allow students to watch them as many times as they wish in

24 hours of 7 days (Bray & Kwo 2014). In addition, online private tutoring is usually cheaper than other private tutoring modes. Finally, the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020 worldwide have caused the closure of many face-to-face private tutoring centres; and therefore, online private tutoring has been considered as the effective substitute solution for the survival of these educational enterprises (Zhang & Bray 2020).

However, Bray and Kwo (2014) also confirmed that it is quite difficult duty for governments and authorities in any nations to regulate online private tutoring because of its non-border nature as well as the privacy of online private tutoring knowledge in both tutors and students' premises. Thus, Bray and Kwo (2014) recommended that parents should request public information of online tutors' locations (tutors' names, their academic profiles, cities and countries, etc) and copies of online lessons (e.g. audio and video-based lesson clips, etc) for their children. Moreover, parents should also check their children's online tutoring courses frequently to ensure that they would be able to receive updated information and announcements from online tutoring providers.

8.2.2. Different issues of private tutoring knowledge influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring in other contexts

8.2.2.1. Private tutoring knowledge is more important in the primary school level than in secondary school level

Bray and Kwok (2003) admitted that in Hong Kong, parents consider private tutoring knowledge affects their children's minds positively by constructing and keeping their initial and creative learning activities without the parents' guides as they are busy at works. In the parents' viewpoint, these constructive activities, in particular, are more important in the primary school level than in secondary school level, because the mainstream teaching hours in primary schools are usually shorter than in secondary schools. Therefore, children need to be improved by acquiring more learning activities through private tutoring knowledge.

8.2.2.2. Private tutoring knowledge only equips the quick test and exam preparation techniques for tutees without training their critical thinking skills

However, Han and Lee (2016) argued that many South Korean parents enrolled their children in private tutoring classes to require the dramatic academic improvement of one or some subjects for their children as shortly as possible (e.g. within one month, one semester or one year). Unfortunately, this expected rapid learning enhancement of parents may influence the instruction quality of private tutors and curriculum content of private tutoring centres. Alternatively, due to the shortage of time, the prompt private tutoring instructions only equip the quick test and exam preparation techniques for students without training their critical thinking skills. Further, the fundamental concepts and theoretical definitions of academic subjects are less explained clearly as well as basic experiments are undertaken inadequately or limited in students' learning process (Byun 2014; Kim & Kim 2002, as quoted by Han & Lee 2016). Therefore, some exploratory issues of private tutoring knowledge for low, medium and high level students are examined as follows:

8.2.2.3. Prompt private tutoring knowledge may not be effective for low level students

Low level students are usually short of motivations and aspirations to study well in formal schools. Hence, these students often have no or very little learning skills in the study environment such as study time management, self-study regulations, learning value perceptions, etc. As a consequence, when low-performing students are offered the fast and convenient private tutoring designed curriculums and methods, these authentic materials and prompt learning methods still may not be effective for them (Byun & Park 2012; as quoted by Han & Lee 2016). Thus, it is strongly recommended that private tutors should not attempt to cram private tutoring knowledge to low level students through their fast technical skills and material. Instead of that, tutors should design and conduct mentoring programs which stimulate students' learning aspirations, improve the engagement between tutors/teachers and students and encourage academic curiosity by introducing the private tutoring knowledge foundations (Han & Lee 2016).

8.2.2.4. Private tutoring knowledge may create great opportunities to improve medium level students' learning performances

On the other hand, medium level students might have great opportunities to acquire useful tips and techniques for improving their test and exam scores from such shortcut private tutoring knowledge material and teaching methods. The

main reason for this statement is because many medium level students usually have great aspirations in acquiring academic knowledge. Thus, they may create your own study plans and strategies in private tutoring to not only maintain, but also advance their private tutoring knowledge and skill acquisitions among their classmates (Byun & Park 2012; as quoted by Han & Lee 2016).

8.2.2.5. *Private tutoring knowledge only maintains high level students' learning performances*

Nevertheless, high level students are hardly to demonstrate their academic score improvements whist acquiring the convenient private tutoring knowledge, as their competent study ability have to face the maximum limitation in the score ranking. In other words, they have already reached the highest possible scores in the academic assessment system (Lee & Kwon 2011; as quoted by Han & Lee 2016). Undeniably, outstanding level students are hardly to advance their private tutoring knowledge further. However, the most updated private tutoring knowledge may help them for maintaining their top ranking positions in formal schools and preventing them from dropping their current outstanding levels (Yang 2012; as quoted by Han & Lee 2016).

In summary, the discussion statements of private tutoring knowledge for low, medium and high level students are demonstrated in Figure 8.2.
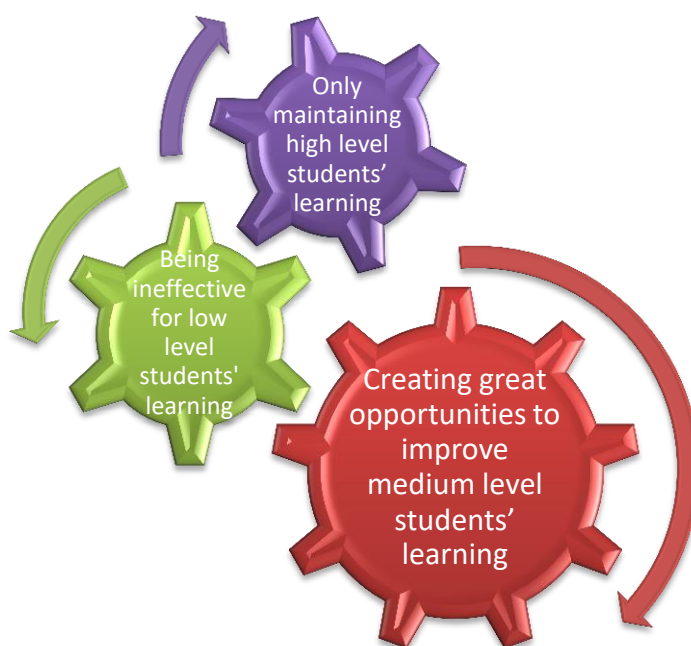
Figure 8.2. Discussion statements of private tutoring knowledge for low, medium and high level students' learning performances

(Byun & Park 2012, as quoted by Han & Lee 2016; Lee & Kwon 2011, as quoted by Han & Lee 2016; Yang 2012, as quoted by Han & Lee 2016)

8.3. Conclusion of Chapter 8

Chapter 8 displays many various viewpoints and clarifications of respondents for and against how private tutoring knowledge influence parental perceptions of private tutoring.

In the brainstorming sessions, many participants confirmed that private tutoring knowledge: (i) revising low level tutees' learning performances effectively, particularly in natural science subjects like mathematics, physics and chemistry; (ii) maintaining medium level tutees' learning performances appropriately, especially in social sciences subjects such as Vietnamese literatures, history, geography and foreign languages like English; and (iii) advancing high level tutees' learning performances brilliantly with, in particular, natural sciences and foreign language subjects.

In focus-group discussions, parents agreed that private tutoring knowledge stimulates tutees' language intelligence in social sciences and stimulates tutees' logical thinking in natural sciences.

In in-depth individual interviews, many individual parents argued for online private tutoring knowledge because its enrolment is simple and easy, the fees are cheap with possible special discounts, save time with prompt assessment results and comments received. However, some other parents were against online private tutoring knowledge as it might be costly for parents in financial hardships, the learning discipline is often loosely and the interactions and engagements are less actively.

In the discussion section, participants expressed similar issues of private tutoring knowledge influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring in other contexts, consisting of private tutoring knowledge: is one of the parental investment objectives; an alternative to resolve the knowledge problem for parents' tutees; reassuring worried parents in trusting private tutors and tutoring centres; expressing in the forms of schoolwork help, school-like program and school-relevant courses; compensating the shortages of homework and exam practical skills for parents' tutees; and delivering in the online environment prevalently. In

contrast, some respondents pointed out some different issues of private tutoring knowledge influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring in other contexts, including private tutoring knowledge: is more important in the primary school level than in secondary school level; only equips the quick test and exam preparation techniques for tutees without training their critical thinking skills; may not be effective for low level students; may create great opportunities to improve medium level students' learning performances; and only maintains high level students' learning performances.

There are two main research limitations of this chapter: First, there are the significant differences, even the great contradictions of parental perceptions of private tutoring knowledge in Vietnam and the perceptions of private tutoring knowledge in other contexts. Hence, further research, particularly quantitative research of various stakeholders' perceptions of private tutoring knowledge (e.g. parents, students, teachers, tutors, etc) in different national contexts and settings should be undertaken to clarify, compare and contrast for narrowing the detected gaps as close as possible. Second, the measurements of private tutoring knowledge for low, medium and high level tutees' learning performances are absent. Hence, the quantitative research for private tutoring knowledge should be conducted in the future studies to quantify the effectiveness of private tutoring knowledge for each type of tutees' learning performances above.

CHAPTER 9

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 4: HOW PRIVATE TUTORING LOCATIONS INFLUENCE PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING

This chapter investigates the effects of private tutoring locations on Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring. The findings show that private tutoring is more developed in urban areas and less developed in rural areas because urban areas have more advantages than rural areas in a numbers of spheres: (i) study facilities and services; (ii) modern teaching methods of urban tutors; (iii) private tutoring demands of urban parents; and (iv) willingness of urban parents to pay tutoring fees. The current urban and rural parental factors of some Asian countries in the international private tutoring context are discussed, compared and contrasted to point out some possible and similar hidden urban and rural parental characteristics in Vietnam. The research limitation of the chapter is also outlined.

9.1. Findings

In the brainstorming sessions, participants drew out the broad development of private tutoring services across the Vietnamese context.

9.1.1. Private tutoring services occurred in both urban and rural areas of North, Central and South Vietnam

In the brainstorming sessions, all 72 participants understood that private tutoring services were available 'from primary, secondary and upper-secondary school levels' and spread in both urban and rural areas of North, Central and South Vietnam in the total of 'sixty-three cities and provinces of Vietnam' (An urban parent).

> *We can see that the private tutoring phenomenon happen everywhere in Vietnam, from primary, secondary and upper-secondary school levels. It happens in all North, Central and South Vietnam. I can bet you that the private tutoring phenomenon run in all sixty-three cities and provinces of Vietnam!*

> (ID Number: P6; in Folders: A4 and G4)

In the focus group discussions, participants discussed about and compared the study environment in both urban cities and rural provinces in Vietnam to clarify the advantages and disadvantages between them.

9.1.2. Study facilities and services in urban private tutoring classes are always better than in rural ones

Thirty-four urban and thirty-two rural Vietnamese parents agreed that both urban parents and their children are often happy with private tutoring enrolments in urban areas, as equipment, facilities and services in urban private tutoring classes are better than in rural areas (A rural parent).

> *You know, the facilities and services of both regular schooling and private tutoring classes in big cities are better than in rural provinces very much. Those regular schooling and private tutoring environments might be for the rich, so they are the dream schools and classes of us and our children. But parents in big cities may also have to pay much more regular schooling and private tutoring fees than us. That is the trade-off, isn't it?*
>
> (ID Number: P5; in Folders: D4 and J4)

As explained by both the urban and rural participants, many urban private tutoring centres in public schools have libraries with recently published textbooks, study magazines, and other academic publications; experimental facilities for natural sciences studies; classrooms with projectors and digital devices; computer rooms (An urban parent).

> *Our children were enrolled in good private tutoring centres. They were provided usernames and passwords of student users to access and study online in the electronic libraries. They have projectors to study social sciences like Vietnamese literatures, history, geography and experimental equipment to study natural sciences such as mathematics, physics and chemistry. They also have computer rooms to study programming and foreign languages.*
>
> (ID Number: P8; in Folders: C4 and I4)

9.1.3. The modern teaching methods of urban tutors are more innovative with digital teaching and learning devices than the traditional teaching methods of rural tutors

Seventeen urban parents pointed out that the teaching methods of urban tutors are usually innovative with modern digital teaching and learning devices. Therefore, urban tutors can apply a series of innovative teaching methods to help tutees studying better, like encouraging their tutees to access libraries to read textbooks and academic magazines; guiding their students to do experiments in natural sciences with modern facilities such as practising "Newton's three laws of motion, static electricity, buoyancy, density" for physics (An urban parent); or observing "salt crystals, how water freezes into ice, or how sugar dissolves in water" for chemistry (An urban parent); organizing student groups with projectors to "show them lesson slides of social science subjects" such as history and geography (An urban parent); or gathering students "in computer rooms for practising Vietnamese and English" (An urban parent). In contrast, fourteen rural parents admitted that rural tutors still apply the traditional teaching method in their children's private tutoring classes due to the lack of digital teaching and learning devices: Rural tutors write and explain the lesson contents on the blackboards and require tutees copy such contents fully into their notebooks.

9.1.4. Urban parents have more private tutoring demands than rural parents

As analysed in Chapter 5, *Table 18. Private tutoring attendance background of urban and rural parents' children,* the urban participants enrolled their children not only in private tutoring of teachers in public schools, but also in other types of private tutoring services such as professional tutoring companies, foreign tutors in Vietnam and professional online tutoring centres. On the other hand, the sampled rural parents only enrolled their children in private tutoring services of their children's public school teachers, professional tutoring companies and online tutoring centres. Alternatively, none of the sampled rural participants enrolled their children in foreign tutoring services in Vietnam. Consequently, urban parents had more private tutoring resources than rural parents.

9.1.5. Urban parents are willing to pay more private tutoring fees for their children than rural parents

As described in Chapter 5, *Table 17. Economic background of urban and rural parents,* 4 urban parents paid in the range of 4,000,001 to 5,000,000 VND monthly tutoring payment and 2 other urban parents paid in the range of over 5,000,000 VND monthly tutoring payment for their children. These participants

revealed that after receiving the private tutoring offers of public school teachers, or hearing from their classmates about private tutoring service advertisements, their children actively asked them for their permissions of enrolling in private tutoring. These children knew that their parents wanted them to participate in private tutoring services of the public schools and should be able to or afford to pay for these services. In contrast, no rural parents could afford to pay the two tutoring fee rates above. Therefore, urban parents were willing to pay more private tutoring fees for their children than rural parents.

9.1.6. Private tutoring services are more developing in urban areas and less developing in rural areas in Vietnam

For the four main reasons in sections 8.1.3, 8.1.4, 8.1.5 and 8.1.6 above, unsurprisingly 100% of both urban and rural participants agreed that private tutoring services are more developed in urban areas and less developed in rural areas of North, Central and South Vietnam.

> *Everyone knows that urban areas are always more developing than rural areas. So, education in urban areas is also more developing than education in rural areas. Thus, private tutoring in urban areas is, of course, more developing than private tutoring in rural areas.*
>
> (ID Number: P12; in Folders: A4, G4 and M4)

9.1.7. Rural parents send their children to urban areas in the annual summer holidays to attend specific private tutoring classes

Five participants confirmed that they had sent their children to private tutoring centres in big cities in the annual summer holidays and enrolled them in specific private tutoring courses such as English language classes as well as fundamental mathematics classes. According to these 5 rural parents, the reasons for their decisions were because urban private tutoring centres are always available and attracting 'excellent tutors with their advanced teaching methods and modern learning facilities' (A rural parent).

> *We have heard so much about excellent tutors with their advanced teaching methods and modern learning facilities of many famous private tutoring centres in big cities. So, in the summer school holidays, we decided to send our children to urban cities to live with our relatives for 3 months, from June to August each year. Our children are enrolled in their favourist private tutoring courses as they*

desire to explore. In here, we are afraid that there are not enough competent tutors and modern learning facilities for helping our children's learning dreams come true.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P8; in Folders: D4, J4 and P4)</div>

9.1.8. Urban teachers co-operating with their rural colleagues for providing their private tutoring services in rural areas

Three rural participants confirmed that they had already observed that there was co-operation between rural teachers and their colleagues from urban areas for organizing private tutoring classes of English and mathematics in English for rural students. For example, as observed by these 3 parents, at the weekends, 6 urban teachers from Ho Chi Minh City travelled to the rural countryside of the city by coach and accessed private tutoring sites in their rural colleagues' houses or private tutoring centres for undertaking English and mathematics in English tutoring classes. In turn, rural teachers prepared the classrooms with tables and chairs for students, blackboard and electricity power source for projectors and computers of urban teachers.

> *We saw that at the weekends, 6 urban teachers from Ho Chi Minh City travelled to the rural countrysides to co-operate with rural teachers to teach English and mathematics in English for students there. Urban teachers bring projectors and computers to rural teachers' houses or private tutoring centres. Rural teachers prepare the classrooms with tables and chairs for students, blackboard and electricity power source.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P11; in Folders: C4, I4 and O4)</div>

9.2. Discussion

Although the Vietnamese participants claimed some notable points of the private tutoring phenomenon in their current urban and rural areas influencing significantly their perceptions of private tutoring in the Findings section, other characteristics of urban and rural parents themselves in Vietnam involving private tutoring might still have been overlooked. Hence, the Discussion section continues to clarify some more urban and rural parental characteristics in some Asian national contexts, including India, China and Cambodia and justify that some possible hidden urban and rural parental characteristics in Vietnam may be also similar to such Asian urban and rural parental characteristics.

9.2.1. Basic parental reasons for the popularity of Indian private tutoring in urban areas than in rural areas and the similarity in Vietnam

Sujatha (2014) confirmed that in India, there have been parental reasons to explain the greater popularity of private tutoring in urban areas than in rural areas: (i) Parents in urban areas have more educational and economic advantages and are more able to afford private tutoring fees than parents in rural areas; (ii) More competition, including competition in private tutoring in urban areas has forced parents to incur more pressures; (iii) Additional competition in urban areas has caused more supplies of private tutoring that, consequently, has created more demands for private tutoring. On the other hand, some several reasons such as parents' lack of financial support, low education levels and aspirations, fewer private tutors have caused a smaller development of private tutoring in rural areas (Sujatha 2014).

Similarly, in the Vietnamese context, some parental reasons for supporting the advantages of urban private tutoring services compared to rural ones, were: (i) better study facilities and services; (ii) the more modern teaching methods of urban tutors; (iii) the more private tutoring demands of urban parents; and (iv) more willingness to pay for private tutoring services, as analysed in the section *7. Findings* above. For these reasons they came to the conclusion that private tutoring services in Vietnam are more developed in urban areas and less developed in rural areas.

9.2.2. Specific factors for Chinese urban parents' demand for private tutoring

In addition, Liu (2019) also confirmed that for urban parents in China, the factors like education, occupation, income and expectation all influence their role in children's educational engagement and their demand for private tutoring. Firstly, parents in urban areas are basically well and more educated than those in rural areas, thus they often engage in their children's learning more positively and as a result have more demand for private tutoring than rural parents (Liu 2019). Secondly, urban parents often have white-collar occupations with specific knowledge and skills in the office working environment. Therefore, they also wish to transfer their professional and prestigious work experience for their

children when they grow up. In order to do it well, their children should be well educated and even talented like the parents. Consequently, parents have to think about hiring private tutors as an effective way to support their children's educational development. However, urban parents with unprofessional and unskilled occupations such as workers and labourers may have less positive attitudes toward their children's future. Thus, many of them might not be enthusiastic for their children's learning situations (Liu 2019). Thirdly, urban parents with high incomes frequently have investments in private tutoring services for their children than parents with low incomes. Frankly, parents with high household income in both urban and rural areas certainly perceive that they should be responsible for spending more on their children's private tutoring and have a greater demand for private tutoring services. Nevertheless, urban high income parents have more responsibility and, as a consequence, more demand for private tutoring for their children than those in rural areas (Liu 2019). Finally, parents in urban areas who group higher education, prestigious occupations and good income together are likely to have strong expectations toward their children's private tutoring enrolments (Liu 2019).

However, although parents in rural areas in the Chinese Mainland are also strongly influenced by education, income and expectation factors in their role of children's educational engagement and their demand for private tutoring, they are not affected by the occupation factor (Liu 2019). Undeniably, rural parents often perceive that they have to work in agricultural occupations for earnings to cover the living expenses of not only themselves and their children, but also their parents or the grandparents of their children in their families. Therefore, the occupations of parents in Chinese rural areas have no significant effects on their children's educational engagement and demand for private tutoring (Liu 2019).

9.2.3. The same discrimination between urban and rural registration residents in the Chinese and Vietnamese education system

Liu and Bray (2017) confirmed that the main reason for which Chinese students in rural schools enroll less in private tutoring than students in urban schools depended on their parents' decisions: Rural parents in Mainland China are less motivated in finding private tutoring classes for their children than urban parents because there is less competition in rural schools and communities than in urban

areas. Furthermore, the household registration system in China also hinders rural registration students to access public educational services (consisting of private tutoring services in public education sector) in urban areas, regardless of their current urban residences (Liu & Bray 2017).

The same scenario also has occurred in Vietnam so far. If the Vietnamese parents have the household registrations in an urban or rural area, their children will receive their education in the same urban or rural area. Hence, parents who have their household registrations in rural areas must enroll their children schools in the same rural area. Otherwise, rural children cannot access schools in urban areas. However, if the urban schools have extra places, parents in rural areas might have opportunities to enroll their children in such urban area schools. In return, rural parents will be charged higher tuition fees than urban parents. The difference of this tuition fees can be considered as the fee for buying the study places of urban students (Cameron 2012).

9.2.4. The relationship between mobility aspects and private tutoring in Cambodian urban and rural areas and the implications in the Vietnamese context

More interestingly, Edwards Jr., Le and Sustarsic (2019) demonstrated five following different elements of the mobility theory of Kaufmann (2014) to explain the relationship between mobility aspects and private tutoring in both urban and rural areas of Cambodia in the parents' perspective:

(i) Students are forced to mobilise due to the lack of much support to undertake private tutoring, consisting of their parents' support:

Edwards Jr., Le and Sustarsic (2019) showed an example of a female student who dropped out of her formal school due to the shortage of private tutoring participation for a number of reasons: (a) The student lived in an isolated area with her very poor family; (b) She could not participate in both formal school and private tutoring for several months because a medical condition affected her physical ability; (c) Despite her medical condition, she still had to work and earn money for helping her family as they expected. Consequently, when this student returned to her public school, she fell behind with her learning performance and risked being humiliated by other classmates because she missed lessons for a few months; (d) Meanwhile, the student lacked personal networks as her siblings had moved to the urban area and even abroad for work; (e) She also lacked of

employment opportunities and other public services in her rural area, e.g. insufficient and unaffordable healthcare services. Finally, she decided to move to an urban area to live and work with one of her siblings in a factory. Indeed, because of the shortage of supports from parents and other stakeholders to her private tutoring, this student was forced to mobilise from a rural area, where she was born and grew up, to an urban area, where she abandoned her formal school and private tutoring classes and started to work (Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019).

A similar story happened in Vietnam as analysed in section *9.1.7. Rural parents send their children to urban areas in the annual summer holidays to attend specific private tutoring classes.* The five Vietnamese rural parents decided to send their children to urban private tutoring centres in the summer holidays because they perceived clearly that the rural tutors were not competent, their teaching methods were not advanced, and the learning facilities were not sufficiently modern for their children.

(ii) *Teachers' socio-spatial position* causes a shortage of private tutoring services for students:

According to Edwards Jr., Le and Sustarsic (2019, p. 14), Cambodian parents had following reasons for the lack of private tutoring service provision due to 'teachers' socio-spatial position', particularly in rural areas: When a teacher was single, the private tutoring classes were run as normal. However, after the teacher's marriage, the private tutoring services were cancelled as he or she had to concentrate on taking care of his/her own family as expected in the cultural norms. Further, a teacher was also easily to discontinue his/her private tutoring if he or she had to take a leading position at the formal school and spent time meeting the new duties. Finally, teachers might abandon their private tutoring if the numbers of students attending their services were insufficient or they could not afford the fees. As a result, urban students and parents definitely have more options to choose their appropriate private tutoring services than students and parents in rural areas because of the many advantages in urban areas as discussed in previous studies (Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019).

(iii) However, *an urban location does not ensure that* every students and parents has access to convenient private tutoring services:

Surprisingly, Edwards Jr., Le and Sustarsic (2019) explained that some students and parents in an urban area may have not been guaranteed that they should have an access to conveniently private tutoring services. For instance, a Cambodian female parent who was a teacher in an urban school might be very happy when her child received a discount or even free tuition in private tutoring service enrolments, as the tutors of her child were also her colleagues in the same school for many years. In this case, the teacher had created a good personal network among her and other teaching team members in the school. Nonetheless, when this mother retired or move out of the school and new tutors appeared in the next grade, her child no longer received such benefits as the new tutors did not know her. In other words, her old personal network as a mobility facilitator, unfortunately, did not work for her child's private tutoring enrolments (Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019).

(iv) *Distance and safety* are constraints of the parent and tutee's mobility in accessing private tutoring services:

Edwards Jr., Le and Sustarsic (2019, p. 15) commented that Cambodian parents also worried about the 'distance and safety' of their children in the private tutoring atmosphere. Tutees in both urban and rural areas should have bicycles to travel from their homes to private tutoring locations. In practice, many students have to walk and ride bicycles in too crowded streets and cross the railways to get their tutoring classes, where they are easily in traffic danger. Additionally, some students have to attend evening tutoring classes, where there are security risks such as robbers and muggers on their way at night (Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019).

(v) *Cultural and organizational competence* support parents and children to overcome geographical distances for accessing private tutoring services:

Finally, Edwards Jr., Le and Sustarsic (2019, p. 15) stated that the 'cultural and organizational competence' of both Cambodian parents and students may help them access private tutoring. Indeed, the cultural and organizational competence of students plus the supports of their parents motivate them voluntarily to arrange the time schedules and locations for organizing private tutoring services with their teachers, regardless of their teachers' requirement to attend private tutoring classes or not. This motivation of both parents and students stimulates them to overcome their own disadvantages such as residing in rural areas, spending time

on working, etc. by organizing their own private tutoring classes with their tutors at the weekends (Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019).

The same story is also told in Vietnam, as analysed in section *9.1.8. Urban teachers co-operating with their rural colleagues for providing their private tutoring services in rural areas.* Urban and rural teachers co-operated with each other to initially access the rural private tutoring market in South Vietnam because they realised the study passions of the local students and their parents can be considered as the key cultural factor of this area. Further, rural teachers and parents may help urban teachers to organize private tutoring classes at the weekends. More importantly, these urban and rural teachers could negotiate with each other to charge low private tutoring fee rates for rural parents there to attract more rural students enrolling in their classes, then also divide the percentages of their tutoring fee incomes to each other. The co-operation in private tutoring is very beneficial for both urban and rural teachers, as (i) it helps urban teachers broaden their private tutoring services in rural areas; (ii) it also assists urban teachers avoid the fierce competitiveness of other urban colleagues teaching the same tutoring subjects; (iii) it supports rural teachers taking advantage of their dwelling places or private tutoring centres in rural areas as private tutoring classrooms for attracting more rural tutees with the cheaper tutoring fee rates compared to tutoring fees in urban areas.

Finally, the private tutoring location differences between urban and rural parents in the international private tutoring context are summarised in Table 9.1 below.

Table 9.1. Comparison between urban and rural parents in private tutoring locations in the international private tutoring context

Parental factor in private tutoring locations	Urban parents	Rural parents
Educational influence	More	Less
Economic ability	More	Less
Occupational influence	More	Less
Income	More	Less
Willingness to pay tutoring fees	More	Less

		More	Less
Demands in private tutoring for children		More	Less
Competition in private tutoring services		More	Less
Supplies in private tutoring for children		More	Less
Expectation for children's success in private tutoring		More	Less

(Sources: Edwards Jr., Le & Sustarsic 2019; Liu 2019; Sujatha 2014)

As displayed in Table 9.1, in both urban and rural parents' viewpoints, all 9 private tutoring location factors of parents in urban areas, including (i) Educational level; (ii) Economic ability; (iii) Occupational influence; (iv) Income; (v) Tutoring fee payment willingness; (vi) Demands in private tutoring for children; (vii) Competition in private tutoring services; (viii) Supplies in private tutoring for children; and (ix) Expectation for children's success in private tutoring, always tend to be more than the same parental factors in rural areas. Therefore, the hidden urban and rural parental factors in Vietnam which the participants forgot, did not realise, or think about ignored: (i) Educational influence; (iii) Occupational influence; and (vii) Competition in private tutoring services. The reasons for these overlooked factors involve their children as follows:

(i) Educational influence: Although participants responded about their personal educational levels, they still ignored discussing this factor further. Urban parents might think that the tradition of study passion in their families always exists and has become an unwritten family rule for their children. Their children must perceive and obey this family rule without any queries. In contrast, rural parents might have lower educational levels than urban parents. Hence, they desire to send their children to private tutoring classes with the strong hope their children would have better opportunities to study better than they did without having to mention it.

(iii) Occupational influence: Once again, participants also responded about their personal occupations. Nevertheless, they did not clarify the influence of their occupations on their perceptions of private tutoring locations. In fact, parents in urban areas might want their children to graduate at a higher education level and follow their careers in public or private office work environment in their current

or other big cities as scheduled. Meanwhile, parents in rural areas did not wish to talk about their farming or fishing work. They also did not wish their children come back to work in their local manual work environment. Instead, they wished their children to be university graduates in urban cities and compete with other urban bachelor graduates in the office work recruitments.

(vii) Competition in private tutoring services: Despite understanding clearly about competition in private tutoring, participants only perceived the competition in private tutoring between their children and other parents' children. They did not realise the importance of competition in private tutoring services in urban and rural areas. In practice, whilst rural parents attempt to send their children to urban private tutoring classes in annual summer holidays, some private tutoring centres tend to open their branches in rural areas to attract local tutee enrolments and avoid competitions from urban rivals.

9.3. Conclusion of Chapter 9

This chapter demonstrates participants' opinions for the influences of private tutoring locations on the parental perceptions of private tutoring.

Firstly, all participants agreed that private tutoring services occurred in both urban and rural areas of North, Central and South Vietnam. However, they all also confirmed that private tutoring services are more developed in urban areas and less developed in rural areas because urban areas have more advantages than rural areas in relation to: (i) study facilities and services; (ii) modern teaching methods of urban tutors; (iii) private tutoring demands of urban parents; and (iv) willingness of urban parents to pay tutoring fees. Therefore, five rural parents decided to send their children to urban private tutoring centres in summer holidays to gather more knowledge. On the other hand, three rural participants also observed that urban teachers have co-operated with rural teachers for providing private tutoring services in rural areas.

Nonetheless, the participants' opinions and viewpoints of the Vietnamese urban and rural private tutoring locations above are not sufficient to reflect the differences of urban and rural private tutoring locations in the international context fully, as some hidden parental factors of this phenomenon might be overlooked. Hence, the current Indian, Chinese and Cambodian urban and rural parental factors in urban and rural private tutoring locations are discussed, compared and contrasted to point out some possible and similar hidden urban and

rural parental characteristics in Vietnam. Finally, the full comparison between urban and rural parents in private tutoring locations in the international private tutoring context is displayed with the nine factors. After comparing and contrasting, the hidden urban and rural parental characteristics in Vietnam are revealed, including: (i) Educational influence; (iii) Occupational influence; and (vii) Competition in private tutoring.

The major limitation of the chapter is the lack of quantitative techniques in determining and measuring the parental factors in private tutoring locations of urban and rural parents' viewpoints and opinions. Therefore, further studies should apply appropriate quantitative research methods to test and measure fully the nine parental factors in the private tutoring locations above. Moreover, a benchmark of the urban and rural parental factors in private tutoring locations of further research should be created to standardise these parental factors in both urban and rural areas in the international context.

CHAPTER 10

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 5: HOW TUTORS' KNOWLEDGE DELIVERIES INFLUENCE PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING

This chapter investigates the effects of tutors' knowledge deliveries on Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring. The findings show that the tutor selections of participants depend on the tutoring subjects. According to parents, tutors should be able to: (i) apply information technology techniques in their knowledge delivery processes, whilst still maintain and advance the traditional teaching methods; (ii) create their own tutoring methods, or enhance the current innovative tutoring methods; (iii) inspire attractive learning purposes for students through their knowledge delivery processes; and (iv) advise both students and their parents in the students' learning performances. The influences of tutors' knowledge deliveries on parental perceptions of private tutoring in the international context are discussed. The research limitations of the chapter are also outlined.

10.1. Findings

10.1.1. Parents believe in the high academic qualifications of youthful tutors and senior teaching experience of mature-aged tutors, but their tutor selections depend on the tutoring subjects

Regardless of living in urban or rural areas, eighteen parents at the ages from 40 to 49 years old and nine parents at the ages from 50 to 59 years old agreed that they preferred their children should be able to study with mature-aged tutors as these tutors have various senior teaching experience in tutoring subjects. Those participants perceived that 'if a student provides wrong solutions for a mathematics exercise for several times', for example, a young and less experienced mathematics tutor 'might be easily upset and even shout at the poor tutee and think that the tutee is quite stupid' (An urban parent). In contrast, parents admitted that in such scenarios, 'a mature-aged tutor would have a great calm about that' and 'would patiently show that student necessary step by step

slowly and clearly to help the tutee understand the problem and the appropriate solution' (An urban parent).

> *Mature-aged tutors, as you know, are very professional teachers and even university lecturers. Moreover, they are very experienced tutors. Let's say, if a student provides wrong solutions for a mathematics exercise for several times, a young mathematics tutor might be easily upset and even shout at the poor tutee and think that the tutee is quite stupid. However, a mature-aged tutor would have a great calm about that. He or she would patiently show that student necessary step by step slowly and clearly to help the tutee understand the problem and the appropriate solution.*

> (ID Number: P12; in Folders: A5, G5 and M5)

On the other hand, three 18 to 30 year old parents and twenty 30 to 39 year old parents confirmed that they prioritised youthful tutors because those usually 'have higher education qualifications such as Masters and PhDs', particularly academic qualifications from prestigious universities abroad (An urban parent). The reasons for these are because participants strongly believed that: (i) youthful tutors 'are very enthusiastic and fully energy' (An urban parent); (ii) they are very actively to 'move quickly around the classroom, talk about the lesson loudly and wake up all the tutoring class' (An urban parent); and (iii) they enthusiastically intend to 'interact with tutees with high frequencies of questions and answers for explaining the issues of the lesson clearly' (An urban parent).

> *Young tutors are very enthusiastic and fully energy. Many of them have higher education qualifications such as Masters and PhDs, including prestigious academic qualifications from foreign universities. They can move quickly around the classroom, talk about the lesson loudly and wake up all the tutoring class, even some tutees who might be feeling sleepy, ha ha. They also interact with tutees with high frequencies of questions and answers for explaining the issues of the lesson clearly.*

> (ID Number: P8; in Folders: C5, I5 and O5)

Interestingly, the rest of the participants revealed that the issue of choosing the appropriate youthful or mature-aged tutors for their children depended on the tutoring subjects in which the tutors had expertise. In detail, seven parents aged

from 40 to 49 years old and five parents aged from 50 to 59 years old admitted that they preferred choosing youthful tutors who teach English, drawing or music tutoring subjects. On a contradiction, one 18 to 30 year old parent and nine 30 to 39 year old parents demonstrated that they prioritised selecting mature-aged tutors teaching mathematics, physics, chemistry, Vietnamese, history and geography.

10.1.2. Tutors should be able to apply information technology techniques in their knowledge delivery process, whilst still maintaining and advancing traditional teaching methods

All 36 urban participants and 26 rural participants agreed that tutors should be able to apply information technology techniques in their knowledge delivery process. For example, tutors may create lesson contents on Powerpoint slides, prepare illustrative video clips and practical exercises and upload them on the website of schools or tutoring centres. In these cases, students are provided with usernames and passwords to access such lessons to learn theoretical issues and conduct practical exercises. These compulsory techniques are very important for parents, because tutors will have the opportunities to (i) 'undertake a tutee-centred method' in their tutoring classes; (ii) 'stimulate sighting and hearing senses' of students; (iii) 'cooperate and interact' with tutors and among tutees more confidently; (iv) 'guide students to learn more actively and explore as many academic issues as possible'; and (v) help students 'make their own decisions in dealing with problems of the lessons' (An urban parent).

> *The issue of applying information technology in the knowledge delivery of tutors is very important. If tutors can do this issue well, they will really undertake a tutee-centred method in the private tutoring class. They will stimulate sighting and hearing senses of our children under the multi-media devices. They also help our children to cooperate and interact with them and with each other more confidently on the internet environment. They will guide students to learn more actively and explore as more academic issues as possible. The most important thing is, tutors will help our children to make their own decisions in deal with problems of the lessons through the aid of information technology in the tutoring classes, such as answering the True or False questions, or choosing the best answer in the multiple choice questions.*

However, 6 urban parents and 10 rural parents also indicated that tutors should still maintain and advance the traditional teaching methods where possible in tutoring classes. These participants argued that although the traditional teaching methods 'could be considered as the tutor-centred method' (An urban parent) and many tutors tried to avoid using such methods because these make tutees 'learn passively, but independently' (A rural parent), these methods are still useful in some circumstances. For instance, the traditional teaching methods help students undertake real experiments under the 'face to face supervisions and assessments of tutors effectively and realistically' (An urban parent). Moreover, students will 'feel all five senses' (A rural parent) in the traditional teaching methods, consisting of sighting the lesson contents, hearing the voices of tutors and other classmates, touching study material, smelling experimental chemicals, and tasting the experimental products, etc. Finally, these parents confirmed that the despite the application of information technology techniques in private tutoring had various advantages, it was completely impossible to replace the traditional teaching methods.

> *From our learning experiences in school time many years ago, the traditional teaching methods were still important. We knew that when tutors apply the traditional teaching methods in their tutoring classes, our children have to learn passively, but independently.*
>
> (ID Number: P8; in Folders: E5, K5 and Q5)
>
> *We understand that many tutors tried to avoid the traditional teaching methods, as could be considered as the tutor-centred method. However, in the traditional teaching methods, our kids will receive the face to face supervisions and assessments of tutors effectively and realistically.*
>
> (ID Number: P6; in Folders: A5, G5 and M5)
>
> *The traditional teaching methods should not be cancelled in both public and private education system because these help our children feel all five senses in their private tutoring classes, such as sighting, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting about everything involve their tutors and other classmates.*
>
> (ID Number: P7; in Folders: F5, L5 and R5)

10.1.3. Tutors should be able to create their own tutoring methods, or enhance the current innovative tutoring methods

Thirty-two urban participants and twenty-five rural participants mentioned that they especially appreciate highly tutors who should be able to create their own tutoring methods, or enhance the current innovative tutoring methods in tutoring classes. For example, ten parents debated that the mathematics private tutoring knowledge delivery creates opportunities for their children to think about mathematical concepts and definitions accurately, correctly and appropriately for the sake of building a logical thinking process. In the opinions of six other parents, the appropriate knowledge delivery methods of tutors should be able to help students to build their own logical thinking process through their own thoughts and comments to evaluate the mathematical problems correctly, and to provide the students with clues for finding clear solutions. Students should also be able to 'learn study experience and even mistakes to each other' whilst 'exploring and finding solutions for mathematical problems' (An urban parent).

> *My son told me that in his mathematics private tutoring class, the tutor divided the students into small groups of 3 or 4 people and gave them various mathematical topics for discussions. I think that's a good idea, as each student member in each group should be able to compare, judge and reason mathematical issues correctly. My son and his classmates also have chances to learn study experience, and even mistakes to each other, in exploring and finding solutions for mathematical problems.*

(ID Number: P9; in Folders: A5, G5 and M5)

10.1.4. Tutors should inspire learning for students through their knowledge delivery processes

Parents desired that tutors should inspire learning for tutees through their knowledge delivery processes in their tutoring subjects. In order to pursue this purpose sufficiently and effectively, tutors should find appropriate and inspiring ways to prove that their tutoring subjects are involved 'directly and closely in their daily lives' (An urban parent). For instance, tutors of a Vietnamese literature subject could 'explain to students that this famous short story is the content of a national classic movie' or 'analyze the artistic value of a poem and tell students how the poem is musicalized and broadcast nationwide' (An urban parent).

I am sure that our children might be very interesting if tutors explain to tutees that their enrolled tutoring subjects involve directly and closely in their daily lives. For example, they may teach a Vietnamese literature short story and explain to students that this famous short story is the content of a national classic movie. Or, they analyse the artistic value of a poem and tell students how the poem is musicalize and broadcast nationwide.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P8; in Folders: B5, H5 and N5)</div>

Moreover, tutors might explain to tutees that the knowledge of their tutoring subjects serves 'the material and spiritual demands of human's daily lives', including their students (A rural parent). For example, chemistry tutors 'may show students how farmers produce salt in their fields' or 'explain to students about how factory workers produce soaps with flavors of various flowers and fruits' (A rural parent).

Tutors should show their tutees that how the knowledge which they have been taught relates closely to the material and spiritual demands of human's daily lives. For example, tutors teaching chemistry may show students how farmers produce salt in their fields. They may also explain to students about how factory workers produce soaps with flavors of various flowers and fruits.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P7; in Folders: D5, J5 and P5)</div>

As appreciated by an urban parent, the learning inspiration of tutors 'will arise tutees' creative passion in their learning as well as stimulate their desire to explore new knowledge'. Tutors will also help tutees 'grow their own personality and life styles, create their knowledge strength, faith and excitement in life-long learning' (An urban parent).

If tutors can do their learning inspiration duty well, they will arise tutees' creative passion in their learning as well as stimulate their desire to explore new knowledge in their life-long learning. They will help our children grow their own personality and life styles, create their knowledge strength, faith and excitement in life-long learning.

<div align="right">(ID Number: P12; in Folders: A5, G5 and M5)</div>

10.1.5. Tutors should be good advisers for both students and their parents

Thirty-five urban parents and thirty rural parents wished that ideally tutors should be good advisers for both students and their parents honestly and promptly from the beginning to the end of their tutoring contracts. For students, parents desired that, as early as possible, tutors should be able to identify the advantages of their children through the tutoring knowledge delivery activities (e.g. good calculation skills; clear pronunciation; neat handed-writing, etc.) and encourage them to explore and advance more of their abilities in the learning process. Additionally, tutors should detect as many as possible disadvantages of tutees in the tutoring classes (e.g. unfocused on the lesson; talked freely in the class; etc.) and remind, or even warn these tutees as soon as possible.

> *We think that tutors, particularly tutors in public schools should pay attentions to identify both advantages and disadvantages of our children in the knowledge delivery process, because they have time and energy to do that well in the tutoring time. That is the responsibility of tutors in their private tutoring classes!*

> (ID Number: P10; in Folders: A5, G5 and M5)

For parents themselves, they were extremely passionate about tutors who should be able to provide them possible suggestions or recommendations for improving their children's learning process. Moreover, tutors should notify them as soon as possible about the tutoring performances of their children periodically and other unusual activities (e.g. absence with no reasons; incompletion of homework; etc.).

> *Tutors should inform us by phone calls or messages about all tutoring activities and learning performances of our children in their tutoring classes as soon as possible. If they have any recommendations to solve the problems of our children's learning, we would love to hear about those.*

> (ID Number: P8; in Folders: B5, H5 and N5)

To sum up, the main findings of the effects of tutors' knowledge deliveries on Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring are demonstrated in Figure 10.1 below.
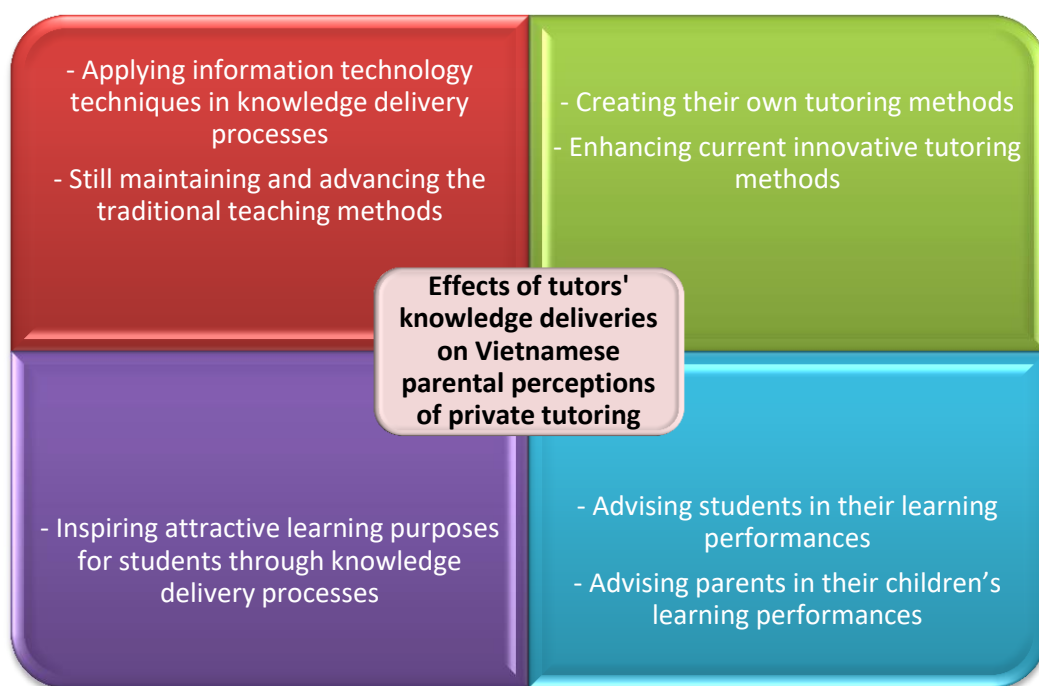
Figure 10.1. Main findings of effects of tutors' knowledge deliveries on Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring

(Source: Researcher's data analysis results)

10.2. Discussion

10.2.1. Tutors self-realize their expertise and feel satisfaction in the tutoring atmosphere

According to Hon (2010), when delivering knowledge to students, tutors normally self-realize their professional abilities, developmental potential and significant senses under the tutoring atmosphere. Moreover, tutors may easily discover a sense of satisfaction when successfully correcting students' mistakes in academic subjects. In addition, tutors also feel in touch with their tutees when they recall the mistakes in academic subjects and are able to instruct their students on how to avoid these mistakes in future. As a consequence, parents and students usually bring private tutors the respect, appreciation, thankfulness and carefulness in their work (Bray & Lykins 2012).

10.2.2. Tutors enhance their self-search ability in meeting students' knowledge needs and demonstrate their ability to deliver professional knowledge

As argued by Hon (2010), parents strongly believe that in private tutoring lessons, private tutors might enhance their self-search ability when exploring what their

students need and think about their tutoring knowledge deliveries by themselves. This important technique may also help tutors broaden their tutoring careers. Bray and Lykins (2012) also confirmed that the dissemination of knowledge is the primary role of tutors. Hence, although the academic qualifications and professional teaching experience of tutors are usually verified by private tutoring centres, it is important that most parents only trust in tutors' professional capabilities as long as they are able to prove that they always provide the best private tutoring services by utilizing their special technical teaching skills when delivering knowledge to their students.

10.2.3. Tutors are willing to be motivators for their students' learning performances

Additionally, Hon (2010, p. 67) stated that every tutor should be a 'motivator' whilst disseminating knowledge. This is because parents easily find out if their children lack of self-motivation to study; hence they require tutors to motivate them to learn theoretical knowledge and practise examination skills in private tutoring classes. Alternatively, parents require tutors to help their children understand theoretical issues clearly and memorize them as well as practise doing exercises in textbooks. Therefore, tutors devise various techniques to motivate their students to access knowledge. For instance, they initially set up a very easy target in the lesson for students to complete. After finishing this target and receiving the applause from tutors, students are required to do another longer, deeper or more difficult task. These tasks are usually repeated many times with an increase in the longer, deeper or more difficult issues until the tutors confirm that students are able to master theoretical issues and practise exercises (Jokić et. al. 2013).

10.2.4. Tutors try to be advisers for parents and students as a part of their professional duties

Similar to the case study in Vietnam, Hon (2010) explained that in Hong Kong, private tutors may advise parents and students on how to deal with some problems when delivering private tutoring knowledge. For students, tutors advise on some issues such as the academic difficulties in regular schools, self-study skills at home and time management skills in examinations. For parents, tutors advise about the specific knowledge and appropriate teaching techniques to ensure the future academic improvements of their children.

In a different educational environment, Sujatha (2014) explained that many parents in India understand clearly that private tutors often help their children to prepare well for examinations, because tutors usually know or predict which knowledge sections of the academic subjects will be examinable, as well as the solutions of possible exam questions. Therefore, tutors frequently have the appropriate teaching methods to deliver knowledge to students. Additionally, they provide their tutees with useful learning materials, conduct mock tests and exams, give constructive feedback and suggest suitable self-study methods for students with case-by-case individual attention.

10.2.5. Tutors may act with various functions in consumer narratives of private tutoring services

Hallsén and Karlsson (2018) suggested similar viewpoints of the tutors' functions in consumer narratives in another country. As parents are the target audience for the consumer narratives, they are also considered as potential consumers of private tutoring services. Thus, tutors' functions definitely influence parental perceptions of private tutoring. These tutors' functions are based on the framework of legitimization and justification of private tutoring in the Swedish context, namely as *(i) stand-in teacher; (ii) elder sibling;* and *(iii) instrument for parent control* (Hallsén & Karlsson 2018, p. 7) as follows:

(i)   stand-in teacher

According to Hallsén and Karlsson (2018), when parents and their children are in trouble with school homework and ask private tutoring centres for help, tutors will be sent to the families as professional carers for students and rescuers for parents. In other words, tutors, on the behalf of private tutoring companies, will help to deliver knowledge which both mainstream school teachers and parents have been unable to provide students. As a result, tutors help to relieve parents' burdens of their children's learning skills and to rehabilitate students' academic potential and personal ability as a stand-in teacher.

(ii)   elder sibling

Perhaps unexpectedly, parents admitted that tutors are also considered as elder siblings for their children, particularly whilst the tutoring occurs in tutees' premises. Additionally, tutors not only strengthen students' learning ability, but also bring personal support to them (e.g. playing with children, sharing good habits and interests together, etc). Consequently, tutors easily become elder

mentors and friends of tutees. Tutees may consider some impressive tutors as their own models or even idols in their school lives if these tutors always bring in something new to them or change their perceptions positively in each tutoring lesson (Hallsén & Karlsson 2018).

(iii)   instrument for parental control

Certainly, in parents' viewpoints, tutors play a vital role as an instrument for their control of children's study activities. Again, tutors, on behalf of private tutoring companies, are sent to families to manage children's studies. Nevertheless, there is no relationship between tutors and tutees either personally or practically, in the tutoring environment. Instead, tutors help parents to do what exactly they require tutors to do as the best option for their children. In contrast, parents use tutors as a customized knowledge tool to control their children's studies at formal schools. The purposes of parents in this case are helping their children to achieve the mainstream school's educational goals and enhance their children's basic knowledge (Hallsén & Karlsson 2018).

Moreover, the images of famous tutors and their courses are often advertised on the websites of private tutoring centres. These tutor images impress parents deeply so that they expect that hiring famous tutors might be the short cut to improve their children's learning performances for a short time period, e.g. for several weeks (Zhang 2019).

To conclude, tutors' knowledge deliveries in the international context affect the recent parental perceptions of private tutoring are displayed in Figure 10.2.
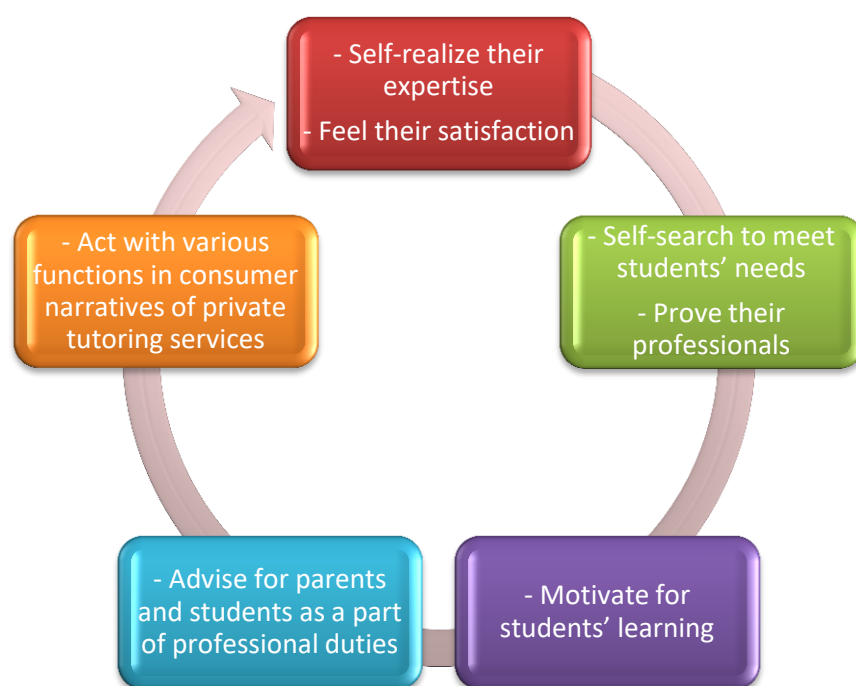
Figure 10.2. Recent parental perceptions of tutors' knowledge deliveries in the international context

(Sources: Hallsén & Karlsson 2018; Hon 2010; Sujatha 2014; Zhang 2019)

This continuous cycle represents a continuing sequence of tasks of tutors' knowledge deliveries influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring in the international context in a circular flow. Moreover, it emphasizes the connection between all components as follows: First, tutors self-realize their expertise with their ex-tutees and feel satisfied with what they have done for the academic successes of those ex-students. Next, in order to develop their tutoring careers, tutors must undertake their self-search activities for their prospective tutees to ensure that they should be able to meet all the prospective tutees' knowledge needs, and prove that they should have sufficient ability to deliver tutoring knowledge to prospective tutees successfully and professionally. Third, tutors should be able to motivate their tutees' learning performances under any circumstances. Fourth, tutors should be able to advise both students and parents about students' learning performances with constructive feedback and recommendations. Finally, after successfully demonstrating all the four tasks, tutors should be able to act with various functions in consumer perspectives, including students and parents, of private tutoring services.

10.2.6. Parents in some countries may not involve tutors' knowledge deliveries due to their opposing perceptions

However, Mischo (2014) argued that sometimes parents and tutors might have the different, even opposing perceptions of private tutoring, consisting of the teaching and learning methods. For example, Jokić et al. (2013) confirmed that in the case of five Eurasian countries: Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia and Georgia, many parents are not concerned about how private tutors deliver knowledge for their children. The reason is that parents strongly believe that when they pay for private tutoring services, they will have a guarantee that tutors would deliver the most up to date and modern academic knowledge for their children. In contrast, the current research findings of this chapter revealed that most of the parents in the case study in Vietnam are really interested in the issue of tutors' knowledge deliveries influencing their perceptions of private tutoring. In other words, Vietnamese parents are always willing to try their best to support and cooperate with tutors' knowledge delivery activities to improve their children's learning performances.

10.3. Conclusion of Chapter 10

The chapter demonstrates participants' viewpoints on the influences of tutors' knowledge deliveries.

First, although some participants believed in the high academic qualifications of youthful tutors, and some others prioritized senior teaching experience of mature-aged tutors, the rest of the parents chose tutors for their children depending on the tutoring subjects: youthful tutors were for foreign languages and artistic tutoring subjects because of their high academic qualified, open-minded, creative thoughts, full energy activities and enthusiasm in knowledge deliveries; whereas mature-minded tutors were for traditional natural and social sciences tutoring subjects due to their professional teaching methods and knowledge delivery experiences. Second, parents suggested that tutors should be able to apply information technology techniques in their knowledge delivery process to ensure that tutors always undertake the tutee-centred method in tutoring activities. However, parents also required tutors to still maintain and advance the traditional teaching methods to help tutors and students to interact face-to-face with each other, as well as make tutees able to feel all five senses in teaching and learning activities. Third, parents highly appreciated tutors who were able to create their own tutoring methods, or enhance the current innovative tutoring methods to suggest students to build their own logical thinking processes, learn the study

experiences and mistakes from other classmates. Fourth, parents strongly expected that tutors should find appropriate and inspiring ways to deliver knowledge to students efficiently to raise the study passions of students and stimulate their desire to explore new knowledge. Finally, parents requested that tutors should be good advisers for both students and parents, such as identifying the advantages and disadvantages to students through the knowledge delivery activities and the provision of prompt and appropriate solutions; providing parents with recommendations for improving their children's learning process as well as notifying them about any unusual in-class activities of their children.

In the discussion section, tutors, in parents' viewpoints, always have to struggle to explore their self-ability to maintain and develop their tutoring careers, such as self-realizing their expertise and their satisfaction under the tutoring atmosphere; and enhancing their self-search ability in meeting students' knowledge needs and proving their professional knowledge delivery ability. Furthermore, tutors are willing to be motivators for their students as well as advisers for parents and students as a part of their professional duties. Additionally, tutors may act with various functions with consumer relationships, including stand-in teacher, elder sibling, and instrument for parent control. Nevertheless, parents in some countries may not involve tutors' knowledge deliveries due to their different perceptions in this service provider and customer relationship.

The major limitation of the study is the lack of quantitative techniques in determining and measuring the influences of tutors' knowledge deliveries on Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring. Therefore, further studies should apply appropriate quantitative research methods to test and measure the possible influences as fully as possible. In particular, the perception of parents' strong belief that tutors' knowledge deliveries should be guaranteed to meet their children's learning requirements is also determined and measured by the use of quantitative research methods.

CHAPTER 11

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 6: HOW STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITIONS INFLUENCE PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRIVATE TUTORING

This chapter investigates the effects of students' knowledge acquisitions on Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring. The findings show that parents have trust in tutors in terms of: (i) skill guarantees in competent knowledge deliveries and acceptable knowledge acquisitions of students; (ii) tutee persuasions to follow their own tutoring methods for the improvement of students' knowledge acquisitions; (iii) more opportunity provisions to students for exploring subject matters deeply and gaining more knowledge acquisitions; and (iv) high level tutee encouragement for exchanging knowledge to other students. For their children, parents trust in: (i) hand-writing skill improvements at the primary school level; (ii) comfortable feelings with the acquisition of private tutoring knowledge; (iii) comfortable feelings with the receipt of the necessary learning support from tutors; and (iv) excited and satisfied feelings when receiving the encouragements of knowledge acquisitions from other classmates. The influences of students' knowledge acquisitions on parental perceptions of private tutoring in the international context are discussed. The research limitations of the chapter are also outlined.

11.1. Findings

11.1.1. Primary school students' knowledge acquisitions relate to the improvement of their hand-writing skills

Twenty-eight parents of primary school tutees in both urban and rural areas were satisfied with the improvement of their children's hand-writing skills whilst acquiring private tutoring knowledge. They understand clearly that due to the limited time in each teaching session, teachers in the government schools could hardly teach their children how 'to write all the letters in the Vietnamese alphabet table carefully and neatly' (An urban parent). Therefore, one of the expectations and satisfactions of parents of primary school tutees was that the hand-writing

skills of their children should be improved, parallel with the successful knowledge acquisitions (An urban parent).

> *We know clearly that in formal Vietnamese language classes, our children have not had enough opportunities to practise hand-writing skills, because teachers in mainstream schools have not enough time to do that. They just taught the kids how to write letters in the alphabet table and then let their students to self-practise. Fortunately, primary school tutors can help us to deal with that. After studying and practicing writing the Vietnamese letters with the tutor, my son was able to write all the letters in the Vietnamese alphabet table carefully and neatly. His hand-writing skills therefore became better.*
>
> (ID Number: P1; in Folders: A6, G6 and M6)

11.1.2. Children usually feel comfortable in acquiring knowledge and receiving the necessary learning supports from their tutors

Sixty-five parents realized that their children usually feel comfortable in acquiring private tutoring knowledge and receiving the necessary learning supports from their tutors where possible at schools or private tutoring centres. For example, a parent confirmed that his son 'wanted to participate in private tutoring classes to learn and acquire knowledge not only from tutors, but also from his classmates' (An urban parent).

> *I can see clearly that my son always feel very comfortable when studying with his tutors at schools and private tutoring centres. I told him that I can tutor him some subjects such as maths, physics and chemistry when I have free time at the weekends, but I gave him an option to enroll these subjects in private tutoring services in his public school and some other subjects in private tutoring centres outside his public school. He immediately agreed because he said that he did not want to disturb my free time at the weekends. He also wanted to participate in private tutoring classes to learn and acquire knowledge not only from tutors, but also from his classmates.*
>
> (ID Number: P8; in Folders: A6, G6 and M6)

11.1.3. Children even feel excited and satisfied when receiving the encouragement relating to knowledge acquisitions from other classmates

Fifty-four parents revealed that children even feel excited and satisfied when receiving the encouragement of knowledge acquisitions from other tutees - their classmates - when they successfully understand difficult knowledge theories or finish complicated practical exercises. On the other hand, if children study with their parents at home, it is hard for them to have feelings of 'real satisfaction' when conquering knowledge successfully with parents, even when parents give them the real and true assessments of their knowledge acquisitions in an impartial way (An urban parent).

> My daughter is also very happy when attending the English private tutoring class with her tutor. She is not only excited and satisfied with this tutor's knowledge and experience, but also excited and satisfied with her classmates' encouragements when she successfully translated English passages into Vietnamese, or finish English exercises. I can't realise her real satisfaction of knowledge acquisition when she study English with me at home, even though her solutions for exercises are also completely correct.

(ID Number: P10; in Folders: C6, I6 and O6)

11.1.4. Tutors can persuasively guarantee their competent knowledge deliveries as well as the acceptable knowledge acquisitions of students

Fifty-seven parents admitted the effectiveness of professional knowledge, technical training skills and practical experience of tutors. Therefore, tutors could persuasively guarantee their competent knowledge deliveries as well as the acceptable knowledge acquisitions of students persuasively as the minimum of private tutoring courses. In contrast, parents also confessed that they are not able to undertake the same issues that tutors have done for their students, as they do not have the pedagogical skills to provide their children with the assessments sufficiently and effectively (A rural parent).

> Tutors have strong knowledge, skills and experiences to guarantee their knowledge deliveries and the knowledge acquisitions of our kids.

> *We cannot do the same things for our kids, because perhaps I and many other parents don't have enough pedagogical skills to do these works well.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P7; in Folders: D6, J6 and P6)</div>

11.1.5. Tutors should be able to successfully persuade tutees to follow their tutoring methods with the strong trust that they will significantly improve their knowledge acquisitions

Sixty-one parents also agreed that tutors should be able to successfully persuade tutees to follow their own tutoring methods with the strong trust that they will significantly improve their knowledge acquisitions compared to other classmates. On the contrary, these parents cannot easily find sufficient persuasive reasons to require their children to voluntarily study with them at home. Moreover, if studying with parents at home, children have no classmates to study with to compare their academic progresses and improvements (An urban parent).

> *We think teachers in public schools or tutors in private tutoring centres are professional, so they can persuade our kids how to learn for improving their knowledge acquisitions successfully. If we can tutor our kids, we can't persuade them to study with us at home. Our kids told us that they have no classmates to study with them at home for comparing and improving their learning progresses.*

<div align="right">(ID Number: P11; in Folders: B6, H6 and N6)</div>

11.1.6. Tutors should be able to provide students with more opportunities to explore subject matters deeply where possible to help them acquire more knowledge

Thirty-two participants believed that their children might have the need to explore the tutoring subject matters more deeply. Thus, tutors should be able to provide them with more opportunities to explore the subject matters as deeply as possible to acquire more knowledge. For natural science subjects such as mathematics, physics and chemistry, tutors may introduce students to more mathematical, physical and chemical theories and exercises at the advanced level as well as undertaking experiments to help them explore more complicated logical knowledge (An urban parent).

Our children always have demand to explore and acquire more knowledge at any time they wish in the private tutoring classes. So, tutors should help them to gain new knowledge by let them explore more advanced knowledge. For example, tutors can provide our children more advanced theoretical knowledge and practical experiments in maths, physics and chemistry.

(ID Number: P10; in Folders: A6, G6 and M6)

For social science subjects like Vietnamese literature, history and geography, tutors should provide them with more advanced subject passages for readings and proposed discursive questions to stimulate students' curiosity in relation to new knowledge. In the next classes, tutors would release solutions for the previous classes (An urban parent).

Yes, you are quite right. I would like to add that for students enrolled in Vietnamese literature, history and geography, tutors can provide them more readings passages in the advance level to help them self-study and find the solutions for the discursive questions.

(ID Number: P12; in Folders: C6, I6 and O6)

11.1.7. Tutors may encourage high level tutees to exchange knowledge with other students

Twenty-seven parents suggested that tutors may encourage tutees at the high level to exchange knowledge to other students where possible. Tutees who had understood theoretical issues and completed exercises correctly in the advanced lesson content would feel extremely excited. In contrast, other tutees who had not fully understood theoretical issues and had not done exercises correctly may ask the competent tutees for solutions. The exchange of knowledge between students and tutors and among students together would make 'everyone wins' (An urban parent): High level students were happy because they understood the lesson contents and could deliver this knowledge to other students who lack understanding. In contrast, low and medium level students were also happy to learn from high level students. Tutors also realized that they could still apply the student-centred teaching method successfully when creating opportunities for students to work in pairs or in groups together (An urban parent).

When tutors notify the solutions, tutees who have done the exercises right will be very happy. Tutees who did not do the exercises right will

ask the done right tutees for solutions. Tutors are also happy because his/her students can deliver advanced knowledge to each other and learn from each other successfully. Everyone wins!

(ID Number: P11; in Folders: B6, H6 and N6)

To sum up, all the findings are described in Figure 11.1 below. Although mentioning to students' knowledge acquisitions, this multidirectional cycle still states a continuing sequence of tutors, students and parental perceptions of private tutoring.
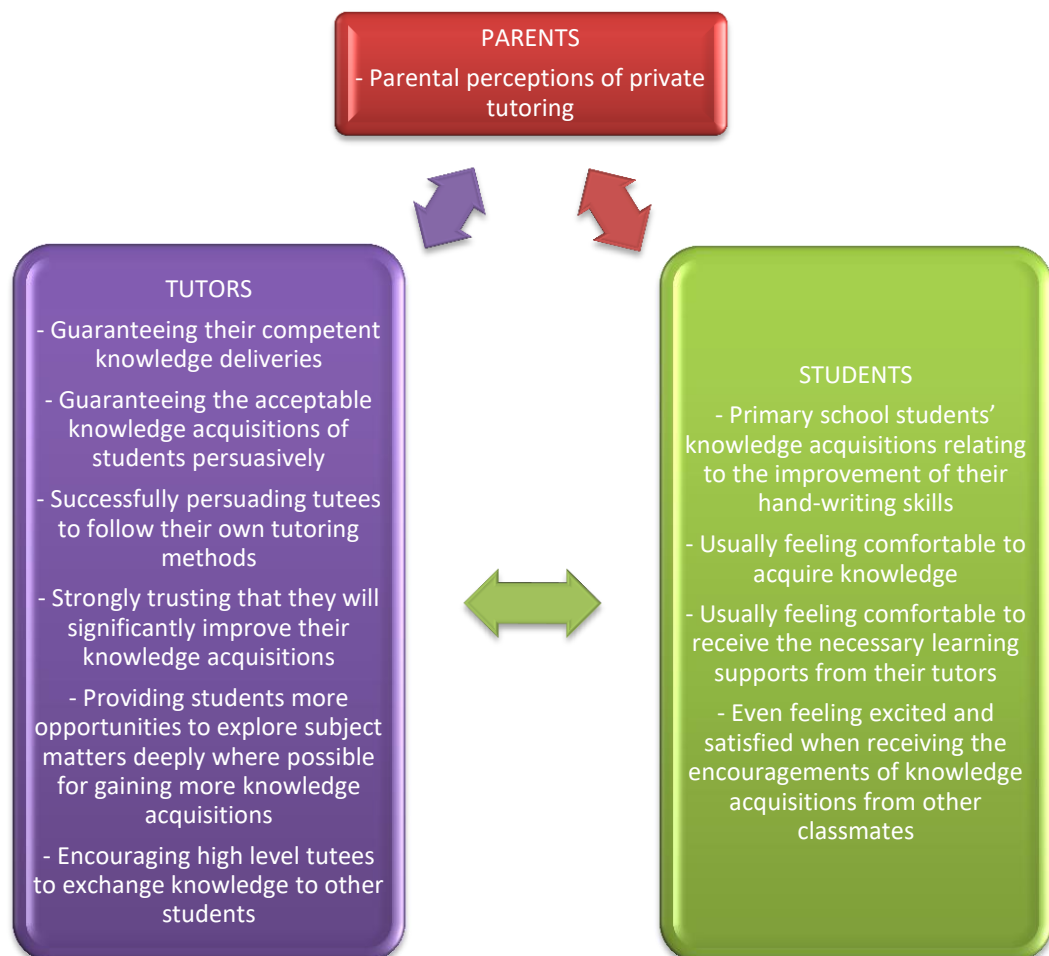
Figure 11.1. Multidirectional cycle describing how students' knowledge acquisitions influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring

(Source: Researcher's data analysis results)

11.2. Discussion

Generally, Vietnamese parents believed that the informal private tutoring environment at schools or education centres between tutors and tutees increasing

their children's knowledge acquisitions were more effective and persuasive than in the informal self-tutoring environment at home between parents and their children. Similarly, in some other countries, the influences of successful students' knowledge acquisitions on parental perceptions of private tutoring may be expressed in multi-faceted elements as follows:

11.2.1. Successful students' knowledge acquisitions express the improvements of their communication, confidence, social skills and paper works

In Pakistan, Chuadhry and Javed (2012) agreed that parents were basically satisfied with their children's knowledge acquisitions in terms of communication, confidence, social skills and paper works as follows:

Firstly, Pakistani parents disclosed that their children have significantly improved communication skills between them and tutors/teachers in the school environment. This effective communication has definitely come from the non-threatening environment and open communication atmosphere in private tutoring classes. Furthermore, children should be able to apply these communication skills to converse with their parents at home (Chuadhry & Javed 2012).

Secondly, parents were happier when realising that their children become more confident about their learning ability. Chuadhry and Javed (2012) demonstrated that Pakistani tutees have been less hesitant about their study problems and have shared their private tutoring queries with their tutors more easily.

Thirdly, parents noted that their children have been easily integrated into the current social standards after undertaking private tutoring classes. They have shown clear and positive attitudes regarding their learning purposes, can listen to their tutors/teachers more carefully, obey their parents' recommendations more thoroughly and start to take responsibility for their individual decisions with more certainty. In other words, in the point of view of parents, their children have started to grow up socially, as they have determined their orders and duties in the society through the private tutoring knowledge's acquisition process (Chuadhry & Javed 2012).

Finally, parents also realized that their children have shown major improvements in their paper works through their writing skills in both theory and practice. The flexible teaching techniques of tutors in private tutoring classes have enhanced students' ability in processing texts in the paper works. Students have known how

to allocate appropriate time to deal more easily with questions in both mock tests in private tutoring centres and real examinations in formal schools. Therefore, students have deepened their understanding of their paper works and would attempt to process the exam papers efficiently and effectively in the future (Chuadhry & Javed 2012).

11.2.2. Successful students' knowledge acquisitions reflect the improvements of their critical, inventive thinking and analytical skills

Tan (2017) argued that private tutoring programs in Singapore contain the requirements of improving critical, inventive thinking and analytical skills for tutees significantly, as these skills are also emphasised in the formal curricula of Singaporean public schools. Further, these skills and other techniques such as socio-emotional competencies and learning and life skills are the core achievement requirements for school students in Singapore under the legal documents of the Singaporean Ministry of Education. Thus, parents admitted that the improvements of their children's knowledge acquisitions in private tutoring centres means that the tutees should be able to be ready to apply their well-prepared critical, inventive thinking and analytical skills for undertaking the tests and exams successfully (Tan 2017).

11.2.3. Successful students' knowledge acquisitions present the vital role of tutors

As described by Park, Byun and Kim (2011), South Korean parents proudly considered private tutoring as a way of involvement in their children's learning. They accepted the economic burden on their shoulders whilst spending considerable amounts of time to search for the most suitable types of private tutoring for their children and investing a lot of incomes for private tutoring fees. Moreover, they often interacted with tutors to understand their children's learning progress in private tutoring centres. As a result, the enhanced knowledge acquisitions of their children were presented in the increase in test and exam scores of some important subjects such as mathematics and English (Park et al. 2011). For example, Seo (2018) pointed out that parents in South Korea revealed that private tutors usually taught their children the math curriculum content of public schools in advance. In private tutoring centres, tutees were trained in

various mathematical techniques to undertake problem solving. Before leaving classes, tutors required their students to take with them a considerable amount of homework. Additionally, tutors often tightly controlled their students' learning performances in classes and at home. The tutors' strict controls guaranteed that students should be able to acquire private tutoring knowledge smoothly and parents might satisfy with the scores achieved in their children's math (Seo 2018).

11.2.4. Successful students' knowledge acquisitions create opportunities for social equality and mobility

According to Tan (2017), Singaporean parents strongly perceived that their children's successful knowledge acquisitions brought an improvement in tests and exams scores. This real academic improvement guarantees that their children could satisfy the entrance requirements of prestigious schools and higher education institutions and this is not dependent on the wealth, power or wishes of any families. This trend may maintain social equality in the Singaporean education system. Moreover, students' knowledge acquisitions also create social mobility. The reason is because their parents are willing to be secondary consumers of private tutoring service products in a competitive society where tests and exams are effective measurements of their children's academic excellence (Tan 2017).

11.2.5. Successful students' knowledge acquisitions provide them more socio-cultural explorations

As discussed by Tan (2017), many Singaporean parents revealed that beside their desire for their children's academic improvements in private tutoring, they strongly hope that their children should be able to gain other benefits such as more socio-cultural explorations. As Singapore is a migration country, tutees might have various opportunities to enroll in private tutoring classes with other classmates who may have different cultures and customs due to their various diverse migration backgrounds. Thus, parents also believe that whilst acquiring knowledge, their children need to acquire not only the knowledge of the curriculum contents, but also the valuable skills through their own socio-cultural explorations to struggle and maintain their current social classes in the modern and developed Singaporean society (Tan 2017).

11.2.6. Successful students' knowledge acquisitions may reduce the stress levels for them and their parents

Tan (2017) argued that regardless of Singaporean parents' aspiration to bring success to their children, their private tutoring enrolments do not stand for the certain improvements of test and exam scores or acquisitions of self-confidence, personal life skills and socio-cultural explorations for their children in Singapore. Similarly, Guill, Lüdtke and Köller (2019) admitted that it is impossible to recommend that private tutoring in Germany definitely improves students' learning achievements in German public schools. However, private tutoring enrolments are still considered helpful as long as these reduce the stress levels of both parents and their children in formal school learning matters. Alternatively, students' knowledge acquisitions might help their parents and themselves to relieve their current stress levels, especially when both of them realise that the students' test and exam grades absolutely improve in the German formal schooling system (Guill et al. 2019).

To conclude, various discussions of successful students' knowledge acquisitions affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring are demonstrated in Figure 11.2:
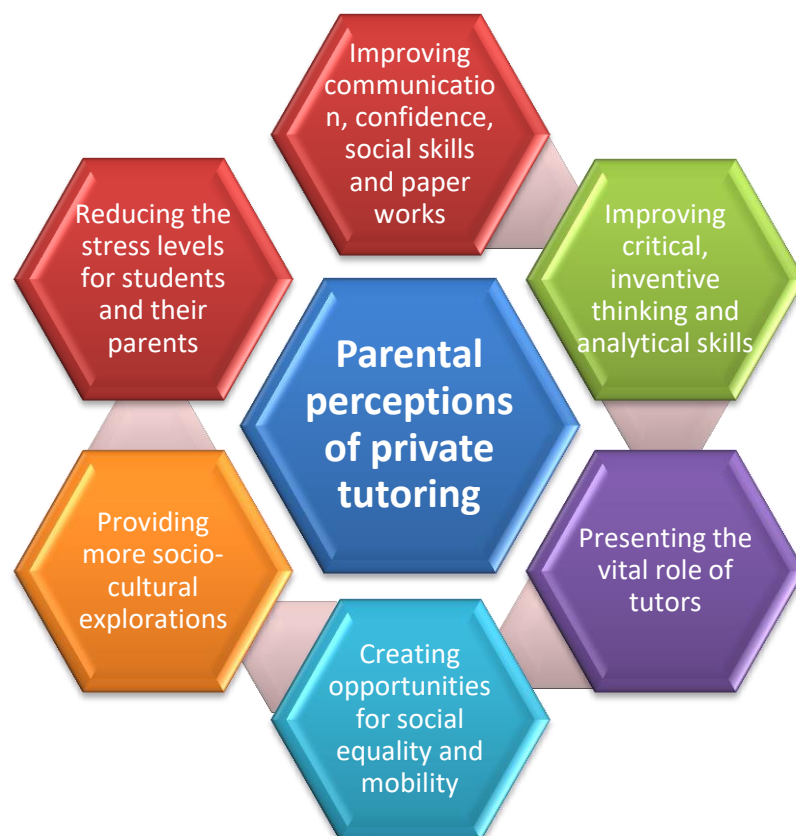
Figure 11.2. Various discussions of successful students' knowledge acquisitions affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring
(Sources: Chuadhry & Javed 2012; Guill, Lüdtke & Köller 2019; Park, Byun & Kim 2011; Seo 2018; Tan 2017)

11.2.7. Students' knowledge acquisitions influence opposing parents' perceptions of private tutoring

Nonetheless, Jokić et al. (2013) also acknowledged that in the case studies of five Eurasian countries: Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia and Georgia, many parents do not pay sufficient attention to the way private tutors deliver knowledge for their children as well as the way their children acquire such private tutoring knowledge. The main reason is because parents in these countries strongly believe that their investments in private tutoring will ensure the quality of both private tutors' educational services and their children's learning obligations. On the other hand, parents in Vietnam actively concentrate on the issue of their children's knowledge acquisitions influencing their perceptions of private tutoring. As shown in the Findings section of Chapter 10, most Vietnamese parents always monitor the teaching and learning activities of tutors and their children through weekly, or even daily interactions by emails, messages, phone calls, or in-person among tutors and their children. If parents realise any possible advantages for their children's knowledge acquisitions, they will actively talk to their children and contact tutors to propose situations for maximizing benefits of their children's learning. In contrast, if parents detect any problems which may cause potential harms for their children's knowledge acquisitions, they are willing to find possible solutions for solving such harmful constraints as soon as possible.

11.3. Conclusion of Chapter 11

This chapter reflects participants' opinions about the influences of students' knowledge acquisitions on the parental perceptions of private tutoring.

As analysed, a lot of issues regarding students' knowledge acquisitions come from both tutors and students which could affect parental perceptions of private tutoring significantly, and vice versa. However, for the purpose of researching students' knowledge acquisitions influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring, this study has only analysed the findings of issues emanating from tutors and students. For tutors, parents believe in: (i) their guarantee of skills such as competent knowledge deliveries and the desired knowledge acquisitions of

students; (ii) their persuasion of tutees to follow their own tutoring methods and improvement of students' knowledge acquisitions; (iii) their provision of more opportunities for students to help them explore subject matters deeply and acquire more knowledge; and (iv) their encouragement of high level tutees to exchange knowledge to other students. For students, parents trust in: (i) the improvement of their children's hand-writing skills when acquiring knowledge at the primary school level; (ii) their children's comfortable feeling to acquire private tutoring knowledge; (iii) their children's comfortable feeling to receive the necessary learning supports from tutors; and (iv) their children's excited and satisfied feelings when receiving the encouragements of knowledge acquisitions from other classmates.

The findings above contribute to the current literature of private tutoring in terms of students' knowledge acquisitions and parental perceptions of private tutoring. These findings confirm that although research has been undertaken about students' knowledge acquisitions, there may have other issues involving tutors and parents which need to be clearly identified to answer the research question. At least three relationships exist among students, tutors and parents whilst analyzing how students' knowledge acquisitions affect parental perceptions of private tutoring: (i) the relationship between students and tutors; (ii) the relationship between tutors and parents; and (iii) the relationship between parents and students.

In the Discussion section, parents in several countries perceived their children's private tutoring knowledge acquisitions from a number of viewpoints for both students and tutors. For students, successful private tutoring knowledge acquisitions: (i) improve their communication, confidence, social skills and writing; (ii) improve their critical, inventive thinking and analytical skills; (iii) provide them more socio-cultural explorations; and (iv) reduce their the stress levels in public schooling. For parents themselves, these simply relieve the stress levels of the parental involvements in their children's learning. For tutors, successful students' knowledge acquisitions in private tutoring present their vital role in their knowledge delivery processes. Finally, for societies, these create opportunities for social equality and mobility, at least in the education sector. However, diverse parental perceptions of private tutoring in some other countries

might not concentrate on their children's knowledge acquisitions as they strongly believe in the guarantee of their investments in private tutoring for their children. There are some research limitations of the study. First, the study lacks quantitative techniques to clarify and quantify the issues relating to students' knowledge acquisitions (e.g. what is the percentage of improvement of primary school students' hand-writing skills when attending private tutoring classes?) to describe more exactly these effects on Vietnamese parental perceptions of private tutoring. Hence, future research directions should concentrate on quantitative skills on students' knowledge acquisitions in private tutoring. Second, there may have been a number of unidentified issues relating to the relationships between students and tutors, tutors and parents, and parents and students in the private tutoring phenomenon. Thus, future studies need to focus more on these relationships to explore any unidentified issues to contribute to the private tutoring literature where possible.

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

This chapter first summarizes the key points of the doctoral research. Second, it presents the research outcomes and significance of the study. Third, it demonstrates the benefits of the study for various stakeholders in society. Fourth, it clarifies some research limitations and proposes further research for private tutoring topic. In terms of research limitations, the candidate admits the subjective views of both the participants and himself in some omissions when conducting research. Finally, the chapter suggests some further research for other researchers and scholars who still would like to follow private tutoring research.

12.1. Summary of the Study

Private tutoring has been indeed a multi-faceted phenomenon and prevalent in all over the world. A critical review of the traditional factors (cultural factors, social factors, economic factors, educational factors and psychological factors) affecting parental perceptions of private tutoring reveals a lack of persuasive contemporary factors and a comprehensive conceptual model to explain these factors. Using the conceptual analysis research method, the thesis theoretically aligns the multinational literature on private tutoring to different concepts or theories, each of which contains distinctive meanings and represents significant ideas. The analytical process elaborates six contemporary factors (government's regulations on private tutoring, private tutoring fees, private tutoring knowledge, private tutoring locations, tutors' knowledge deliveries, students' knowledge acquisitions) and four theories (Fielden and LaRocque's theory; Bray et al.'s theory; Moust's theory; and Cameron's theory) of private tutoring to assemble the conceptual framework of contemporary factors influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring. Moreover, through some qualitative research methods and techniques, the author attempts to explore Vietnamese parental responses to private tutoring to answer six research questions relating to six contemporary factors above. After completing the doctoral research, the candidate harvests some valuable research outcomes and the significance of the study as his first experience in his future research career. Further, his study results in some potential research benefits for various stakeholders in society. However, the candidate's research also contains some undeniable limitations which require

appropriate suggestions for further research. All of these issues are outlined below.

12.2. Outcomes of the Study

The outcomes of the study are representatively demonstrated below:

(i) The opinions of the Vietnamese parents about the Vietnamese government's regulations on private tutoring were identified;

(ii) The voices of the Vietnamese parents about private tutoring fees in Vietnam were mentioned;

(iii) The expectations of the Vietnamese parents about private tutoring knowledge in Vietnam were examined;

(iv) The thoughts of the Vietnamese parents about private tutoring locations in Vietnam were investigated;

(v) The desires of the Vietnamese parents about tutors' knowledge deliveries in Vietnam were indicated; and

(vi) The satisfaction of the Vietnamese parents about students' knowledge acquisitions in Vietnam was demonstrated.

12.3. Significance of the Study

12.3.1. Significance for the wider community

Investigating contemporary factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring made known to the wider society that parents have a strong interest in private tutoring (Guill & Bos 2014). They have accepted both advantages and disadvantages of this kind of educational services when investing a significant portion of their income for their children's studies (Bray & Kwo 2014). Therefore, the government should realise that parents usually would like to access private tutoring as a type of public goods (Bray & Kwo 2014). Furthermore, school and university communities might be significantly influenced when monitoring factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring for attracting their children as their prospective students for their educational institutions (Bray et al. 2016).

12.3.2. Significance for the Business Administration discipline

Educational policy makers, administrators and managers might have some vital educational reforms when contemporary factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring are revealed. Educational policy makers would like to revise their policies to ensure that private tutoring should be best controlled under parents' perspectives, while educational administrators and managers might want to modify rules in their educational institutions to adapt to such parents' perspectives in private tutoring (Bray et al. 2016).

12.3.3. Significance for the Vietnamese education system

As demonstrated in section *2.1.3. Traditional Factors Influencing Parents' Perceptions of Private Tutoring* and *2.3. Contemporary Factors Influencing Parents' Perceptions of Private Tutoring*, the closely and tightly relationships between traditional factors and contemporary factors influencing parental perceptions of private tutoring have been vital and become the main research ideas to review the theoretical frameworks create the conceptual model of the study. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam, on the behalf of the Vietnamese government, should explore and utilize both traditional factors and contemporary factors flexibly and sufficiently (e.g. combined them together, or divide them separately, depending on the situations in different schooling periods) when designing the private tutoring policies for the education system of the country.

12.4. Benefits of the Study

12.4.1. Benefits for the Vietnamese government and governments in other nations

Firstly, the Vietnamese government would benefit from the study by determining the demands and supplies of private tutoring from an investigation of the results of contemporary factors influencing parents' perceptions of private tutoring. Moreover, they would have more determinants to measure the social inequalities of private tutoring under parents' perspectives. They should also have more qualitative research data from the study to monitor and predict the trends on the future of private tutoring in Vietnam (Bray & Lykins 2012). Additionally, the governments in other nations may consider this research as a reference of private tutoring in the Asia-Pacific region when monitoring private tutoring from the parental perspective.

12.4.2. Benefits for school and university communities

Secondly, both school and university communities would benefit from the study. School communities could monitor parents' satisfaction with their children's academic achievements through private tutoring to enable reform of the academic assessments in the mainstream school system. Likewise, university communities might change their higher education curricula to correspond with parents' satisfaction with their children's academic achievements through private tutoring as well as parents' expectations of their children's studies in the higher education environment (Bray & Lykins 2012).

12.4.3. Benefits for families

Thirdly, families would also benefit from the study. Parents must have a strong trust that their private tutoring enrolment options for their children are appropriate, as demonstrated by their children's academic achievements. Moreover, the relationships between parents and children within families should be strengthened and tightened, forming win-win family relationships: Parents are responsible for investing their income in private tutoring, whilst acquiring the knowledge is the responsibility of their children. When children are happy to receive their high academic results due to their private tutoring undertaken, parents are also satisfied with their investments in private tutoring for their children (Bray et al. 2016).

12.5. The unique contributions to knowledge

As claimed by Phillips and Pugh (2015), the original contribution(s) to knowledge of a Doctoral candidate should be new, such as new approaches or new knowledge introduced into the current research literature. Therefore, some original contribution(s) to knowledge in this thesis are below:

12.5.1. Elaborating and extending the existing theoretical frameworks of the private tutoring topic

First, the candidate elaborated and extended the existing theoretical frameworks of the research topic. He elaborated four existing important theories of education which involve private tutoring in a conceptual model, consisting of: Fielden and LaRocque's theory of government regulations in private education (Fielden & LaRocque 2008, pp. 4 & 5); Bray et al.'s theory of private tutoring fees model (Bray et al. 2016, p. 297); Moust's theory of tutor performance model (Schmidt &

Moust 1995, adapted by Cater & Yam 2013, p. 60); and Cameron's theory of the household registration system for education (Cameron 2012, p. 12). The elaboration encouraged the writer to extend these theories in the case study of Vietnam (Phillips & Pugh 2015).

12.5.2. Re-interpreting some existing private tutoring theories in a different context

Second, the researcher re-interpreted some existing theories in a different context: He reinterpreted all four existing important private tutoring theories above in the Vietnamese context by investigating the six contemporary factors which had been withdrawn from these theories. In addition, the research contributed to theoretical knowledge of recent private tutoring literature by exploring the contemporary factors that influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring in the case study of Vietnam (Phillips & Pugh 2015).

12.5.3. Providing a new interpretation of knowledge contribution by using existing and known private tutoring literature

Third, the author provided a new interpretation of knowledge contribution by using existing and known literature: He initially reviewed four traditional factoring categories which had already broadly affected parents' perceptions of private tutoring. He then introduced six current contemporary factors that have also influenced their perceptions of private tutoring deeply. Interestingly, these six contemporary factors had previously been drawn from the four traditional factoring categories (Phillips & Pugh 2015).

12.5.4. Repeating the private tutoring research topic in another context

Fourth, the writer repeated the research topic in another context: Although he repeated the same private tutoring case study research topic, this repetition was applied for the case study in Vietnam (Phillips & Pugh 2015).

12.5.5. Investigating the private tutoring research topic from a different stakeholder's perspective

Finally, the candidate investigated the research topic from a different stakeholder's perspective: the broad private tutoring research topic had been considered from the Vietnamese parents' perspective (Phillips & Pugh 2015).

12.6. Limitations

Although the researcher had tried to investigate the possible contemporary factors that influence parental perceptions of private tutoring, some following limitations could still have been occurred. These should be not only the subjective from the researcher, but also the subjective from the participants as follows:

12.6.1. Omission of researching tutors as not being teachers in the mainstream schooling

Undeniably, most of participants only mentioned tutors as public school teachers when providing responses in brainstorming sessions, focus group discussions and in-depth individual interviews. The reason might be because in the viewpoints of most of respondents, only regular school teachers who were teaching their children in mainstream schools could be able to play the role as competent and important tutors in their own private tutoring classes. Therefore, some participants might omit referring to other types of tutors who may be university students, university lecturers, retired teachers, or teachers who were teaching in other schools than regular schools of their children, etc in the research.

12.6.2. Omission of researching private tutoring centres outside the mainstream schooling

Similarly, most of informants only referred to private tutoring centres inside the mainstream schooling system (e.g. private tutoring classes of current regular teachers; private tutoring centres owned by regular schools, etc). As a result, some parents may omit examining private tutoring centres outside the mainstream schooling such as private foreign language tutoring centres, private information technology training centres, etc of the Vietnamese private education companies.

12.6.3. Omission of researching foreign owned private tutoring centres

Moreover, parents rarely specified private tutoring centres that have been owned and operated by foreign education investors in Vietnam. It could be because within the population samplings, there may be very few parents who decided to send their children to such foreign owned private tutoring centres. Consequently, the respondents might omit mentioning to these growing foreign owned private tutoring centres.

12.6.4. Omission of using quantitative research techniques in the thesis

As justified in the research methodology chapter, the candidate would like to undertake an exploratory research only in this thesis to explore complicated issues in private tutoring from parental perspectives. Hence, the researcher omitted applying quantitative research techniques to build hypotheses, select large amounts of population samples and use statistical techniques to test some possible factors which influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring, such as private tutoring fees and/or private tutoring locations, etc.

12.6.5. Omission of selecting parents of grade 1 to 12 students who did not enroll in any private tutoring classes

After selecting parents of grade 1 to 12 tutees in assigned urban and rural areas as research samples, the researcher collected various valuable ideas and opinions to help him answer the six research questions. However, the candidate unfortunately omitted to select parents of grade 1 to 12 students who did not enroll in any private tutoring classes in the same assigned urban and rural areas as samples for the research.

12.6.6. Omission of researching parental perceptions of private tutoring lessons and parental perceptions of preparatory courses separately and clearly

Bray and Kwo (2014) distinguished very separately and clearly that private tutoring markets should be divided into two main sections: Private tutoring lesson markets and preparatory course markets. One of the important differences here is private tutoring lessons are taught by tutors who are teachers in primary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools; whist tutors who teach preparatory courses are university and college professors and lecturers. Alternatively, parents of primary school students (Grade 1 to 5) and lower-secondary school students (Grade 5 to 9) usually concentrate on their perceptions of private tutoring lessons, while parents of upper-secondary school students (Grade 10 to 12) often focus on preparatory courses. In fact, it was nearly impossible to distinguish separately and clearly the parental perceptions of private tutoring lessons and parental perceptions of preparatory courses in the thesis. Consequently, the candidate admitted that the research of parental perceptions of private tutoring lessons and parental perceptions of preparatory courses separately and clearly were omitted.

12.7. Further Research

12.7.1. More research on tutors who are not mainstream schooling teachers of children should be conducted

Practically, other types of tutors who are not mainstream schooling teachers of children such as university students, university lecturers, retired teachers, or teachers in other schools still provide private tutoring services in the Vietnamese education market. These components of tutoring supplies might have significant effects on the tutoring demands of households, the pricing strategies of tutoring services, the parental decisions on their children's private tutoring enrolments, etc. Hence, more research of tutors who are not mainstream schooling teachers of children should be conducted to justify the roles and effects of these types of tutors in the Vietnamese private tutoring market.

12.7.2. More research on private tutoring centres outside the mainstream schooling should be undertaken

There have been various private tutoring centres outside the mainstream schooling in Vietnam so far. These private educational centres do not necessarily belong to state-owned educational institutions. In fact, many of these are owned by private investors like educators, academics, and other stakeholders. Alternatively, these small educational businesses are operated and managed by shareholders under the *Enterprise Law 2020* of Vietnam (Vietnam Business Law, 2020). Thus, more research of private tutoring centres outside the mainstream schooling should be undertaken to clarify economic factors of these small educational businesses.

12.7.3. More research on foreign owned private tutoring centres should be considered

At present, the development of registered foreign owned private tutoring centres in Vietnam has been emerging, initially in urban cities. This phenomenon confirms that foreign investors have paid attention to the Vietnamese education system, relied on the *Investment Law 2014* of Vietnam (Vietnam Business Law, 2020). Therefore, more research of registered foreign owned private tutoring centres should be considered to determine important issues such as how registered foreign owned private tutoring centres operate in the Vietnamese business environment; how they can compete with domestic private tutoring centres, etc.

12.7.4. More quantitative research on parental perceptions of private tutoring should be needed

Although there has been a significant number of quantitative research on private tutoring worldwide, the quantitative research on private tutoring under parental perspective in Vietnam has been still little. Meanwhile, parents are one of the main stakeholders in the private tutoring phenomenon who are responsible to pay private tutoring fees under economic perspective. Consequently, more quantitative research in parental perceptions of private tutoring should be conducted to investigate multi-faceted relationships between millions of Vietnamese parents and the existence of private tutoring in Vietnam.

12.7.5. More research on parents of grade 1 to 12 students who did not enroll in any private tutoring classes should be performed

Indeed, in his initial research, the candidate only concentrated on parents of grade 1 to 12 tutees and parents of grade 1 to 12 non-tutees were overlooked. Hence, more research on parents of grade 1 to 12 students who did not enroll in any private tutoring classes should be performed. The researcher confessed that if he had been able to select parents of grade 1 to 12 students who did not enroll in any private tutoring classes in the same assigned urban and rural areas as research samples, he would have collected other exciting and interesting data from such parents to do the compare and contrast analysis with parents of grade 1 to 12 tutees for answering each of six research questions more efficiently and effectively.

12.7.6. More research on parental perceptions of private tutoring lessons and parental perceptions of preparatory courses should be implemented separately and clearly

As pointed out in section 12.6.6, the candidate suggests that more research of parental perceptions of private tutoring lessons and parental perceptions of preparatory courses should be implemented separately and clearly. This separation help stakeholders understand deeply and distinguish clearly the main differences between: the roles of private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses; the roles of tutors for private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses; the teaching methods of tutors for private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses; the learning strategies of students for private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses, etc.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. List of Publications

Lai, S-L, Pham, H-H, Nguyen, H-KT, Nguyen, T-C & Le, A-V 2019, 'Toward Sustainable Overseas Mobility of Vietnamese Students: Understanding Determinants of Attitudinal and Behavioral Loyalty in Students of Higher Education', *Sustainability,* vol. 11, no. 383, pp. 1-17. doi:https://doi.org/10.3390/su11020383

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Appendix 2. Administrative Map of Socialist Republic of Vietnam

BẢN ĐỒ HÀNH CHÍNH NƯỚC CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

TỈ LỆ SCALE 1 : 9 000 000

(Source: Ministry of Resources and Environment – Department of Survey, Mapping and Geographic Information of Vietnam 2020, *Administrative Map of Socialist Republic of Vietnam*, viewed 9 August 2020, <https://www.bandovn.vn/vi/page/mau-ban-do-hanh-chinh-nuoc-cong-hoa-xa-hoi-chu-nghia-viet-nam-181?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>)
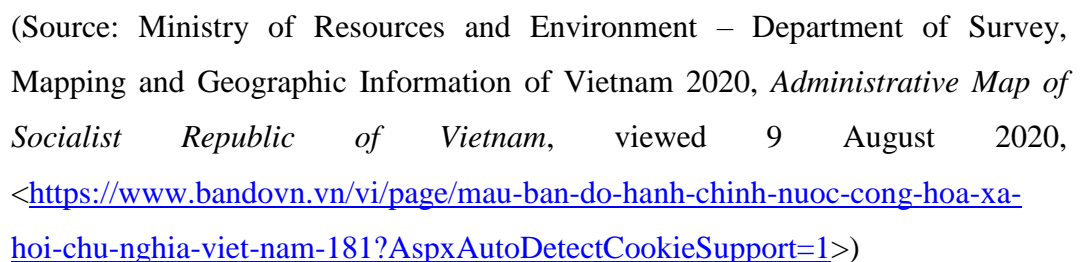
Appendix 3: Overview of the Vietnamese Education system

According to the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam (2020), the largest estimated student enrolment number of the Vietnamese education system in the school year 2019–2020 was 17,055,000 in the general education sector (in which the primary education was 8,760,000; the lower-secondary education was 5,650,000 and the upper-secondary education was 2,645,000). Meanwhile, the pre-primary education was 5,352,600 students, consisting of the nursery education (787,600 students) and kindergarten education (4,565,000 students); and the full time higher education sector was only 1,518,986 student enrolments. Hence, Tran and Pasquier-Doumer (2019) confirmed that the private tutoring services in Vietnam have been increasing mainly in these three educational levels: primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary.

The education system in Vietnam is described as follows:

- **Pre-primary education**

Public kindergartens usually admit children ranging from 18 months to 5 years of age. Sometimes, four- or five-year-old children are taught the alphabet and basic arithmetic. This level of education is not compulsory and tends to be popular in major cities such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Hai Phong, Can Tho and Vung Tau.

(Source: Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam 2020)

- **Primary education**

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

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

Phase 1 includes Grades 1, 2 and 3 with 8 subjects: Vietnamese Language, Mathematics, Morality, Nature and Society, Arts, Physical Education, and (since 2020) Experience Activities and Foreign Language.

Phase 2 includes Grades 4 and 5 with 11 subjects: Vietnamese Language, Mathematics, Morality, Science, History, Geography, Basic Techniques, Music, Arts, Physical Education and (since 2023) Experience Activities and Foreign Language.

(Source: Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam 2020)

- **Lower-secondary education**

Lower-secondary school or Junior high school includes sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth grade. Until its abolition in 2006, students had to pass the Intermediate Graduation Examination (IGE) presented by the local Department of Education and Training to graduate. The IGE comprises Math, Literature, and Foreign Language tests. This educational level is homogeneous throughout most of the country, except in very remote provinces, which expect to popularize and standardize middle education within the next few years. Intermediate education is not compulsory in Vietnam.

The Lower Secondary Education's weekly schedule includes the following subjects and activities: Vietnamese Language, Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, History, Geography, Civics, Foreign Language (most often English or French), Physical Education, Technology, Art, Music, Optional Subjects, Class Activities and School Activities, Vocational-oriented activities (3 periods per month in Grade 8 or in some cases, the summer between 7th and 8th Grade) and Extra-curricular activities (4 periods per month in all grades). In the end of year 8, student will participate in secondary vocational exam to earn extra-mark for the 10th grade examination.

The Technology subject aims to show the link between theory and practice. It includes three parts: home economics (in Grade 6), agriculture-forestry and aquaculture (in Grade 7), Industry (in Grade 8) and optional modules (in Grade 9).

(Source: Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam 2020)

- **Upper-secondary school education**

Lower secondary school education consists of grades six to nine, while high school or upper-secondary school education consists of grades ten to twelve. The IGE is a prerequisite entrance examination for high schooling. The IGE score determines the schools at which students are able to enroll. The higher the score, the more prestigious the school.

Middle and secondary curriculum

All subjects are compulsory for students.

Literature: mostly Vietnamese literature, occasionally combined with foreign literature including Chinese, French, American and Russian

Mathematics

Years 6: two separate subjects – Arithmetic and Geometry

Years 7–9: two separate subjects – Algebra and Geometry

Year 10: two separate subjects – Algebra and Geometry

Year 11: two separate subjects – Algebra and Calculus, and Geometry

Year 12: two separate subjects – Calculus, and Geometry

Natural Science (Year 6–9, from 2021)

Physics (from year 10 onwards since 2024)

Chemistry (from year 8 onwards until 2023; year 10 onwards starting 2024)

Biology (from year 10 onwards since 2024)

History and Geography (Year 6–9, from 2021)

History (from year 10 onwards starting 2024)

Geography (from year 10 onwards starting 2024)

Civics: generally consists of economics, philosophy (Marxism-Leninism), politics, jurisprudence and ethics

Foreign language: English is the predominant foreign language; French, Mandarin, Russian, Japanese, German and Korean are taught at some specialized schools

Technology (Vocational Training): consists of Agriculture/Horticulture, Mechanics, Electronics, Design, etc.

Informatics: recently introduced, yet to be implemented in poorer regions. Students study basic programming in languages such as Pascal, C/C++ and Python (from 2020)

Physical Education (P.E)

National Defense and Security Training (since year 10)

Music and Arts (until the first half of year 9 until 2022, when Music and Arts will be introduced from year 10 onwards)

Advanced classes consists of either:

Natural sciences: Students follow an advanced curriculum (and different textbooks) in mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology

Social sciences: Students follow an advanced curriculum (and different textbooks) in literature, history, geography and foreign language

At the start of secondary school, students can enroll in Specialist Classes if they pass the class entrance exam, which usually consists of a Mathematics exam, a

Literature exam, an English exam and an exam of the subject that the student wants to specialize in. The specialised subject can be any of the subjects listed above, except Technology, Physical Education, Civics and Music/Arts. Students enrolled in these programs have a heavier workload than regular secondary school students. The workload varies from school to school, but grade 11 students are generally expected to study grade 12 courses concurrently. Other courses include university-level courses. Some schools go as far as requiring their students to finish secondary school by the end of grade 10.

Only prestigious schools offer these classes, and they have yet to be standardized.

(Source: Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam 2020)

- **National High School Exam**

All high school students in Vietnam are required to take the National High School Exam, which is administered by the Ministry of Education and Training, at the end of grade 12 to get a diploma called the Graduation Diploma of General Upper Secondary Education. They still have to take the regular end-of-term examinations before taking the National High School Exam.

The Ministry of Education and Training announced that for the graduation examination of 2017, five papers would be included: Mathematics, Literature, Foreign language, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. Three papers are mandatory for all students: Mathematics, Literature, and Foreign language. Foreign language exam can be one of the following: English, French, German, Chinese, Japanese, Russian or Korean (since 2021). Apart from three mandatory papers, student must complete a fourth paper by choosing either natural sciences (a combination of Physics, Chemistry, and Biology) or Social Sciences (a combination of History, Geography, and Civic Education). In some cases, students can take both the Natural Sciences and Social Sciences and will choose the paper with the higher result to be evaluated.

(Source: Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam 2020)

Appendix 4. Administrative Map of Caobang (rural area in North Vietnam) *(in Vietnamese)*

(Source: *Administrative Map of Cao Bang*, viewed 1 October 2021, <1-ban-do-tinh-cao-bang.jpg (3203×2252) (bandovietnam.com.vn)>

Appendix 5. Administrative Map of Hanoi (urban area in North Vietnam) *(in Vietnamese)*

(Source: *Administrative Map of Hanoi*, viewed 1 October 2021, <ban-do-thanh-pho-ha-noi.png (3000×2996) (bandovietnam.com.vn)>

Appendix 6. Tourist Map of Quangbinh (rural area in Central Vietnam) *(in Vietnamese)*

(Source: *Tourist Map of Quangbinh*, viewed 1 October 2021, <ban-do-du-lich-quang-binh.jpg (2800×2200) (bandovietnam.com.vn)>

Appendix 7. Administrative Map of Danang (urban area in Central Vietnam) *(in Vietnamese)*

(Source: *Administrative Map of Danang*, viewed 1 October 2021, <1-ban-do-hanh-chinh-thanh-pho-da-nang.jpg (3198×2247) (bandovietnam.com.vn)>

Appendix 8. Administrative Map of Ho Chi Minh City (urban area in South Vietnam) *(in Vietnamese)*
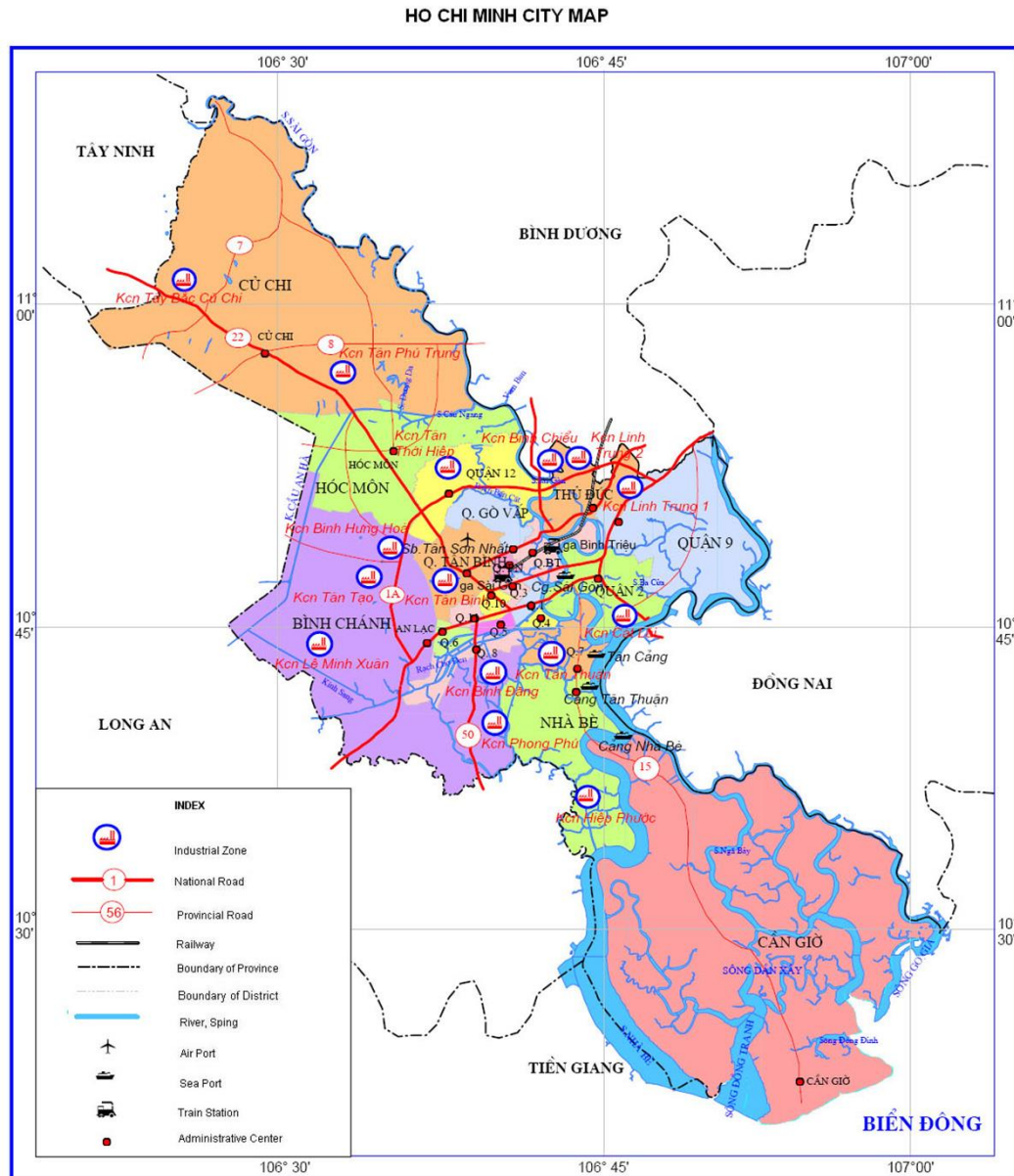
HO CHI MINH CITY MAP

(Source: *Administrative Map of Ho Chi Minh City*, viewed 1 October 2021, <Bản Đồ Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh (TPHCM) Mới Năm 2021 (bandovietnam.com.vn)>

Appendix 9. Administrative Map of Camau (rural area in South Vietnam) *(in Vietnamese)*

(Source: *Administrative Map of Camau*, viewed 1 October 2021, <1-ban-do-hanh-chinh-tinh-ca-mau.jpg (2250×3198) (bandovietnam.com.vn)>

Appendix 10. Structured Interview Questions for Descriptive Statistics of Fundamental Characteristics of Participants

I. The social background of parents

1. What is your gender?

□ Male   □ Female

2. What is your family status?

□ Married parent   □ Single parent   □ Widower

3. What is your age?

□ 18 - 29 years old   □ 30 - 39 years old   □ 40 – 49 years old

□ 50 – 59 years old   □ 60 years old +

4. What is your highest education level?

□ Primary school   □ Lower-secondary school   □ Upper-secondary school

□ Vocational college   □ University bachelor   □ University masters

□ University PhD

5. What is your occupation?

□ Unemployed   □ Farmer   □ Fisher   □ Private staff

□ Public officer   □ Teacher   □ Sales person

□ Technical expert □ Manufacturing labour   □ Other

6. What is the number of your children enrolled in private tutoring?

□ One child   □ Two children   □ More than two children:___

II. The economic background of parents

7. What is the monthly income of your families (VND)?

□ Less than 10,000,000   □ 10,000,000-15,000,000

□ 15,000,001-20,000,000   □ 20,000,001-25,000,000

□ 25,000,001-30,000,000   □ More than 30,000,000

8. What is your monthly payment for your child/children's private tutoring (VND)?

□ Less than 1,000,000   □ 1,000,000-2,000,000

□ 2,000,001-3,000,000   □ 3,000,001-4,000,000

□ 4,000,001-5,000,000   □ More than 5,000,000

III. The private tutoring attendance background of their child/children

9. What is/are the type(s) of your child/children's regular school(s)?

□ Regular public school   □ Regular private school

10. What is/are the type(s) of your child/children's tutor(s)?

□ The same teacher from the same regular public school

□ A different teacher from the same regular public school

□ A different teacher from the different regular public school

□ The same teacher from the same regular private school

□ A different teacher from the same regular private school

□ A different teacher from the different regular private school

□ A professional tutor (retired professor, lecturer or teacher; university student) of professional tutoring companies

□ Foreign tutor in Vietnam

11. What is/are the mode(s) of your child/children's tutoring enrolment(s)?

□ Face-to-face   □ Online

12. What is/are your child/children's number(s) of tutoring attendance hours weekly?

□ Less than 5 hours   □ 5 to less than 10 hours   □ 10 to less than 15 hours

□ 15 to 20 hours   □ More than 20 hours

13. What is/are the type(s) of your child/children's tutoring attendance?

□ Individual (one-to-one)   □ Small group (2 to 5 students)

□ Large group (6 to 12 students)   □ Class style (13 or more students)

14. What is/are your child/children's tutoring subject enrolment(s)?

□ Mathematics   □ Vietnamese   □ English   □ Physics

□ Chemistry   □ Biology   □ Geography □ History

□ Drawing   □ Music

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Appendix 11. Proposed Initial Overview Brainstorming Session, Focus Group Discussion and In-Depth Individual Interview Questions

Part 1. Brainstorming Sessions

What do you think about factors that influence your perceptions of private tutoring?

Part 2. Focus Group Discussions

1. How do you feel about the government's regulations on private tutoring?
2. How do you feel about your children's private tutoring fees?
3. How do you feel about your children's private tutoring knowledge?
4. How do you feel about your children's private tutoring locations?
5. How do you feel about the knowledge delivery of your children's tutors?
6. How do you feel about your children's knowledge acquisition?

Part 3. In-Depth Individual Interviews

7. What do you think about the government's regulations on private tutoring?
8. What do you think about your children's private tutoring fees?
9. What do you think about your children's private tutoring knowledge?
10. What do you think about your children's private tutoring locations?
11. What do you think about the knowledge delivery of your children's tutors?
12. What do you think about your children's knowledge acquisition?

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Appendix 12. Proposed Non-Leading Brainstorming Session, Focus Group Discussion and In-Depth Individual Interview Questions

Part 1. Brainstorming Sessions

What do you think about factors that influence your perceptions of private tutoring?

a. What make you think that the Government should involve in private tutoring? In your viewpoints, how the Government might involve in private tutoring?

b. When the private tutoring providers charge you private tutoring fees of your children, what do you think about the amounts and the prices of fees? What make you think about them?

c. What do you think about private tutoring knowledge for your children? What make you think about that?

d. What do you think about similarities and differences of private tutoring locations in urban areas and rural areas? What make you think about them?

e. What do you think about tutors' knowledge deliveries for your children? What make you think about that?

f. What do you think about your children' knowledge acquisitions? What make you think about that?

Part 2. Focus Group Discussions

1. How do you feel about the government's regulations on private tutoring?

a. How do you feel about the issue of the government should discourage and prohibit private tutoring?

b. How do you feel about the issue of the government should recognise and regulate private tutoring?

2. How do you feel about your children's private tutoring fees?

a. When the private tutoring providers charge you private tutoring fees of your children, how do you feel about the amounts of fees?

b. How do you feel about the prices of fees?

3. How do you feel about your children's private tutoring knowledge?

a. How do you feel when private tutoring helps your children to revise their knowledge?

b. How do you feel when private tutoring helps your children to advance their knowledge?

4. How do you feel about your children's private tutoring locations?

a. How do you feel when your children attend their private tutoring classes in urban areas?

b. How do you feel when your children attend their private tutoring classes in rural areas?

5. How do you feel about the knowledge deliveries of your children's tutors?

a. How do you feel when tutors create a non-threatening knowledge delivery environment for your children?

b. How do you feel when tutors deliver easily understandable tutoring lessons to your children?

c. How do you feel when tutors encourage your children to ask tutoring lesson questions?

d. How do you feel when tutors provide your children comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback?

6. How do you feel about your children's knowledge acquisitions?

a. How do you feel when your children acquire tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment?

b. How do you feel when your children acquire tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably?

c. How do you feel when your children increase subject matter explorations when acquiring tutoring knowledge?

d. How do you feel when your children receive deeper learning opportunities when acquiring tutoring knowledge?

Part 3. In-Depth Individual Interviews

7. What do you think about the government's regulations on private tutoring?

a. What do you think about the issue of the government should discourage and prohibit private tutoring?

b. What do you think about the issue of the government should recognise and regulate private tutoring?

8. What do you think about your children's private tutoring fees?

a. When the private tutoring providers charge you private tutoring fees of your children, what do you think about the amounts of fees?

b. What do you think about the prices of fees?

9. What do you think about your children's private tutoring knowledge?

a. What do you think when private tutoring helps your children to revise their knowledge?

b. What do you think when private tutoring helps your children to maintain their knowledge?

c. What do you think when private tutoring helps your children to advance their knowledge?

10. What do you think about your children's private tutoring locations?

a. What do you think when your children attend their private tutoring classes in urban areas?

b. What do you think when your children attend their private tutoring classes in rural areas?

11. What do you think about the knowledge deliveries of your children's tutors?

a. What do you think when tutors create a non-threatening knowledge delivery environment for your children?

b. What do you think when tutors deliver easily understandable tutoring lessons to your children?

c. What do you think when tutors encourage your children to ask tutoring lesson questions?

d. What do you think when tutors provide your children comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback?

12. What do you think about your children's knowledge acquisitions?

a. What do you think when your children acquire tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment?

b. What do you think when your children acquire tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably?

c. What do you think when your children increase subject matter explorations when acquiring tutoring knowledge?

d. What do you think when your children receive deeper learning opportunities when acquiring tutoring knowledge?

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Appendix 13. Proposed Non-Leading Brainstorming, Focus Group and In-Depth Individual Interview Questions (in Vietnamese language version)

BẢNG CÂU HỎI KHÔNG ĐỊNH HƯỚNG ĐƯỢC ĐỀ XUẤT

PHẦN I: GỢI Ý

Anh/chị nghĩ gì về những yếu tố ảnh hưởng đến nhận thức của anh/chị về vấn đề học thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Điều gì khiến anh/chị nghĩ rằng Chính phủ có thể liên quan đến vấn đề học thêm? Theo quan điểm của anh/chị thì Chính phủ có thể liên quan đến vấn đề học thêm như thế nào?

b. Khi các nhà cung cấp dịch vụ học thêm thu phí học thêm của con cái anh/chị từ anh/chị, anh/chị nghĩ gì về số tiền phí học thêm và mức giá cả của phí học thêm? Điều gì khiến anh/chị nghĩ như vậy?

c. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về kiến thức học thêm đối với con cái của anh/chị? Điều gì khiến anh/chị nghĩ như vậy?

d. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về sự giống nhau và khác nhau ở những địa điểm học thêm ở khu vực thành thị và nông thôn? Điều gì khiến anh/chị nghĩ như vậy?

e. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về sự truyền đạt kiến thức của thầy/cô dạy thêm đối với con cái của anh/chị? Điều gì khiến anh/chị nghĩ như vậy?

f. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về sự tiếp thu kiến thức của con cái của anh/chị? Điều gì khiến anh/chị nghĩ như vậy?

PHẦN II: THẢO LUẬN THEO NHÓM TẬP TRUNG

1. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về các quy định của Chính phủ về vấn đề học thêm?

a. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về việc Chính phủ không khuyến khích và ngăn cấm vấn đề học thêm?

b. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về việc Chính phủ thừa nhận và đặt ra quy định về vấn đề học thêm?

2. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về học phí học thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Khi các nhà cung cấp dịch vụ dạy thêm thu tiền học phí của con cái của anh/chị từ anh/chị, anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về số lượng tiền học phí học thêm này?

b. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về mức giá cả của học phí học thêm này?

3. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về kiến thức trong việc học thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi việc học thêm giúp con cái của anh/chị củng cố lại kiến thức?

b. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi việc học thêm giúp con cái của anh/chị duy trì được kiến thức?

c. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi việc học thêm giúp con cái của anh/chị nâng cao thêm kiến thức?

4. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về địa điểm học thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi con cái của anh/chị tham dự các lớp học thêm của chúng ở khu vực thành thị?

b. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi con cái của anh/chị tham dự các lớp học thêm của chúng ở khu vực nông thôn?

5. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về sự truyền đạt kiến thức của các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm tạo ra một môi trường truyền đạt kiến thức không mang tính dọa nạt cho con cái của anh/chị?

b. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm truyền đạt những bài học thêm rất dễ hiểu cho con cái của anh/chị?

c. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm khích lệ con cái của anh/chị hỏi nhiều câu hỏi về các bài học thêm?

d. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm cung cấp cho con cái của anh/chị những lời hồi đáp về các bài học thêm rất tỉ mỉ?

6. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào về sự tiếp thu kiến thức của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi con cái của anh/chị tiếp thu kiến thức học thêm trong môi trường không chính thức và luôn được hỗ trợ?

b. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi con cái của anh/chị tiếp thu kiến thức học thêm một cách dễ dàng và thoải mái?

c. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi con cái của anh/chị gia tăng những sự khám phá về các vấn đề trong môn học khi tiếp thu kiến thức học thêm?

d. Anh/chị cảm thấy như thế nào khi con cái của anh/chị nhận được nhiều cơ hội học tập chuyên sâu hơn khi tiếp thu kiến thức học thêm?

PHẦN III: PHỎNG VẤN CHUYÊN SÂU VỚI CÁ NHÂN

7. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về các quy định của Chính phủ về vấn đề học thêm?

a. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về việc Chính phủ không khuyến khích và ngăn cấm vấn đề học thêm?

b. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về việc Chính phủ thừa nhận và đặt ra quy định về vấn đề học thêm?

8. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về học phí học thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Khi các nhà cung cấp dịch vụ dạy thêm thu tiền học phí của con cái của anh/chị từ anh/chị, anh/chị nghĩ gì về số lượng tiền học phí học thêm này?

b. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về mức giá cả của học phí học thêm này?

9. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về kiến thức trong việc học thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi việc học thêm giúp con cái của anh/chị củng cố lại kiến thức?

b. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi việc học thêm giúp con cái của anh/chị duy trì được kiến thức?

c. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi việc học thêm giúp con cái của anh/chị nâng cao thêm kiến thức?

10. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về địa điểm học thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi con cái của anh/chị tham dự các lớp học thêm của chúng ở khu vực thành thị?

b. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi con cái của anh/chị tham dự các lớp học thêm của chúng ở khu vực nông thôn?

11. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về sự truyền đạt kiến thức của các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm tạo ra một môi trường truyền đạt kiến thức không mang tính dọa nạt cho con cái của anh/chị?

b. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm truyền đạt những bài học thêm rất dễ hiểu cho con cái của anh/chị?

c. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm khích lệ con cái của anh/chị hỏi nhiều câu hỏi về các bài học thêm?

d. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi các thầy cô giáo dạy thêm cung cấp cho con cái của anh/chị những lời hồi đáp về các bài học thêm rất tỉ mỉ?

12. Anh/chị nghĩ gì về sự tiếp thu kiến thức của con cái của anh/chị?

a. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi con cái của anh/chị tiếp thu kiến thức học thêm trong môi trường không chính thức và luôn được hỗ trợ?

b. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi con cái của anh/chị tiếp thu kiến thức học thêm một cách dễ dàng và thoải mái?

c. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi con cái của anh/chị gia tăng những sự khám phá về các vấn đề trong môn học khi tiếp thu kiến thức học thêm?

d. Anh/chị nghĩ gì khi con cái của anh/chị nhận được nhiều cơ hội học tập chuyên sâu hơn khi tiếp thu kiến thức học thêm?

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Appendix 14. Research Questions versus Brainstorming, Focus Group Discussion and In-depth Individual Interview Questions

Research Questions	Brainstorming, Focus Group Discussions and In-depth Individual Interview Questions
RQ1. How do the government's regulations on private tutoring influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Part 1. Brainstorming* What make you think that the Government may involve in private tutoring? In your viewpoints, how the Government might involve in private tutoring? *Part 2. Focus Group Discussions* How do you feel about the government's regulations on private tutoring? a. How do you feel about the issue of the government should discourage and prohibit private tutoring? b. How do you feel about the issue of the government should recognise and regulate private tutoring? *Part 3. In-Depth Individual Interviews* What do you think about the government's regulations on private tutoring? a. What do you think about the issue of the government should discourage and prohibit private tutoring? b. What do you think about the issue of the government should recognise and regulate private tutoring?
RQ2. How do private tutoring fees influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Part 1. Brainstorming* When the private tutoring providers charge you private tutoring fees of your children, what do you think about the amounts and the prices of fees? What make you think about them? *Part 2. Focus Group Discussions* How do you feel about your children's private tutoring fees? a. When the private tutoring providers charge you private tutoring fees of your children, how do you feel about the amounts of fees? b. How do you feel about the prices of fees?

	Part 3. In-Depth Individual Interviews What do you think about your children's private tutoring fees? a. When the private tutoring providers charge you private tutoring fees of your children, what do you think about the amounts of fees? b. What do you think about the prices of fees?
RQ3. How does private tutoring knowledge influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Part 1. Brainstorming* What do you think about private tutoring knowledge for your children? What make you think about that? *Part 2. Focus Group Discussions* How do you feel about your children's private tutoring knowledge? a. How do you feel when private tutoring helps your children to revise their knowledge? b. How do you feel when private tutoring helps your children to maintain their knowledge? c. How do you feel when private tutoring helps your children to advance their knowledge? *Part 3. In-Depth Individual Interviews* What do you think about your children's private tutoring knowledge? a. What do you think when private tutoring helps your children to revise their knowledge? b. What do you think when private tutoring helps your children to maintain their knowledge? c. What do you think when private tutoring helps your children to advance their knowledge?
RQ4. How do private tutoring locations influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Part 1. Brainstorming* What do you think about similarities and differences of private tutoring locations in urban areas and rural areas? What make you think about them? *Part 2. Focus Group Discussions* How do you feel about your children's private tutoring

	locations?
	a. How do you feel when your children attend their private tutoring classes in urban areas?
	b. How do you feel when your children attend their private tutoring classes in rural areas?
	Part 3. In-Depth Individual Interviews
	What do you think about your children's private tutoring locations?
	a. What do you think when your children attend their private tutoring classes in urban areas?
	b. What do you think when your children attend their private tutoring classes in rural areas?
RQ5. How do tutors' knowledge deliveries influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	*Part 1. Brainstorming*
	What do you think about tutors' knowledge delivery for your children? What make you think about that?
	Part 2. Focus Group Discussions
	How do you feel about the knowledge delivery of your children's tutors?
	a. How do you feel when tutors create a non-threatening knowledge delivery environment for your children?
	b. How do you feel when tutors deliver easily understandable tutoring lessons to your children?
	c. How do you feel when tutors encourage your children to ask tutoring lesson questions?
	d. How do you feel when tutors provide your children comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback?
	Part 3. In-Depth Individual Interviews
	What do you think about the knowledge delivery of your children's tutors?
	a. What do you think when tutors create a non-threatening knowledge delivery environment for your children?
	b. What do you think when tutors deliver easily understandable tutoring lessons to your children?
	c. What do you think when tutors encourage your children to

	ask tutoring lesson questions?
	d. What do you think when tutors provide your children comprehensive tutoring lesson feedback?
RQ6. How do students' knowledge acquisitions influence parents' perceptions of private tutoring?	***Part 1. Brainstorming***
	What do you think about your children' knowledge acquisition? What make you think about that?
	Part 2. Focus Group Discussions
	How do you feel about your children's knowledge acquisition?
	a. How do you feel when your children acquire tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment?
	b. How do you feel when your children acquire tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably?
	c. How do you feel when your children increase subject matter explorations when acquiring tutoring knowledge?
	d. How do you feel when your children receive deeper learning opportunities when acquiring tutoring knowledge?
	Part 3. In-Depth Individual Interviews
	What do you think about your children's knowledge acquisition?
	a. What do you think when your children acquire tutoring knowledge in the informal and supportive environment?
	b. What do you think when your children acquire tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably?
	c. What do you think when your children increase subject matter explorations when acquiring tutoring knowledge?
	d. What do you think when your children receive deeper learning opportunities when acquiring tutoring knowledge?

(Source: Created originally by the researcher)

Appendix 15. Useful data of parental perceptions of private tutoring for future research

Brainstorming Sessions

The parents' reasons for the regulations of the government on private tutoring

<u>*** Reasons for teachers**</u>

(i) Fears of teachers' threats for their children for private tutoring enrolments

In a lesson in my son's regular school, the teacher wrote some lesson contents on the blackboard and explained them at the same time. After finishing her explanations, she cleared the blackboard very quickly without asking that if any students had not yet finished taking notes them into their notebooks. My son told me that the students who are currently studying with this teacher in her own private tutoring class (including him) had nothing to be worried about, as they had studied such lesson contents and copied them down already. But other students who did not study in her private tutoring class had felt worried very much about that.

(A parent of a 7th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

The mathematics teacher in my daughter's mainstream class always required his students to do math test papers with the test questions which were very similar, even the same contents with the lesson contents in his private tutoring (Laugh). Haha, you know, my daughter attended that math private tutoring class, so she understood and knew how to answer these questions. Of course, she got 10 marks for that test. She was very happy and revealed with her close classmates that the math test content was very similar to the lesson contents in the math teacher's private tutoring class. Some of her classmates did not enroll in this teacher's private tutoring class, so they asked her for borrowing her private tutoring math notebook, and they made some copies as the reference documents for their next tests and exams. Bad luck for them, because the math teacher detected that they studied these private tutoring lessons from the copies of the borrowed notebook of my daughter. He then met my daughter in person and warned her very strictly: "Your parents paid the tutoring fee for you to attend my math class, so don't waste your parents' money. It is your own private tutoring notebook, so don't share this with your classmates. Don't try to be a female hero. Try to study hard with your own private tutoring notebook." The math teacher also warned the whole regular math class: "Don't try to take advantages in study by borrowing

your classmates' math notebooks. I can suddenly change the test questions at any time to test your real knowledge acquisition ability." My daughter then told me that both her and her classmates were dismayed about these threats of the math teacher. She explained to me that she simply wanted to help her friends to understand the lesson contents more clearly…

(A parent of a 11th grade student in Hanoi)

Some mainstream teachers in my son's classes discriminated between the students who attended and who did not attend their private tutoring classes delicately. They revealed specific lesson questions with solutions for students who attended their private tutoring classes. In the regular school time, the teacher asked the lesson questions orally in the class. The students who had already known the answers because of conducting private tutoring classes with their teacher quickly handed up as a signal to express that they can answer these questions. Such students also quickly received their teacher's permissions to answer the questions. These students then were granted good marks due to answering the questions correctly and quickly.

(A parent of a 4th grade student in Danang)

Teachers in our village aren't daring to threaten their students to force them to enroll in their private tutoring classes because they are local residents as well. If they do that, they will receive the criticism strictly from the villagers and their says and reputations then also will be nothing into the villagers' eyes.

(A parent of a 9th grade student in Quangbinh)

(ii) Teachers wish to gain additional incomes from undertaking private tutoring classes

Teaching is just a profession for living. Their (teachers') salaries are not enough for living, so they have to struggle to find the way to earn more money. When they earn enough money to cover for their life and their families, they also want to be rich. That's it.

(A parent of a 6th grade student in Hanoi)

I had heard that a mother of a young female teacher gave a principal of a lower-secondary school in Dak Lak province three hundred million Vietnamese Dongs as a bribery to help her daughter get a tenure teaching position in this school. This teacher's family may think that it was an investment for their daughter. She

might struggle to earn more income by opening her private tutoring classes for her students in the future.

(A parent of a 5th grade student in Camau)

Many teachers are very rich, but their ambitions of making money in private tutoring have not changed. Their greed makes us look them down. Dangerously, it affects our children's psychological issues seriously.

(A parent of a 3rd grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

(iii) Teachers wish to raise their professional achievements from their students' learning performances

In the meeting of parents and teachers, my son's physics teacher complained to me about his shortage of study concentration in class and, definitely, his slow knowledge acquisition in physics. The teacher said that she was very worried about the problem of poor academic performances of my son and some other students might affect her professional achievements incredibly. She then directly suggested me: "Your son's physics learning performance is too slow. Please send him to a physics tutoring class. You can enroll him in my tutoring class or another physics teacher's tutoring class, it's up to you. But please send him to a physics tutoring class as soon as possible, because his loss of physics knowledge in previous classes needs to be revised." I sympathized with her, because I know that too many bad students in her class will affect her professional achievements. Of course, I don't want my son to be a bad student. That's the reason why I agreed to send my son to her physics tutoring class.

(A parent of a 10th grade student in Hanoi)

(iv) Teachers wish to raise their professional reputations from their private tutoring classes

My daughter told me that when she studied chemistry subject in class, the teacher taught them the same knowledge that had been already printed fully in the textbooks. However, when she attended his chemistry tutoring class, the teacher made his students excited by introduced the new knowledge and new methods to do practical exercises. My daughter and her classmates then told their friends to enroll in his chemistry tutoring class to acquire such new knowledge and techniques to solve subject problems.

(A parent of a 8th grade student in Danang)

* Reasons for parents themselves

(v) Desires for their children's academic achievements regardless of their children's study ability

If you have a child, you will understand that education is the best way for him or her to promote his or her future for the whole life. People always want their children to be officers rather than workers in the future, right??? So it is nothing wrong when we strongly hope that our children should receive high academic achievements. We will strive to help them to reach their academic goals at any price!!! As I have told you before, we have already sent our children to the private tutoring classes.

(A parent of a 1st grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

(vi) Brags of their children's study ability

My son is very good at mathematics and he studies very hard, because he has my intelligent genes. I am a bank officer, so I have very good mathematical and computing skills to do my works in the bank (Laugh). Many neighbours and colleagues of mine trust that my son will pass the entrance exam assessments to enter high reputation universities. I have required my son to apply for Banking Academy, Academy of Finance, Foreign Trade University or National Economic University after he graduates the upper-secondary school and passes his graduation exams. These choices are good for him. I will pay more money for him to maintain his enrolments in current private tutoring classes.

(A parent of a 12th grade student in Hanoi)

(vii) The crowd's psychological effect in their children's study

My daughter told me that her friend's English teacher has just opened an English tutoring class at home. This female teacher graduated from the English faculty of Ho Chi Minh City National University in Saigon and had 8.0 IELTS certificate. My daughter also told me that many of her classmates and friends had enrolled in her English tutoring class, because all of them want to have good English skills to find the future good jobs with foreign companies in Saigon. I can't speak English, but I don't want my daughter can't speak English like me. So I encouraged her to ask that English teacher for enrolling in her tutoring class.

(A parent of a 10th grade student in Camau)

(viii) Lack of appropriate education levels for tutoring their children

You know, we are minority ethnic people in the mountain area. When we were young, we had to work hard and didn't have ability to study at university level.

Because of no knowledge, our lives are not good regardless of how work hard we do. We deeply understood that and we didn't want the same hardships happen to our children, so we encouraged them to study hard. But we didn't have enough knowledge to tutor them when they asked me difficult questions in their lessons. So the best way is sending them to the private tutoring classes of their teachers.

(A parent of a 4th grade student in Caobang)

(ix) Lack of time for tutoring their children

I have got a lot of fishing works every day, so I don't have any time to pay attention to my son's study. I don't want to pay for his private tutoring. But I must send him to his teacher's tutoring class for his study and, importantly, for his safety. If I let my son to take care by himself, he will not concentrate on his study and go out to play with his friends in this village. They might go to play internet games. Dangerously, they may go to the beach for swim without the adult watch.

(A parent of a 5th grade student in Quangbinh)

* Reasons for their children

(x) Their children's self-study ability in regular schools is limited

I'm very worried about my son's knowledge acquisitions in Vietnamese language subject. He also made mistakes in dictations and grammars, although he speaks Vietnamese very fluently. I'm afraid that even if he graduates the university level, he still will not be able to write a report in Vietnamese accurately and coherently. So I've hired a Vietnamese literature teacher to tutor him.

(A parent of a 8th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

(xi) Their children have spent most of time on private tutoring and had no time for physical and recreational activities

In weekdays, my daughter usually has to get up at 5 am to brush teeth, wash face and have breakfast, then leave home at 6.15 am and come to the teacher's house to attend a private tutoring class at 7 am. She finishes this private tutoring class at 9 am and comes back home at 9.30 am to do her homework for the subjects at the regular school in the afternoon and has lunch. At 12.30 pm she comes to her regular school and studies there until 5 pm. She leaves the school and continues to take another private tutoring class at another teacher's house from 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm. After returning home at 8.00 pm, she has a bath and then has dinner quickly and continues to study at 10.30 pm or 11 pm. Even at the weekends, she has to take one private tutoring session from 9 am to 11 am and another private

tutoring session from 3 pm to 5 pm in both Saturdays and Sundays. She also has to spend the rest of time in the weekends for her self-study. It's so awful! She doesn't have any time to play badminton or practise dance.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 7th grade student in Danang)</div>

(xii) **Their children have more study pressures after undertaking private tutoring classes**

You know, some months ago, a 10th grade male student was dead by jumping from the roof of the 4th floor building of Nguyen Khuyen upper-secondary school in Ho Chi Minh City. He left a letter to confess that he wished to suicide because he must suffer extremely heavy study pressures in private tutoring programs and expected outstanding level grades from this private school and his family, although he had been considered as a very good student before. He felt very depressed and he decided to suicide to run away from his mental crisis. This terrible school event shocked our parents and other students for a long time.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 10th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)</div>

(xiii) Limitation and losses of their children's self-creative ability

My son told me that in the Vietnamese literature tutoring class, the teacher usually read the essay samples very clearly. The students quickly copied such essay samples down into their notebooks. Then they tried to learn all these essay samples by heart. They were very confident on the test or exam dates in the regular school, because they just simply wrote all the knowledge that they had memorized into the answer sheets. But my son laughed loudly and explained to me that when the teacher returned the test papers to the students, many test papers with high grades were very similar in contents. Some test papers even were exactly the same contents in many sentences, commas and full stops.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 5th grade student in Hanoi)</div>

(xiv) Limitation and losses of their children's self-study ability

When coming back home from private tutoring courses, my daughter rarely opened her tutoring notebooks to review the lessons that her had already studied. I reminded her: Why don't you open your tutoring notebooks and review them? If you don't do that, you will forget your acquired knowledge quickly.' Surprisingly, my daughter grinned: 'No worries, Daddy. I will recall the tutoring knowledge and keep doing tutoring exercises in the next tutoring sessions. I need to come

and see my tutors and tutees to have a motivation to do all these works. At home I feel no motivation to study.'

<div align="right">(A parent of a 9th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)</div>

(xv) Possibility of traffic accidents for their children when travelling in streets to private tutoring

Children are usually excited when travelling in streets by bicycles, electric bikes or motorbikes for private tutoring, so they might pay less attention to other vehicles and traffic lights in streets. They particularly like to gather in groups of four or five people who live near each other before going to private tutoring classes together. When children travel in groups and spread their travelling in lines, they often cheer and shout together loudly and usually hinder other vehicles in the same way or in the opposite way on the road. Thus, traffic accidents easily occur when a child is hit by a car or a motorbike and this fall from his or her bike may make the falls of other children from their bikes in front of many vehicles.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 10th grade student in Hanoi)</div>

(xvi) Possibility of lies to going to private tutoring from their children for doing uncontrolled or even illegal activities

Some of children are very tricky. So please don't believe them easily. If you are a parent and your child tell you that he or she must go for private tutoring today, you should ask him or her very clearly about what subject he or she studies today; who teach that subject; how long the tutoring class occur, etc. You know, if your child want to play and doesn't want to come to the private tutoring class on that day, he or she will easily tell a lie to you to go to an online game outlet, or dangerously, even use some addictive substances like smoking shashi or blowing addictive balloons together.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 11th grade student in Hanoi)</div>

* Reasons for the government

(xvii) The overloading of curriculum contents of the Ministry of Education and Training

My son has to study in both the morning and the afternoon of weekdays. When coming back home, he has to review the previous lessons, do homework and preview the next lessons in the textbooks. He studies like a robot. However, he always worries that he hasn't understood some difficult and complicated knowledge, especially knowledge in mathematics and Vietnamese language. Thus,

I have to enroll him in private tutoring classes of mathematics and Vietnamese language in his teachers' houses at the weekends to help him overcome his study burdens.

<div align="center">(A parent of a 1th grade student in Danang)</div>

My son is also required to study a lot of knowledge in mathematics, Vietnamese language and English in the government school. His mathematics notebook is full of numbers, calculations, circles, squares, triangulars and rectangles, while his Vietnamese language contains full of letters, words and phrases. Surprisingly, he told me that when he and his classmates haven't finished studying the Vietnamese alphabetical table, the teacher required all students start studying English vocabularies. My son said that he couldn't write the word 'apple' because he hadn't been taught letter 'p' before. Regardless of that, he was required to study some new English words each day.

<div align="center">(A parent of a 1th grade student in Caobang)</div>

(xviii) The examination pressures from the Ministry of Education and Training for their children

We parents understand clearly that the expectations of our children should be achieve high grades in tests and exams are burdening our children. But you know, schools in Vietnam now look like the battlefields, and students looks like soldiers to compete to each other, especially at the last grade of each education level. Hence, our poor children have to incur very high pressures in tests and exams. As a result, we try to help them by encourage them to enroll in private tutoring services.

<div align="center">(A parent of a 9th grade student in Danang)</div>

(xix) The theoretical focused contents of curriculum in the mainstream education system

We parents heard that secondary and upper-secondary students in official schools in some urban areas and in many rural areas have to study theoretical issues only without doing practical experiments in some important subjects such as Physics and Chemistry. Students told us that it is because regular schools are lack of funds to cover the practical experiment and experimental tool maintenance expenses. As a result, many Physics and Chemistry teachers in mainstream schools only deliver theoretical knowledge and ignore doing practical experiments for their students.

In my viewpoint, the national curriculum contents should focus more on soft skill subjects like exercise lessons, swim lessons, ethical lessons, handicraft lessons, drawing lessons and music lessons to help students start developing their physical and mental health at all the education levels. However, for example, the current primary level curriculum contents only concentrate on Mathematics and Vietnamese language.

(A parent of a 1st grade student in Camau)

(xx) The rankings of graduation qualifications from the Ministry of Education and Training

As you know, the rankings of graduation qualifications in our nation are very important. In our generation, students with low graduation rankings in their qualifications like 'Pass' or 'Credit' would be less appreciated than students with high graduation rankings in their qualifications like 'Distinction' and 'High Distinction'. No one can deny that 'Pass' or 'Credit' level university qualification holders will be more difficult to get a job than 'Distinction' and 'High Distinction' level university qualification holders. I'm sure that in our children's generation, everything will be the same.

(A parent of a 10th grade student in Quangbinh)

(xxi) The regulation enforcement in private tutoring issued by the government does not work well

In my son's regular primary school, some primary teachers still organize their own private tutoring classes for their students at their own houses. Parents have to take their children to the teachers' houses to attend private tutoring classes there. I'm sure that these primary teachers understand clearly that they are not allowed to organize their own private tutoring classes for primary students. But they still ignored that and maintain their own private tutoring classes at home because of collecting tuition fees from us.

(A parent of a 2rd grade student in Camau)

(xxii) The existence of specialized schools and gifted classes in the mainstream education system

My son has to take three 2 hour private tutoring classes in mathematics each week, although he studies mathematics every day in his math specialized class in Le Hong Phong specialized upper-secondary school. He said that at this private

tutoring class, he can review previous studied knowledge and exchange new studied knowledge with other high and outstanding level students. I told him I totally agreed with that.

(A parent of a 10th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

The parents' proposed solutions for the government's regulations on private tutoring

* Solutions for the government

(i) The Ministry of Education and Training, on the behalf of the Vietnamese government, should ban private tutoring nationwide

Private tutoring set a financial burden on our families' income. It makes a lot of parents worry about affording to pay tuition fees for their children. Like me, I have to pay 1,500,000 Vietnamese Dongs for my son to attend private tutoring classes in mathematics, physics and chemistry a month. My family has to manage and work hard to pay these fees for him. So in my opinion, the government should prohibit private tutoring in all education levels.

(A parent of a 7th grade student in Hanoi)

(ii) The Ministry of Education and Training should decrease the loading of national curriculum contents

Many of us agreed that private tutoring phenomenon is not really come from teachers, parents or students. It really comes from the philosophical knowledge background with more theoretical issues and less practical skills. So in my viewpoint, the Ministry of Education and Training should reduce the loading of current knowledge. The too sophisticated knowledge only makes heavy pressures for both students and teachers. Such knowledge does not help children in their future because it does not apply for their real lives. So if the Ministry of Education and Training can do this well, private tutoring will be disappeared.

(A parent of a 12th grade student in Hanoi)

(iii) The State Budget, on the behalf of the Vietnamese government, should increase teachers' salaries

I support the decision of increasing salaries for teachers from the government, because this benefit will affect not only teachers, but also many stakeholders positively. For teachers, if they receive sufficient salaries to cover enough their families' living expenses, they will wholeheartedly concentrate on their

professional teaching occupations and less pay attention to undertake private tutoring classes.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 10th grade student in Caobang)</div>

(iv) The Ministry of Education and Training should issue only one national testing and exam system for evaluating students' knowledge acquisition in the nationwide schooling system

I think the Ministry of Education and Training should apply only one national testing and exam system for all the fundamental education levels in all sixty-three cities and provinces in our country. That will save a lot of money for the State Budget. That's also fair enough for every teacher, student and parent (laugh loudly).

<div align="right">(A parent of a 4th grade student in Hanoi)</div>

* Solutions for parents themselves under the recommendations of the government

(v) The Ministry of Education and Training should encourage parents to tutor their children themselves

I think many parents in nationwide could tutor their children themselves, especially for children in primary and lower-secondary school levels. If they can do these well, they will not only provide their children all the knowledge they harvested in their childhood many years ago, but also master the knowledge acquisition and study progress of their children. Importantly, they can prove to their children that private tutoring is not something really scary. Parents can do as the same things as teachers and tutors can do in private tutoring classes to help their children overcome academic difficulties in their regular schools. So the local authorities should call out parents to tutor their children themselves.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 2nd grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)</div>

(vi) The Ministry of Education and Training should recommend parents to treat private tutoring as optional services

Private tutoring should be treated like optional beauty services. I only choose the necessary ones and pay for the affordable ones for my children. If my children are really bad in mathematics, I will send them to private tutoring because I know that they really need them. I don't want to imitate other neighbors by just sending their children to private tutoring while not being sure about their study abilities. So the Ministry of Education and Training should recommend parents only

enrolling their children in private tutoring classes if children really need them, not because of the imitations among parents.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 5th grade student in Danang)</div>

(vii) The Ministry of Education and Training should receive the parents' complains regarding of private tutoring

I suggest that the Ministry of Education and Training and Department of Education and Training in all sixty-three cities and provinces of Vietnam should open and maintain the telephone hot line or the enquiry email box on their websites to gather our complaints and recommendations about private tutoring. Unfortunately, as I know, so far there are only some local authorities like Danang and Ho Chi Minh City to do that.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 6th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)</div>

* Solutions for teachers under the regulations of the government

(viii) The Ministry of Education and Training should require teachers to fill and sign in the 'No Teaching Private Tutoring Class Commitment' sheets

We urgently proposed that the Ministry of Education and Training should require teachers to fill and sign in the 'No Teaching Private Tutoring Class Commitment' sheets. This legislative document will help teachers tighten their professional teaching attitudes and styles in public schools.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 6th grade student in Hanoi)</div>

(ix) The Ministry of Education and Training should dismiss any teacher who has intentionally organized his/her own private tutoring classes to teach his/her own students in the regular schools

The government should dismiss any teacher who has intentionally organized his/her own private tutoring classes to teach his/her own students in the regular schools. In my opinion, it's true, but it's really, really hard. But they have to try their best to regulate the private tutoring phenomenon in our nation.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 8th grade student in Caobang)</div>

(x) Teachers should be allowed to organize private tutoring classes for revising knowledge for low level students and advancing knowledge for high level students only

It is excellent if teachers can revise knowledge for low level students and advance knowledge for high level students. Both students and parents are happy with these. Low level students will be confident for their improved academic

achievements, and high level students will be confident to compete with other outstanding level students in nationally and internationally to pick up gold, silver or bronze medals in examinations.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 8th grade student in Hanoi)</div>

*(xi) **The Ministry of Education and Training should manage the teaching quality of teachers in regular schools strictly***

The Ministry of Education and Training should manage the teaching quality of teachers in regular schools strictly. Teachers don't have time to develop their professional and teaching skills in public schools because they've spent most of their time on private tutoring. That's the truth!

<div align="right">(A parent of a 9th grade student in Camau)</div>

*(xii) **The Ministry of Education and Training should inspect teachers' knowledge delivery in mainstream schools frequently to ensure that teachers deliver 100% national curriculum contents to students as planned.***

We know that many teachers are really competent, and they really love their teaching works. However, who can guarantee that all the teachers deliver 100% lesson contents in their regular schools? Who can guarantee that all the teachers will not divide the lesson contents into two halves: A haft in regular schools and a half in private tutoring classes? So the Ministry of Education and Training should inspect those carefully.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 9th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)</div>

Focus Group Discussions for how the government's regulations on private tutoring have influenced parents' perceptions of private tutoring

Should the government discourage and prohibit private tutoring?

The parents who agreed that the government should discourage and prohibit private tutoring showed some following reasons under the Vietnamese context:

*(i) **Related local authorities could be hardly able to control the quality of both teachers/tutors and private tutoring classrooms effectively***

Like in Ho Chi Minh City, the local authorities of some districts didn't know that some teachers organized private tutoring classes in their homes. And of course, they also didn't know the quality of both teachers/tutors and private tutoring classrooms. They just came and inspected some of private tutoring classes in teachers' houses after receiving the reports from the local residents.

<div align="right">(A parent of a 4th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)</div>

(ii) Private tutoring might cause significant losses of individual income tax due to the tax evasions of some teachers/tutors

My son told me that his teacher usually reminded her tutees orally that the deadline of fee payments for her private tutoring classes was the first 10 days of the month and in cash without any given invoices. Hence, I always keep in mind that I have to pay her the private tutoring fees of my son at the beginning of the month and in cash. When I paid her the fees at her home, she just received it, wrote my son's full name and the amount of money that I had paid into her notebook and said 'Thank you' without giving me any receipts. Thus, I wonder that how she can pay her individual income tax for the General Taxation Department without any payment evidence?

(A parent of a 6th grade student in Hanoi)

(iii) Private tutoring may cause some briberies from parents and corruptions to teachers/tutors

My daughter told me a story about one of her classmates in the formal school. That girl was an average level student in mathematics. The math teacher advised her to enroll in his math private tutoring class to improve her study performance. However, unlike most of her classmates were currently attending the private tutoring class of the math teacher, initially she did not do that because her family was poor and couldn't afford the fee. As a result, the math teacher always checked her math homework notebook and strictly complained about her mistakes. Additionally, she was appointed to stand up and required to answer difficult math questions orally. She received some bad marks because she could not answer questions correctly. At the end of the semester, she was ranked as a bad math student. Hence, in the next semester, her family managed to send her to the math teacher's private tutoring class. Consequently, the math teacher asked her easier questions and gave her better marks. Her math study performance was improved significantly.

(A parent of a 8th grade student in Danang)

My friend told me that private tutoring is a very appropriate reason to create the good relationship between we parents and official teachers. Both we parents and teachers know clearly that the purpose of this relationship is to improve the children's learning performances, expressing in the grades of students in test and final exams. He revealed that if a parent send his/her child to the mainstream

teacher's private tutoring classes, as well as give the teacher some valuable presents in some celebrations such as the Teacher's Day, the New Year's Day, the Teacher's Birthday, blah blah…, the teacher will easily consider the child's test and exam results less strictly. Some teachers even should be able to interfere the subject marks to produce good results which satisfy both parents and their children.

(A parent of a 10th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

(iv) Private tutoring could cause the decrease in ethical issues of teachers/tutors in regular schools

Many teachers I know are very materialistic. They charged we parents high private tuition fees for tutoring our children. Some of them have felt proudly because they can earn more incomes easily, and they enjoy their lives by purchasing luxurious things like expensive cars, motorbikes, and houses. They have considered knowledge as purely a service product and sell it to their own students. They do not really think of the future of their students. They just want to think of opportunities to earn money from their students and parents.

(A parent of a 11th grade student in Hanoi)

However, some parents, although discouraging private tutoring, strongly argued that the government should not prohibit private tutoring due to some following facts:

(i) Private tutoring is an educational profession like other occupations under the Labour Law

I think private tutoring works should be considered equally as other professions. Teachers have to work hard with their professional techniques in private tutoring: They have to prepare and update their professional private tutoring content curriculums, deliver knowledge and conduct assessments for their students. If this is a profession legally, why the government has to prohibit private tutoring and prohibit teachers to do their professional practice in private tutoring?

(A parent of a 1st grade student in Caobang)

(ii) Teachers/tutors need to earn incomes from private tutoring to cover the living expenses for them and their families like other citizens

In practice, medical doctors in public hospitals are allowed to open their own medical and health check offices to deliver private medical and health check services and collect service fees; lawyers in public legal departments are allowed

to open their own legal consulting and certified document offices to deliver private legal services and collect service fees. So, why teachers are not allowed to open and joint their own private tutoring centres to deliver private tutoring services and collect service fees?

(A parent of a 6th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

(iii) The demand for private tutoring of students and parents is real and hardly changed

We parents agreed that the demand for private tutoring of students and parents is real and hardly changed. When this demand appears at any time, the supply of private tutoring from teachers and tutors will automatically appear as well to meet the private tutoring demand. We parents, students and teachers, tutors are all happy in the private tutoring market. So, why has the government tried to prohibit it?

(A parent of a 7th grade student in Danang)

(iv) Students really love the teaching methods in private tutoring of teachers/tutors

Our kids told us that there have been some competent and highly reputation teachers and tutors who are ready to deliver private tutoring knowledge to students with their interesting and professional teaching methods. Thanks to these competent teachers and tutors, our kids acquire private tutoring knowledge easily and comfortably. If private tutoring is an opportunity for competent teachers and tutors express their professional practice for their students, why has the government tried to prohibit their educational service?

(A parent of a 10th grade student in Hanoi)

Should the government recognise and regulate private tutoring?

Unsurprisingly, no respondents answered *No* to the question, because they believed they had no reasons to say that. Consequently, the answer *Yes* of informants has been specified clearly in the following reasons:

(i) Strengthening the law enforcements of related local authorities on private tutoring

We parents strongly believed that if the Ministry of Education and Training could recognize and regulate private tutoring more appropriately, the law enforcements of related local authorities would be strengthened significantly. For examples, the local People's Committees in both urban and rural areas would have to consider

the applications of private tutoring service provisions of private tutoring centres and individual tutors more carefully to issues the work permits for the centres and tutors that satisfy all the requirements of private tutoring profession only; the inspectors of the local Department of Education and Training should have to check the work permits of such private tutoring centres and individual tutors more frequently and detect the breaches in private tutoring activities quickly.

(A parent of a 12th grade student in Hanoi)

(ii) Preventing teachers/tutors from evading individual income taxes

If the Ministry of Education and Training could recognize and regulate private tutoring more appropriately, we parents partly believed that the individual income tax evasions of teachers and tutors would be prevented. For example, if all teachers and tutors are required to receive private tutoring fees through their bank accounts instead of cash, the local Departments of Taxation could co-operate with their opened account banks to check their bank account balances and determine their taxable incomes as well as tax payable amounts correctly.

(A parent of a 4th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

(iii) Reducing briberies from parents and corruptions of teachers/tutors

We parents also partly believed that briberies from parents and corruptions of teachers/tutors might be reduced if the law enforcements of related local authorities in private tutoring could be strengthened, although it may be still very difficult. For example, if the inspectors of local Department of Education and Training usually inspect private tutoring activities of teachers/tutors frequently and fairly as well as issue the appropriate penalties to teachers and tutors who breached private tutoring regulations correctly, the intentions of corruptions of teachers and tutors would be definitely prevented. If teachers and tutors do not intend to corrupt in their private tutoring activities, there will be no reasons for we parents think about briberies for teachers and tutors in returns of our children's studies. Therefore, only if the law enforcements of related local authorities in private tutoring could be strengthened more appropriately and applied correctly and fairly, we strongly hope that such briberies from some of us as well as corruptions of teachers/tutors in private tutoring might be reduced respectively.

(A parent of a 6th grade student in Danang)

(iv) Minimizing the decrease of ethical issues of teachers/tutors in regular schools

We parents also partly believed that if the law enforcements of related local authorities in private tutoring could be strengthened more appropriately and applied correctly and fairly as mentioned above, the decrease of ethical issues of teachers/tutors in regular schools may be reduced. For example, if teachers/tutors in regular schools perceived that all their private tutoring activities are monitored frequently and inspected strictly by the related local authorities as well as any of their breaches of regulations in private tutoring activities would be punished strictly, they would have to think about their careers in the future and consider their ethical issues in private tutoring carefully.

(A parent of a 9th grade student in Quangbinh)

In-Depth Individual Interviews for how the government's regulations on private tutoring have influenced parents' perceptions of private tutoring

Why informants partly believed that teachers and tutors would be prevented from evading individual income taxes

Many parents, like me, still have the habit to make daily payments in cash. Thus, teachers/tutors are also happy to receive cash from we parents as private tutoring fee payments for our kids. They will be then smart enough to hide cash income evidences when they are required to declare their incomes to the local authorities for taxation purposes.

(A parent of a 6th grade student in Camau)

Why respondents partly believed that briberies from parents and corruptions to teachers/tutors might be reduced

Many parents may come to the teachers' houses who are currently teaching their children in both mainstream schools and private tutoring classes on the celebration days such as the Teacher's Day, the New Year's Day, the Teacher's Birthday, blah blah and give them thankful gifts with the nice words: 'Thank you very much indeed for helping my child to improve his/her study' or some says thankfully like that. In the past, the traditional thankful gifts could be bunches of flowers, some delicious foods, tea pot and cups sets, beautiful hats, nice suits for male teachers or nice dresses for female teachers, blah blah. However, today many parents prepare envelopes with the full names of them and their kids. They put an amount of cash on such named envelopes and give them to each of their

kids' teachers when visiting each of their private houses. The amount of money might be varied, usually from some hundred thousand to some million Vietnamese Dongs, depending on the importance of the subjects that the teachers are currently teaching their children in both regular schools and private tutoring classes. Parents explained that they give teachers money as thankful gifts because of the convenience: Teachers can use the money to buy something they like, and they will definitely feel comfortable with this convenience. Of course, the local authorities may know about these thankful gifts very clearly. But, how they can prove that these are briberies instead of thankful gifts? It's nearly impossible to do that.

(A parent of a 2nd grade student in Danang)

Traditionally, we parents usually passionate with our kids' studies, because we clearly understand that education will bring more career opportunities and brighter futures for them. Hence, we are always interested in our kids' teachers, regardless in regular schools or in private tutoring classes. We express the interest in teachers by giving them thankful gifts, because it is the hundreds of year cultural customs. Therefore, the government's regulations on private tutoring should not be able to interfere such cultural customs.

(A parent of a 3rd grade student in Caobang)

I know that when starting a teaching career, many teachers might still have got the aspiration of delivering good and updated knowledge for students. However, these teachers also know clearly that they provide students private tutoring services for fees. Therefore, they also consider the thankful gifts from parents as normal as additional incentives for them. Moreover, teachers could use their power as academic staff in the mainstream schools to require parents to send the kids to their private tutoring classes. It is impossible for the local authorities to find evidences from them.

(A parent of a 12th grade student in Hanoi)

Why narrators partly believed that the decrease of ethical issues of teachers/tutors in regular schools may be minimized

We parents also feel that it is difficult to determine the limitation of ethical issues in private tutoring of teachers/tutors in regular schools. Teachers/tutors may demonstrate bad study results of their students as undeniable evidences to urge these students to enroll in their private tutoring classes for improve their study

performances. Parents might be dissatisfied with their children's study results and ask teachers/tutors for enrolling their children in private tutoring classes. Students with bad study results may realise that they need to do something to improve their study results, so they ask their teachers/tutors for enrolling them in private tutoring classes. In particular, it is impossible to say that teachers/tutors try to force students and parents to enroll in their private tutoring classes if they have the voluntary applications for private tutoring enrolments of students and parents on hand.

(A parent of a 12th grade student in Ho Chi Minh City)

(Source: Originally collected, transcribed and translated into English by the researcher)