

ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES OF PROFESSIONAL GROUP AT HIGH SCHOOLS IN TUYEN QUANG PROVINCE

Nguyen Minh Anh Tuan

Faculty of Education, Tantrao University, Tuyen Quang Province, Vietnam

*Corresponding author: Nguyen Minh Anh Tuan, e-mail: nmatuan@tuyenquang.edu.vn

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Abstract. Professional teams (PG) are an important component of general schools, playing a role in promoting professional activities to contribute to improving the quality of education, especially in the context of educational innovation and implementation of the current 2018 General Education Program. The study aims to assess the current status of professional team activities at high schools in Tuyen Quang province. Data was collected from 132 managers and teachers through a questionnaire. The results show that the majority of managers and teachers are aware of the role of PG; school leaders are interested in directing PG activities; fully implementing policies related to the teams of leaders and deputy leaders; PG activities are diverse, ties are diverse, disciplined and closely follow the instructions of the managements. However, PG activities still face some difficulties such as untimely directive documents, limited operating budget, and inadequate activity organization skills. This study has contributed to identifying the strengths and existing problems in PG activities at high schools in the area, which is the basis for proposing solutions to improve the quality of PG activities in accordance with the requirements of educational innovation.

Keywords: Organizing professional groups, professional groups, professional group activities, high schools in Tuyen Quang.

1. Introduction

The professional group (PG) is a component of the organizational and management structure of high schools, which directly develops and organizes the implementation of teaching and education plans according to the subject program and educational activities for the subjects in charge [1]; at the same time, PGs proposes, promotes and supports members to improve their professional qualifications and work skills [1].

Although PG plays an important role in professional activities in high schools in particular and educational innovation in general, there are currently very few studies in this field, especially there is no research on this topic in the context of implementing the current 2018 General Education Program (GEP). In Vietnam, Tran Phuoc Hoa (2021) studied the management of PG activities in the context of general education innovation in high schools and noted that PG activities in recent years have had positive changes, but the quality of activities is not high, one of the most important reasons is that the management of PG activities is still limited [2]. Author Tong Van Tao (2023) studied the current status of innovation management of PG activities in high schools, stating that PG holds a central position in the organizational structure and operation of general schools, the quality of PG activities determines the quality of teaching at school;

teachers' teaching capacity depends on the innovation of PG activities. Therefore, innovation management of PG activities is one of the most important contents of the principal in school management [3]. Tra Trong Tam (2021) reported that high schools have performed fairly well in managing PG activities, but there are still some shortcomings in the management of this activity [4]. However, these studies mainly focus on the content of managing professional group activities. There are very few studies on the effectiveness of professional groups in general, and in high schools in particular, in the context of educational innovation and implementation of the current 2018 General Education Program. Therefore, studies on the effectiveness of professional group activities and proposals for appropriate solutions to help schools improve the quality of education are very necessary and important.

In the world, many studies on professional group activities in the direction of lesson study (LS) have confirmed the importance of professional exchange between general teachers, the implementation of this form of activity has helped the teaching staff improve their professional qualifications, teaching and working skills, thereby improving students' learning outcomes (Cerbin et al., 2006) [5]. McLaughlin et al. (2003) argued that in order to achieve teaching goals, at the collective level, teachers must share knowledge and experience in performing tasks, and group cooperation plays an important role, which has a significant and positive impact on teaching innovation [6], [7]. Authors Chen Xi et al. (2023) believe that the effectiveness of collective teacher cooperation has a significant and positive impact on teaching innovation and knowledge sharing, and knowledge sharing has a positive impact on teaching innovation [8]. Thus, the authors' studies all highlight the role and importance of PG in educational management, emphasizing the need to enhance its effectiveness, thereby improving the quality of educational management and teaching and learning in general schools.

In recent years, education in Tuyen Quang province has made steady progress thanks to the implementation of a number of positive solutions. Among them are the attention paid to organizing and promoting innovation in the activities of professional groups in a disciplined manner, with diverse content of activities, and actively training the team of group leaders/deputy group leaders. Therefore, the author chose this locality to conduct research to promote the advantages and point out the shortcomings in PG activities in high schools in the province. From there, suggest school leaders and educational management agencies create new ideas to build a friendly learning environment through professional group activities, support teachers to learn expertise, and practice teaching from colleagues.

2. Content

2.1. General overview of the survey

- *Research subjects*: 41 managers (including: 9 principals/vice principals and 32 heads/deputy heads of PGs); 91 teachers at 05 high schools (Son Nam, Kim Xuyen, Ham Yen, Nguyen Van Huyen, Minh Quang) in Tuyen Quang province.

- *Survey period*: from July 2024 to June 2025.

- *Survey purpose*: To determine the organizational structure, operational efficiency, advantages and disadvantages of professional groups, thereby suggesting issues that need attention and improvement for the school management team.

- *Survey method*: The survey was conducted through a questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The questionnaire was designed according to the following process: The draft questionnaire was adjusted using qualitative methods to form a preliminary questionnaire, then analyzed for Cronbach's Alpha reliability and exploratory factor analysis to finalize the official questionnaire then used for multivariate analysis.

- *Measurement scale*: A 5-point Likert scale was used, with categories such as Very Good/Very Necessary/Very Feasible/Very Effective and equivalent: conventionally 5 points. Good/Necessary/Feasible/Effective and equivalent: 4 points. Average/Normal: 3 points. Not Good/Less Feasible/Not Necessary/Less Effective and equivalent: 2 points. Level Very bad/Very unnecessary/Very unlikely/Very ineffective and equivalent: 1 point. Using the formula for calculating the score range (Max-Min)/n, the difference between levels is 0.8. Thus, the average score (AS) of each assessment level is as follows: Very good/Very necessary/Very feasible/Very effective and equivalent: from 4.2-5.0 points; Good/Necessary/Feasible/Difficult/ Effective and equivalent: from 3.4 to less than 4.2 points; Average/Normal and equivalent: from 2.6 to less than 3.4 points; Not good/Less feasible/Not necessary/Less effective and equivalent: from 1.8 to less than 2.6 points; Very bad/Very unnecessary/Very unlikely/Very unlikely and equivalent: <1.8 points.

- *Data processing method*: Data were processed using SPSS 25.0 and Excel.

2.2. Survey results

2.2.1. Current status of organization, direction and guidance of PG activities in high schools

The results in Table 1 show that there is a considerable variation in the AS in the assessment of high school managers and teachers on the survey contents. Specifically, the management staff of high schools in Tuyen Quang province assessed that the AS fluctuated from 2.88, which was classified as “Average” to 4.20, which was classified as “Very Good”. There were 3/7 survey contents that were assessed by the management staff to have the GPA classified as “Average” according to the scale; 3/7 other survey contents had AS classified as “Good” and only one content was classified as “Very Good” as mentioned above.

Table 1. Results of assessment of organization, direction and guidance of PG activities in high schools

No	Survey content	Managers (n=41)		Teachers (n=91)		p-value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Number of PG, subject combination in PG suitable for school practice	4,15	1,3141	3,95	0,8931	0,3069
2	Appoint PG leaders who meet work requirements, have professional capacity and prestige	4,20	1,4283	3,59	0,3522	0,3237
3	EMA and schools issue full documents directing and guiding PG activities	3,02	0,0014	3,01	0,0005	0,4286
4	EMA and schools regularly organize conferences and seminars on PG activities	2,90	0,0108	2,84	0,0273	0,3896
5	PG has its own meeting room, with adequate facilities and equipment to meet task requirements	4,10	1,2057	4,00	1,002	0,3992
6	PG is facilitated by the school in terms of time and budget to organize activities	2,88	0,0152	2,75	0,0642	0,3794
7	Emulation - reward work, replicating advanced models in PG work	3,87	0,4245	3,58	0,4237	0,4126
Average		3,54	0,2923	3,36	0,126	0,3712

*Note: Aver: Average score; SD: Standard deviation; p: Probability of random occurrence

The results of the evaluation of high school teachers are quite similar to the evaluation of managers on these survey contents. Specifically, teachers' evaluation of the organization, direction, and guidance of PG activities in high schools has a large fluctuation in GPA, from 2.75, and is classified as “Average” on the scale, to 4.00, which is classified as “Good”. 3/6 survey contents were classified as “Fair” according to the scale; the remaining three items have the average score classified as “Good”.

The survey results show that high schools have done quite well in organizing the PG, including the structure of subjects combined in the PG and selecting a team of group leaders/deputy group leaders with sufficient prestige and professional capacity; schools have arranged working rooms with adequate equipment to serve the work of the PG. However, the issuance of documents directing and guiding the PG to operate effectively and organizing conferences and seminars on PG activities have not been organized promptly, especially in the context of current educational innovation; especially, the budget for the activities of the PG has not met the requirements of the task. In addition, when interviewing directly with managers and teachers of high schools, respondents reported that since 2012, the EMA has only issued two documents guiding professional group activities and the most recent document was issued in 2014 [9], while schools are implementing educational innovation and implementing the 2018 GEP, it is necessary to issue documents directing and guiding professional group activities of the management agency in accordance with current practice.

The statistical analysis results clearly show that although the contents assessed by managers and teachers of high schools have different averages for each research content, those differences are not statistically significant, because the p values are > 0.05 , meaning that the assessments of managers and teachers of high schools are equivalent. This is supported by the low standard deviation (SD) relative to the means.

2.2.2. Activities of building and organizing the implementation of PG's operational plan and tasks according to the School Charter

The survey results presented in Table 2 show that, in general, PG activities in high schools have gradually become more organized and reflect the professional work of the school. The organization and implementation of PG activities have been assessed by high school managers and teachers to reach the mean scores of 3.55 and 3.53, respectively; both were classified as “Good” on the scale. In which the assessment of the management staff has an average score ranging from 3.05, reaching the “Fair” rating, to 4.07, reaching the “Good” rating. In addition to the two survey items, the other survey items all have the average score ranked “Fair”. Thus, the assessment results of the management staff of the schools show that it is necessary to promote the activities of the PGs to be more effective, especially the implementation according to the plan is necessary but needs to be adjusted flexibly to suit reality and achieve higher efficiency. The evaluation results of high school teachers generally tend to be more positive than those of managers, with a smaller average score ranging from 3.22, reaching the “Fair” rating to 4.12, reaching the “Good” rating. This result shows that two items were rated “Good”; 8/10 remaining survey contents have an average score reaching the “Fair” rating according to the scale.

From the above results, it can be concluded that the PGs at schools are paying close attention to the record-keeping in line with PG regulations, with records maintained clearly and in detail, so the management staff and high school teachers all rated the average score higher than other survey contents. On the contrary, activities of a deeper professional nature, such as the content of PG activities in the direction of studying lessons, thematic activities, discussing new and difficult contents, or organizing extracurricular activities, class management work, and student ethics education, have not been implemented as effectively as expected, so the average score tends to be lower than other research contents. This survey result is quite consistent with the results of teachers who reported that PGs are currently on recording group records to serve the school's and

education management agencies' examinations. Regarding the innovation of professional group activities, teachers said that it is quite difficult to discuss new and difficult areas, such as guiding student research, developing topics, and conducting lesson study.

Table 2. Current status of activities in high schools

No	Survey content	Managers (n=41)		Teachers (n=91)		<i>p-value</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1	The PG's activity plan is built in detail, scientifically, and in accordance with practice	3,85	0,7287	3,77	0,5917	0,4379
2	Teaching and education plans according to the subject program, specific educational activities by week, month, semester, and school year in accordance with the GEP	3,88	0,7710	4,10	1,2076	0,4577
3	Organizing discussions and proposing the selection of textbooks and reference materials for use at school	3,32	0,1005	3,25	0,0639	0,3860
4	The PG's activity plan is organized and implemented seriously, flexibly, and effectively	3,05	0,0024	3,21	0,0436	0,4035
5	The PG has sufficient records according to regulations and records clearly and in detail	4,07	1,1517	4,12	1,2564	0,3421
6	The content of the PG's activities is in the direction of studying lessons, topics, and exchanging new and difficult content	3,32	0,1005	3,46	0,2130	0,2234
7	Professional and professional training for teachers according to the PG's plan	3,59	0,3427	3,23	0,0533	0,1638
8	Evaluating and classifying teachers according to professional standards and considering emulation and rewarding	3,83	0,6877	3,57	0,3265	0,3168
9	Organizing regular PG activities according to regulations and ad hoc activities (if any)	3,39	0,1523	3,33	0,1087	0,4466
10	Organizing extracurricular activities, discussing the work of class leaders, educating students' ethics, nurturing gifted students, educating weak students, etc.	3,20	0,0381	3,22	0,0483	0,4983
Average		3,55	0,2801	3,53	0,3902	0,3676

**Note: Aver: Average score; SD: Standard deviation; p: Probability of random occurrence*

This result suggests that schools need to provide stronger direction, organize training, guidance and strengthen inspection of PG activities in the context of implementing the 2018 GEP and current educational innovation. The results of statistical analysis show that although there is a difference in the average score in each assessment content between managers and high school teachers on PG activities at high schools, this difference is not statistically significant when the corresponding *p*-value of each survey content is greater than 0.05. The data are considered reliable because the SD values of each survey content compared to the average score in the assessment of managers and teachers are quite small.

2.2.3. Results of the evaluation of the effectiveness of PG activities

The survey results presented in Table 3 show that, in general, the effectiveness of PG activities at high schools was assessed by managers and teachers as “Good” according to the scale, with the AS of 4.08 and 3.94, respectively. This shows that PG activities at schools are recognized and have positive effects on the professional activities of the school. The effectiveness of PG operations at schools was assessed positively by the management staff with a fairly high AS and a small range, from 3.95 and reaching the “Good” rating to 4.22 and reaching the “Very Good” rating. Of which, 7 of 9 survey items were rated by the management staff as being classified as Good (with an average score from below 4.20 to 3.95) and 2 contents were assessed as being classified as “Very Good” (average score > 4.20). Meanwhile, teacher evaluations were also positive, although the AS tended to be lower than that of managers, while the AS assessed by teachers had a larger range, from 3.39 and reached the rating of “Fair” to 4.20 and reached the rating of “Very good” according to the scale.

Table 3. Evaluation of the effectiveness of PG activities at high schools

No	Survey content	Managers (n=41)		Teachers (n=91)		<i>p-value</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1	The effectiveness of implementing the teaching plan and educational activities of PG in improving the quality of school education	4,22	1,4872	4,01	1,0221	0,1221
2	The effectiveness of PG in maintaining discipline and implementing professional regulations in schools	4,20	1,4283	4,18	1,3826	0,0916
3	The effectiveness of PG in supporting members to improve their qualifications, skills, and professional skills	3,98	0,9518	4,04	1,0898	0,0819
4	The effectiveness of PG in innovating teaching and learning methods, teaching methods, and student assessment	4,22	1,4872	4,20	1,4347	0,0690
5	The effectiveness of PG in orienting and guiding students to be creative in science and technology, and experience	3,90	0,8144	3,39	0,2445	0,0466
6	The effectiveness of PG in nurturing excellent students and educating weak students	3,95	0,9048	4,02	1,0444	0,0703
7	The effectiveness of PG in improving the quality of student management and homeroom work	3,95	0,9048	4,00	1,0000	0,0516
8	The effectiveness of PG in innovating class observation, comments, and evaluation of teachers' teaching hours	4,12	1,2588	3,58	0,3392	0,0406
9	The effectiveness of PG in guiding and supporting teachers and students to participate in professional and technical competitions/ exams	4,15	1,3141	3,96	0,914	0,0229
Average		4,08	1,1724	3,94	0,8871	0,7170

**Note: Aver: Average score; SD: Standard deviation; p: Probability of random occurrence*

From the survey results, it is easy to see that the assessment of the effectiveness of PG between managers and teachers has significant differences in AS, leading to differences in classification according to the scale in some survey contents. Specifically, there are 03 contents that managers and teachers assess have significantly different AS and are statistically significant when the p values are < 0.05 in each corresponding survey content, meaning that their assessments are not equivalent in the above 03 contents. This can be explained by the fact that, with different approaches at different work positions, the assessment of PG performance may not be the same or due to differing expectations of PG performance between managers and teachers. On the contrary, for the remaining 06 survey contents, although managers and teachers have different averages, the statistical results clearly show that these differences are not statistically significant because the p values are > 0.05 ; or in other words, the assessments of managers and teachers are similar in the above 06 contents. The data are considered reliable because the SD values of each survey content compared to the corresponding averages in the assessments of both managers and teachers are quite small (See details in Table 3).

The above survey results suggest that education management agencies and leaders of high schools need to pay more attention to directing PGs to be more active in guiding and supporting teachers in guiding students in scientific and technological research and innovation and professional and technical competitions/exams; it is necessary to enhance practical innovation in PG activities, especially innovating the work of observing, commenting on and evaluating teaching hours in ways that reduce pressure on teachers and to strengthen the work of advising and guiding teachers in innovating teaching methods, testing and assessing students and other professional skills. These findings are consistent with Nguyen Minh Anh Tuan et al, (2022) when surveying the current situation of educational innovation of high school teachers in Tuyen Quang province [10], and Nguyen Minh Anh Tuan (2023) when studying the current situation of teaching and learning to develop the competence of high school students in Tuyen Quang [11].

3. Conclusions

PG activities at high schools in Tuyen Quang province have been organized and implemented in accordance with regulations. Managers and teachers generally show adequate awareness of the role and importance of PGs, and the majority of teachers have a positive attitude, supporting PG activities. Schools have structured PGs appropriately and selected a team of PG leaders with prestige and working capacity. PGs have developed detailed and practical action plans and implemented them consistently. PG activities are generally disciplined; the content of PG activities is quite rich and gradually innovated, democratic and helps colleagues to progress in their expertise and work skills. The policies for the team of group leaders/deputy group leaders are implemented in accordance with current regulations, helping PG leaders feel supported and motivated in their work.

The activities of PG in high schools in Tuyen Quang province have achieved encouraging results, fostering professional discipline and creating a democratic and transparent educational environment; supporting and helping teachers and students to participate in educational activities, contributing to the effective implementation of the goal of developing students' qualities and competencies according to the requirements of the 2018 GEP. However, it remains necessary to further raise awareness of managers and teachers about the role and importance of PG in general schools; actively innovate the form and content of PG activities; create opportunities for PG to exchange experiences with other schools, and so on. Therefore, education management agencies and school leaders need to continue guiding PGs to innovate their activities; organize training for the team of professional group leaders/deputy group leaders; organize seminars and conferences to discuss PG activities and support time and funding so that PG activities become increasingly effective, contributing to improving the quality of school education.

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