

DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL GROUP LEADERS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NGHE AN PROVINCE USING A COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH

Nguyen Ngoc Hien¹, Phung Quang Duong^{2*}, Bui Van Hung³

^{1,2,3} Vinh University, 182, Le Duan Street, Vinh City, Nghe An Province, Viet Nam

*Corresponding Author Email: duongpq@vinhuni.edu.vn

Abstract: Management staff is the force that determines the education quality of schools. Developing management staff including professional group leaders in primary schools plays an important role in every education system. The study surveys the current situation of professional group leaders' capacity and developing professional group leaders at primary schools of 08 districts/towns/cities of Nghe An province with 1,533 participants who are leaders of the Department of Education and Training and primary schools; professional group leaders, and teachers. Based on theoretical research and a survey of the current situation, the article proposes 05 solutions to develop professional group leaders at primary schools according to the competency-based approach.

Keywords: Professional leaders, professional group leaders, competency-based approach, developing professional group leaders using the competency-based approach, primary schools.

Introduction

In high schools, the school leaders play a key role. They are the ones who plan the development strategy of high schools, bring change to the school in all aspects, have a great influence on school organization, culture, and teachers, and directly determine the education quality of the school. School leaders have the primary responsibility of directing, creating, and maintaining a positive, cooperating, and supporting school culture, improving the capacity of teaching staff; and promoting and sustaining success for schools and classrooms (Day et al., 2020). The education system can predict the future of a country. The team of teachers and school leaders can evaluate the education quality. There is a growing understanding of the importance of school leadership for the quality and development of schools, and it is recognized that school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning (Leithwood et al., 2020). Since then, training and fostering school leaders have been a priority in education policies around the world. Increased school autonomy and great focus on schooling and school results outcomes require reconsidering the role of school leaders. There must be a strategy for training and fostering school leaders (Pont et al., 2008). School leaders must understand how their professional learning relates to their leadership roles. They must be lifelong learners if they want to keep up with the demands of today's complex and ever-changing educational environment (Boren et al., 2017). Bush (2018) said that although leadership ability is considered the second most important factor affecting student outcomes, the preparation of school leaders' abilities has not received much attention in many countries. Therefore, according to the author, training and fostering school leaders is a process that must be conducted regularly and continuously. When studying the importance of

professional development for school leaders, Sahlin (2023) emphasized the need for school leaders to continuously learn and interact professionally with colleagues. Jensen et al. (2020) emphasized the significance of stakeholders for the development of school leader staff. Mulford et al. (2008) researched the must-have qualities and competencies of school leaders to build personality traits for school leaders, and train, and foster desired school leaders.

In primary schools, professional group leaders are "grassroots level" or "department level" ones (Phung, 2019). The professional group leader is the bridge between the principal and the teacher group; is the person who represents the principal to comprehensively manage a professional group. From 2020 - 2021, the 2018 general education program officially be implemented. The focus of this program is on the comprehensive development of learners' capacity and qualities, ensuring harmony between teaching knowledge and developing personality traits, and step-by-step vocational training. The 2018 general education program also confronts professional group leaders at primary school. These groups are required to innovate not only teaching methods and forms but also ways of organizing and paying attention to students' daily learning activities. In other words, the professional group leader must be a competent person to meet not only the professional and professional requirements but also the leadership and management requirements in their dual role (Nguyen, 2015). However, currently, primary school professional group leaders at primary schools have been doing management work emotionally, rigidly, based on their experience" (Nguyen, 2016). One of the reasons for the above limitation is that professional group leaders at primary schools lack the necessary capabilities, especially leadership and management capabilities. Therefore, proposing strategies to develop professional group leaders at primary schools to meet the requirements of education reform is currently an urgent issue that needs a satisfactory answer. In professional group leader development, there are many different approaches, in which the competency-based approach is a trend that has attracted attention in both theoretical and practical aspects (UNESCO, 2012). If following this approach, it will not only ensure that professional group leaders at primary schools meet the requirements of general education innovation but also create the potential for them to develop long-term and firmly. Meanwhile, there is a gap in research on developing professional group leaders at primary schools using the competency-based approach. Therefore, the article focuses on researching the development of professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province using the competency-based approach. These research results are a useful scientific basis to propose strategies to develop professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province and the whole country.

Survey Organization

Participants

The participants were leaders of the Department of Education and Training and primary schools, professional leaders and teachers of primary schools in 08 districts/towns/cities of Nghe An province including Vinh City, Thai Hoa town; Dien Chau district, Hung Nguyen district, Yen Thanh district, Do Luong district, Tan Ky district, Tuong Duong district. These are representative units for education in Nghe An province. The quantitative survey sample was 1,533 people, including 503 leaders of departments and primary schools (100%); 460 professional team leaders (100%), and 570 teachers (10%). The gender ratio was 78.7% for

women and 21.3% for men. Most participants have work experience of 5-10 years (33.7%) and more than 10 years (55.2%).

Survey content and instruments

The survey content includes the current situation of the capacity of professional group leaders and the development of professional group leaders at primary schools.

The survey instruments include 03 questionnaires (for managers, professional group leaders, and teachers). The quantitative survey questions were built based on the teacher's professional standards, functions, and tasks of professional group leaders at primary schools and the competency-based approach in developing a team of professional group leaders at primary school.

Interview forms for managers of the Department of Education and Training, primary schools, and professional group leaders include content related to the capacity of professional group leaders at primary schools and professional group leaders at primary schools.

Analysing survey results

Quantitative data were coded and processed using Excel and SPSS 21.0 software with descriptive statistical techniques. The scale includes 5 levels from 1 to 5. The standard deviation (SD) is $(5-1)/5 = 0.8$ (from 1-1.8: No competence/Very weak; From 1.81 -2.6: Poor competence/Weak; From 2.61-3.40: Average ability/Medium; From 3.41-4.2: Good competence/Good; From 4.21- 5: Very good competence/ Very good).

Interviews conducted with 03 department heads were coded from CBQLP1 to CBQLP3; 05 school managers were coded from CBQLT1 to CBQLT5; and 05 professional team leaders were coded from TTCM1 to TTCM5.

Survey Results

The current situation of the competence of professional group leaders at primary schools

The competence of professional group leaders at primary schools includes professional competency, professional skills, professional group management capacity.

The current situation of the competence of professional group leaders at primary schools

The professional competence and professional skills of the subject leader need to be evaluated based on the component competencies specified in the Teacher Professional Standards of the Ministry of Education and Training (2018). Competency for development of personal knowledge, development of the plans for teaching and education towards the development of qualities and capacity of students ability, use of methods of teaching and education towards the development of qualities and capacity of students, competence for testing and evaluation towards developing student qualities and abilities, counseling and support for students ability. These component competencies are evaluated on a 5-level scale (from the lowest level of No Competence to the highest level of Good Competence). Although the professional competence

and professional skills of a professional group leader are similar to that of a teacher, it has higher requirements for the professional group leaders. Therefore, it is necessary to find out the required level (or expected level) of professional competence and skills of the professional group leaders. On that basis, it is compared with the actual level to have an overview of the current situation of professional competence and skills of the professional group leaders in the survey areas.

Table 1: Level of assessment of professional competency and knowledge of professional group leaders at primary schools

Components of competency	Actuality		Expectation	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Competency for development of personal knowledge	3,75	0,72	4,86	0,31
Development of the plans for teaching and education towards the development of qualities and capacity of student abilities	3,56	0,73	4,86	0,31
Use of methods of teaching and education towards the development of qualities and capacity of students	3,45	0,78	4,79	0,42
Competence for testing and evaluation towards developing student qualities and abilities	3,24	0,82	4,79	0,42
Counseling and support for student abilities	3,14	0,87	4,66	0,45

The survey results show that there is a significant difference between the actual and expected professional competence and skills of the professional group leader at primary schools in Nghe An province. For example, in terms of competency for the development of personal knowledge (the highest rated competency), the actual score (M=3.75, SD=0.72) was lower than the expected score (M=4.86, SD=0.31) by 1.11. In terms of counseling and support for student abilities (the lowest rated capacity), the actual score (M = 3.14, SD = 0.87) was lower than the expected score (M = 4.66, SD =0.35) by 1.52. Thus, the requirement for professional competence and skills of the professional group leader at primary schools is higher than the actual professional competence and skills of the professional group leader at primary schools.

According to CBQLP1, the result objectively reflects the current situation of professional competence and knowledge of the professional group leader at primary schools. The implementation of the 2018 General Education Program, with the basic orientation of developing student qualities and abilities, has placed high requirements on the professional competence and skills of professional group leaders at primary schools. Not only do they have to change the way they build teaching and educational plans, use teaching and educational methods, and test, assess, consult, and support students but also guide teachers in the team to carry out these tasks.

Thus, compared to actual requirements, the professional competence and skills of the professional group leader at primary schools in Nghe An province are still limited and inadequate.

Current situations of professional team management capacity of the professional group leader at primary schools.

Based on the functions and tasks of the professional team as prescribed in the Primary School Charter (Ministry of Education and Training, 2020), the professional team management capacity of the professional group leader at primary schools includes organizing and developing plan competency for developing professional teams, capacity to manage teaching activities, capacity to manage student educational activities by grade level, teacher management capacity, education quality management capacity of professional teams, facility management capacity of the professional team. These component competencies are evaluated at the required level (or expected level) and the actual level.

Table 2: Level of assessment of the professional team management competency of the professional group leaders at primary schools.

Components of competency	Actuality		Expectation	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
The professional team management competency	3,60	0,70	4,88	0,30
Competency to manage teaching activities	3,54	0,73	4,88	0,30
Competence to manage student educational activities by grade level	3,34	0,76	4,84	0,34
Teacher management competency	3,21	0,83	4,84	0,34
Education quality management competency of professional groups	3,04	0,90	4,80	0,38
Facility management competence of the professional groups	3,10	0,90	4,80	0,38

Survey results show that in terms of the professional group management competency of the professional group leader at primary schools in Nghe An province, the highest-rated component is competency to organize and develop plans to develop professional teams (M= 3.60, SD= 0.70); followed by competency to manage teaching activities (M= 3.54, SD= 0.73) and competency to manage student educational activities by grade level (M= 3.34, SD= 0.76). The

reason these components are highly appreciated is because according to CBQLT1, these competencies are directly related to the management of professional groups that professional group leaders must conduct regularly and daily. Among the management competencies of the primary school's professional team leader, the lowest rated component is the competency to manage the quality of education of the professional team (M= 3.04, SD= 0.90). According to CBQLT2, managing the education quality in general, and managing the education quality for professional groups in particular, is both a new and difficult problem for many primary school professional leaders, meanwhile, they have not been qualified and fully prepared for this job.

Comparing the actual and expected scores, it can be seen that the actual scores are always lower than the expected scores in all components of competency. For example, in terms of professional team management, the difference between the actual score and the expected score is 1.28. In terms of education quality management competency of professional groups, the difference between the actual score and the expected score is 1.76. CBQLT3 indicated that the above results reflect the conflict between the high requirements and the limitation and inadequacy of professional team management competency of the professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province.

The current situation of developing professional team leaders in primary schools using the competency-based approach

Based on the Developing Human Resource model of L. Nadler (1979) and the competency-based curriculum of UNESCO (2012), the development of professional group leaders at primary schools includes creating the professional group leader development plan, selecting and using professional group leaders, training and fostering professional group leaders, evaluating professional group leaders, establishing a favorable environment for professional group leaders to promote their competencies.

The current situation of creating the professional group leader development plan

Creating the professional group leader development plan is evaluated based on the following criteria: the suitability for the primary education development scale of each locality, meeting the training and fostering needs of teachers and administrators, ensuring the characteristics of professional team leaders at primary schools in terms of quantity; ensuring the characteristics of professional group leaders at primary schools in terms of structure; ensuring the characteristics of professional group leaders at primary schools in terms of quality.

Table 3: Evaluation level of creating the professional group leader development plan

Criteria	Mean	SD
The suitability for the primary education development scale of each locality	3,60	0,74

Meeting the training and fostering needs of teachers and administrators	3,52	0,75
Ensuring the characteristics of professional team leaders at primary schools in terms of quantity	3,35	0,76
Ensuring the characteristics of professional group leaders at primary schools in terms of structure	3,29	0,79
ensuring the characteristics of professional group leaders at primary schools in terms of quality	3,07	0,88
Total	3,36	0,78

The results in Table 3 show that, among the criteria for creating the professional group leader development plan, the highest-rated criterion is the suitability for the primary education development scale of each locality ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.74$). The next one is meeting the training and fostering needs of teachers and administrators ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.75$) and ensuring the characteristics of professional team leaders at primary schools in terms of quantity ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.75$). According to CBQLT4, the reason these criteria are highly appreciated is that these are mandatory requirements that primary schools often have to do when building human resource development plans and group leader development plans. The lowest-rated criterion is ensuring the characteristics of professional team leaders at primary schools in terms of quality ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 0.88$). Explaining the results, CBQL4 assumed that the characteristics of professional team leaders at primary schools in terms of quality are mainly related to their professional group management competency. Meanwhile, the requirements for the competency are changing to meet the 2018 General Education Program. Based on the overall results ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.78$), creating the professional group leader development plan at primary schools in Nghe An province is at an average level.

The current situation of selecting and using professional team leaders at primary schools

Selecting and using primary school professional group leaders at primary schools is evaluated based on the following criteria: ensuring requirements for political qualities, ethics, and lifestyle, ensuring competency requirements, teachers' readiness to work as professional group leaders, selecting professional group leaders based on specific criteria, and creating conditions for professional group leaders to promote their qualities and competencies.

Table 4: Evaluation level of selecting and using professional group leaders at primary schools

Criteria	Mean	SD
----------	------	----

Ensuring requirements for political qualities, ethics, and lifestyle	3,62	0,73
Ensuring competency requirements	3,54	0,74
Teachers' readiness to work as professional group leaders	3,30	0,86
Selecting professional group leaders based on specific criteria	3,26	0,78
Creating conditions for professional group leaders to promote their qualities and competencies	3,17	0,92
Total	3,37	0,80

The results in Table 4 reveal that among the five criteria for selecting and using professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province, there are two criteria that are rated at a good level, which are ensuring the requirements of political qualities, ethics, lifestyle ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.73$) and ensuring competency requirements ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.74$). The remaining criteria are rated at the average level. The overall result ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.80$) of selecting and using professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province is at an average level. According to TTCM1, this result objectively reflects the current situation of selecting and using professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province. However, creating conditions for primary school professional group leaders to promote their qualities and competencies has not received enough attention from primary schools in the area.

The current situation of training and fostering professional group leaders

Training and fostering primary school professional group leaders are evaluated based on the following criteria: training the primary school professional group leader skills for pedagogical students, fostering political qualities, ethics, and lifestyle; fostering professional skills and competencies, and fostering professional group management competencies.

Table 5: Evaluation levels of training and fostering of professional group leaders at primary schools

Criteria	Mean	SD
Training the primary school professional group leader skills for pedagogical students	3,17	0,80
Fostering political qualities ethics, and lifestyle	3,58	0,73

Fostering professional skills and competencies	3,50	0,74
Fostering professional group management competencies	3,29	0,79
Total	3,38	0,76

The results in Table 5 show that training and fostering of professional group leaders at primary schools for pedagogical students is the lowest-rated criterion ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.80$) in training and fostering of professional group leaders at primary schools. According to TTCM2, in pedagogical schools, students have not been trained to work as professional group leaders, so when taking on this task, they often encounter difficulties, especially in the context of implementing the 2018 General Education Program. In fostering professional group leaders at primary schools, fostering political qualities, ethics, and lifestyle is rated highest ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.73$), followed by fostering professional skills and professional competencies ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.74$) and fostering professional group management competencies ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.79$). Based on the overall results ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.80$), training and fostering professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province is at an average level.

The current situation of evaluating professional group leaders

Evaluating professional group leaders based on the following criteria: identifying evaluation goals, selecting assessment content, developing evaluation standards/criteria, organizing evaluation using appropriate methods and forms, and using assessment results to serve the development of primary school professional team leaders.

Table 6: Evaluation levels of evaluating professional group leaders

Criteria	Mean	SD
Identifying evaluation goals	3,41	0,73
Selecting assessment content	3,37	0,76
Developing evaluation standards/ criteria	3,10	0,87
Organizing evaluation using appropriate methods and forms	3,31	0,86
Using assessment results to serve the development of primary school professional team leaders	3,00	0,88

Total	3,23	0,82
-------	------	------

The results of Table 6 show that among the criteria for evaluating professional group leaders, according to CBQLT5, the two most difficult criteria to implement are developing evaluation standards/ criteria and using assessment results to serve the development of primary school professional team leaders. Therefore, these two criteria are rated at the low level, respectively 3.10, SD= 0.87, and M= 3.00, SD= 0.88 which is completely reasonable. Therefore, when evaluating professional group leaders, specific and explicit evaluation standards/criteria must be developed. Moreover, use these evaluation results to serve the development of primary school professional group leaders in the next stages.

The current situation of establishing a favorable environment for professional group leaders at primary schools to promote their competencies

Establishing a favorable environment for professional group leaders at primary schools to promote their competencies is evaluated based on the following criteria: developing and promulgating policies for professional group leaders, establishing an innovative working environment for professional group leaders, honoring good professional group leaders, and creating promotion opportunities for professional group leaders.

Table 7: Evaluation levels of establishing a favorable environment for professional group leaders at primary schools to promote their competencies

Criteria	Mean	SD
Developing and promulgating policies for professional group leaders	3,29	0,80
Establishing an innovative working environment for professional group leaders	3,27	0,78
Honoring good professional group leaders	3.08	0,90
Creating promotion opportunities for professional group leaders.	3,15	0,90
Total	3,19	0,84

The results of Table 7 show that establishing a favorable environment for professional group leaders at primary schools to promote their competencies is the lowest rated content (based on the overall results: M=3, 19, SD= 0.84) compared to other ones in developing professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province. Discussing the results, CBQLP2

assumed that establishing a favorable environment for professional group leaders at primary schools to promote their competencies is a task that requires the participation of not only the school, but also of relevant parties (policies for professional group leaders, honoring professional group leaders, creating promotion opportunities for professional group leaders). Meanwhile, not all stakeholders are willing to participate and implement it actively. This was a weakness that needed to be overcome, CBQLP2 emphasized.

Solutions to develop professional group leaders in primary schools using the competency-based approach

Based on theoretical research and a survey of the current situation, the article proposes 05 solutions to develop professional group leaders at primary schools using the competency-based approach.

Planning for professional group leaders at primary schools based on the educational development needs of local primary schools and teachers' competencies

Planning for management staff in general, and professional group leaders at primary schools in particular, must first be based on the educational development needs of local primary schools. Expanding or narrowing the scale of education in the ward/commune or district has a direct impact on the number of schools/classes and consequently the number of professional group leaders. Besides, the requirement to improve the quality of management staff, including local professional group leaders, also affects the planning of professional group leaders. To plan professional group leaders at primary schools, the following measures need to be well implemented:

Establishing the basis for planning primary school professional group leaders

Building a plan for professional group leaders at primary schools needs to be based on the following basis: forecasting the development of primary education in the district, ward/commune, current situation of teachers in primary schools in the district, ward/commune; the number of classes/grades of primary schools in the district, ward/commune; requirements for building a safe, healthy, friendly educational environment and preventing school violence, directions of educational management levels for planning primary school professional group leaders.

Organizing and planning primary school professional group leaders according to a synchronized procedure

The process of building a plan for primary school professional group leaders at primary schools includes the following steps: surveying the current situation of professional group leaders at primary schools in the district, analyzing the current situation of professional group leaders at primary schools in the district, identifying issues that require special attention in developing professional group leaders at primary schools, planning professional group leaders at primary schools in each stage.

Building key professional group leaders at primary schools with pervasive influence and support colleagues in professional development

In primary schools, the professional group leader is a department-level manager. Therefore, when building key management staff, it is necessary to build key professional group leaders. Key professional group leaders are the leaders in innovating the work of the professional team, able to propose the measures, consult, and independently handle professional issues at the educational level. Building key professional group leaders means forming professional group leaders at primary schools who are capable of doing professional group leaders' work, able to provide professional training for other professional group leaders, willingness to take on professional group leaders' work in early or late grades/grades. To build key professional group leaders at primary schools, the following measures need to be well implemented:

Incorporating the policy of building key professional group leaders into the school development strategy and school year plan

In terms of strategies to develop teacher teams, administrators need strategies to build key professional group leaders. Besides, in terms of incorporating the policy of building key professional group leaders into the school's development strategies, it is necessary to consider building key professional group leaders as the task of the school year.

Determining standards for key professional group leaders

Based on the functions, tasks, and competency requirements of the professional group leader and the standards for selecting managers of core general education institutions in the standards for principals of general education institutions of the Ministry of Education and Training (2018), the standards for professional group leaders at primary schools are determined as follows: at least 05 years working as a professional group leader in the primary school, being graded according to principal standards as good or better; capacity to design and implement educational activity samples, organizing seminars, workshops, and training on the innovation of content and teaching methods for colleagues, capacity to use foreign languages, apply information technology, exploit and use technological equipment in teaching, education, and management of professional teams, aspiring to become a professional leader of a key primary school.

Proposing policies to motivate and encourage core professional group leaders to promote their role in improving the effectiveness of professional group operations.

Within each educational institution, each school needs to have policies for professional group leaders in general and key professional group leaders in particular. For key professional group leaders, there should be policies on remuneration, training, and fostering to improve professional qualifications and skills, and priority policies in promotion, and appointment.

Organizing training for professional group leaders at primary school using the competency-based framework

Training is the main way to improve teachers' professional qualifications and educational

administrators. In the context of implementing the 2018 General Education Program, training activities are even more important for teachers and educational administrators. Training professional group leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework is based on their competencies (professional competency, professional skills, and professional team management capacity) to train them. These solutions include:

Specifying the purpose and requirements for training professional leaders at primary school using the competency-based framework

Training professional team leaders in primary schools using the competency framework to achieve the following goals: raising awareness of the importance of professional groups' work at primary schools for teachers and administrators, developing professional competency for professional group leaders, and encouraging teachers' willingness to take on professional group's work. Training professional group leaders using the competency-based framework must ensure comprehensiveness, and focus on applying fostered knowledge to innovate and improve the quality of professional groups' activities in general correlation with the training of primary school administrators.

Developing a training program for professional group leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework

Based on the purpose and requirements for training professional leaders at primary schools, the training program for professional group leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework includes the following contents: knowledge of primary school professional groups' work and general knowledge about the local socio-economic, cultural and educational situation, professional skills, and professional capacity, professional group management capacity, and other capacities.

Organizing training for professional groups according to a synchronized procedure

The process of organizing training for professional group leaders according to the competency-based framework includes the following steps: thoroughly grasping the purpose and requirements for training using the competency-based framework for professional group leaders, distributing training materials, and identifying tasks that the professional group leader needs to complete during the time of self-studying training materials, exchanging and discussing the content of training materials, gathering issues that need to be answered through exchange and discussion, answering questions and summarizing the basic contents of the training materials.

Directing and evaluating the results of training for professional group leaders using the competency-based framework

After training professional group leaders using the competency-based framework, it is necessary to organize an evaluation of the training results. Evaluating training results must be based on the level of knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the professional group leader in the professional group's work.

Evaluating the professional leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework with adjustments and improvements

Evaluating the professional leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework not only evaluates the performance of functions and tasks of the professional group leader but also evaluates the professional team leader's competency to perform the professional group's work. Evaluating the professional leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework requires assessment of professional capacity, professional team management capacity, and other capacities, simultaneously with adjustments and improvements. To evaluate the professional leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework with adjustments and improvements, the following measures need to be well implemented:

Clearly identifying the purpose and requirements for evaluating the professional leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework

The purpose of evaluating the professional leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework is to accurately determine the professional group leader's capacity level to do the current professional group's task. On that basis, appropriate content and methods of training team leaders will be adjusted and supplemented. Evaluating the professional leaders at primary schools using the competency-based framework must ensure sequentiality based on the activities of the professional group leaders, and quantify the professional group leader's competency.

Selecting evaluating content

The evaluating content is the competencies that the professional group leader needs to have or needs to be trained. (Professional capacity, professional skills, and professional group management competency and other competencies)

Using a variety of methods to evaluate professional leaders at primary school using the competency-based framework

Evaluating professional leaders at primary school using the competency-based framework requires using many assessment methods: qualitative/quantitative assessment, formative/summative assessment, process/product assessment, and evaluation based on many reference frames.

Organizing the evaluation of professional leaders at primary schools according to a synchronized process

The process of evaluating professional leaders at primary school using the competency-based framework includes the following steps: identifying objectives for evaluating primary school professional leaders, selecting evaluating content for professional leaders at primary schools, developing assessment standards and scales, organizing evaluation of professional leaders at primary schools, and learning from experience.

Using the assessment results to develop primary school professional group leaders in the next

stages

The evaluating results of professional leaders at primary schools must be used to develop professional leaders at the primary school in the next stages. To do this, after evaluation, the evaluating results must be objectively analyzed, and point out the strengths and limitations of professional leaders' competencies. On that basis, improving the content and methods of training professional group leaders or providing specific requirements for professional group leaders.

Creating a favorable environment and conditions for professional group leaders at primary schools to promote and develop their competencies

Favorable environments and conditions are very important to promote and develop human professional competencies in any field. When living and working in a favorable environment and conditions, the professional group leader can devote all his or her competencies to the professional group's work. The favorable working environment and conditions of professional group leaders at primary schools are created by many factors. To create a favorable environment and conditions for professional group leaders at primary schools to promote and develop their competencies, the following measures need to be well implemented:

Directing school culture-building activities in primary schools

Building school culture in primary schools is creating a favorable environment and working conditions for professional group leaders at primary schools. The essence of building school culture is to build a cultural behavior between administrators and teachers, between teachers, between teachers and students, and between students. When school culture is built, it will create a favorable educational environment for educational work in general and professional work in particular.

Organizing the contest "Excellent Professional Group Leader"

Organizing the excellent professional group leader contest, honoring professional group leaders who have made many contributions to professional group work, is also a form of creating a favorable environment for professional group leaders at primary schools to promote and develop their competencies.

Providing the targets for professional group leaders

Through evaluating the work of professional teams, it is possible to identify the strengths and limitations of each professional group leader. On that basis, set out different targets for each professional team leader.

Develop and improve policies for professional group leaders and key professional group leaders

It is possible to motivate managers in general and professional team leaders in particular in different ways, in which using policies to create motivation is very important.

To develop strong professional team leaders at primary schools and meet the requirements of fundamental and comprehensive innovation in general education, it is necessary to apply 05 proposed solutions synchronously. The solutions are closely related and influence each other, forming a system that has a synchronous impact on the development of professional group leaders at primary schools using the competency-based approach.

Conclusions

The professional group team at primary schools is a "grassroots-level" management officer. Developing professional group leaders at primary schools is to develop important management staff resources of the school. Survey results show that the professional competency, professional skills, and professional group leader management competency at primary schools in Nghe An province are limited. Developing professional group leaders at primary schools in Nghe An province has not met the requirements of general education innovation. Based on theoretical research and a survey of the current situation, the article proposed 05 solutions to develop professional group leaders at primary schools using the competency-based approach. When implemented synchronously, these solutions will contribute to the development of strong professional group leaders at primary schools.

References

1. Boren D, Hallam P, Ray N, et al. (2017). Examining effective principal professional development through a university-district sponsored principals academy. *Educational Practice and Theory* 39(2): 87–106.
2. Bush, T. (2018). Preparation and induction for school principals: Global perspectives. *Management in Education* 32(6): 66–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020618761805>.
3. Duong, P. Q. (2019), Professional manager of primary school in the context of education innovation, *Journal of Educational Sciences*, No. 18, June 2019.
4. Doat, D. V. (2015) Necessary leadership and management skills of professional group leaders, *Proceedings of the scientific conference "Training educational managers in the context of educational innovation"*, University of Education Publishing House, Hanoi.
5. Jensen. R. (2020). Professional development of school leadership as boundary work: patterns of initiatives and interactions based on a Norwegian case. *International Journal of Leadership in Education* 25(4):1–18. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2020.1716998>.
6. Kiem, T. (2015). Capacity of professional group leaders in high schools, *Proceedings of the scientific conference "Training educational managers in the context of educational innovation"*, University of Education Publishing House, Hanoi.
7. Lien, N. T. N. (2015). Teacher motivation skills of high school professional leaders, *Proceedings of the Scientific Conference "Training educational managers in the context of educational innovation"*, Publishing House University of Education, Hanoi
8. Leithwood K, Harris A, Hopkins D. (2020). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. *School Leadership & Management* 40(1): 5–22.
9. Ministry of Education and Training (2018) Regulations on standards for principals of

- general education institutions (Issued together with Circular No. 14/2018/TT-BGDĐT, dated July 20, =
10. Ministry of Education and Training (2018) Professional standards for teachers in general education establishments (Issued together with Circular No. 20/2018/TT-BGDĐT dated August 22, 2018).
 11. Ministry of Education and Training. (2020). Circular on lower secondary school, upper secondary school, and multi-level school charter (Issued together with Circular No. 28/2020/TT-BGDĐT dated September 4, 2020).
 12. Mulford B, Kendall K, Kendall D, et al. (2008). Successful school principalship and decision making. *Leading and Managing* 14(1): 60–71
 13. Nadler, L. (1979). *Developing Human Resource*, American Society for Training and Development.
 14. Pont, B., Nusche, D., & Moorman, H. (2008). *Improving School Leadership*. OECD. Retrieved from: <https://www.oecd.org/education/Improving-sc...>
 15. Sahlin, S. (2023). Professional development of school principals – how do experienced school leaders make sense of their professional learning. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17411432231168235>.
 16. Thuy, N. T. L. (2016). Managing professional group leaders of primary schools in Hai Ba Trung district, Hanoi, *Education Magazine*, No. 383.
 17. UNESCO. (2012). *Guidelines for Capacity Development in Education Policy Planning and Resource Management*, Education Sector UNESCO, Paris.