

A Model and Solutions for Managing Instructional Change at Upper Secondary Schools in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT:

Drawing on Fullan's model and the findings of empirical research on managing instructional change at upper secondary schools in Vietnam's North Central region, this paper proposes a model for managing instructional change at upper secondary schools that is adapted to the Vietnamese educational context. It also puts forward six solutions to enhance the effectiveness of change management in teaching activities at Vietnamese upper secondary schools in accordance with the proposed model: 1) Developing context-sensitive action plans for instructional change tailored to the specific conditions of each upper secondary school; 2) Building teacher consensus and commitment throughout the process of instructional change; 3) Organizing capacity-building programs to enhance teachers' competencies for driving instructional change; 4) Implementing instructional change in a synchronized and coherent manner, centering teachers in their pivotal role as agents of change; 5) Conducting continuous assessment and adaptive improvement of instructional change processes; 6) Institutionalizing and sustainably maintaining the outcomes of instructional change at upper secondary schools.

Keywords: teaching and learning activities, instructional change, instructional change management, model.

1. Introduction

Upper secondary education plays a particularly vital role in Vietnam's national education system and in the country's broader strategy for human resource development and human development. In the current context, upper secondary education must undergo fundamental and comprehensive transformation — most critically in the area of teaching practices and the management of instructional change. Accordingly, developing an appropriate model for managing instructional

change and applying it to propose practical management solutions for upper secondary schools is a matter that is at once urgent and significant, both theoretically and practically, in the context of ongoing educational reform.

A wide range of change management models have been developed and applied in educational settings, each reflecting different theoretical assumptions about the nature of change, the role of individuals, organizations, and contextual conditions. Prominent among these are Lewin's three-step

model — Unfreezing, Changing, and Refreezing (1947); Weick and Quinn's episodic and continuous change model (1999); Hiatt's ADKAR model (2006); and Fullan's three-phase model (2007). Of these, Fullan's model is widely regarded as one of the most influential theoretical frameworks for change management in education. Fullan describes change as a dynamic, non-linear process comprising three interconnected phases — initiation, implementation, and institutionalization — while emphasizing that these phases do not unfold mechanically, but are interwoven, recursive, and strongly shaped by context (2006).

Drawing on Fullan's model and the empirical research findings on managing instructional change at upper secondary schools in Vietnam's North Central region (Le Cong Duc & Pham Le Cuong, 2025), this paper proposes a model for managing instructional change at upper secondary schools adapted to the Vietnamese educational context, and puts forward solutions to enhance the effectiveness of instructional change management in accordance with that model.

2. Methodology

Design: The study utilized a mixed-methods approach, beginning with a qualitative theoretical synthesis to develop the instructional change management model, followed by a quantitative descriptive and correlational survey design to assess the necessity and feasibility of the proposed solutions.

Participants/Sample: The sample consisted of 434 participants, carefully selected to represent educational stakeholders directly involved in instructional change. This cohort included 21 school managers (Principals and Vice-Principals) and 413 teachers. The participants were recruited from six upper secondary schools located across Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, and Ha Tinh provinces in Vietnam's North Central region.

Instruments: Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire designed specifically for this research. The instrument employed a five-point rating scale to evaluate the necessity and feasibility of the six proposed solutions, with levels ranging

from Level 1 (Very Unnecessary / Very Infeasible) to Level 5 (Very Necessary / Very Feasible).

Procedure: The research team first conducted an extensive review of domestic and international literature in management science and educational change to construct an adaptive model for upper secondary schools. Subsequently, the structured questionnaires were distributed to the target sample across the selected provinces to gather empirical feedback on the practical value of the six proposed management solutions.

Data Analysis: Quantitative data collected from the questionnaires were processed utilizing descriptive mathematical statistics. Specifically, the arithmetic mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) were calculated to assess the precise levels of necessity and feasibility, while the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to determine the statistical relationship between these two variables

3. Results

3.1. Change management model

3.1.1. Theoretical and practical basis

The change management model for teaching activities is grounded in a synthesis of theoretical foundations and practical realities of educational management, set against the backdrop of upper secondary schools in Vietnam's North Central region implementing the fundamental and comprehensive renewal of education and the 2018 General Education Curriculum.

On the theoretical side, the model draws on Fullan's (2007) three-phase framework of change — Initiation, Implementation, and Institutionalization — which places teachers at the center of the change process, underscores the importance of a learning culture, and highlights the need for continuous feedback mechanisms to sustain improvement. Alongside this, the integration of Deming's Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle expands the model toward developing organizational learning capacity, ensuring that the change process does not stall at short-term outcomes but evolves into a continuous improvement cycle embedded within the school.

On the practical side, empirical research findings (Le Cong Duc & Pham Le Cuong, 2025) reveal that the process of instructional change at upper secondary schools in the North Central region still exhibits significant management gaps. Most schools have adopted a policy commitment to reform, yet their plans remain largely procedural — lacking a sound basis in needs analysis and resource assessment. During the implementation phase, teachers' capacity for innovation remains limited, coordination between subject departments and school leadership is insufficiently close, and monitoring and feedback mechanisms are not functioning effectively. Most notably, the institutionalization of reform outcomes — the stage

that sustains and scales success — has received little systematic attention, resulting in change processes that are intermittent and lack long-term durability.

It is on the basis of these theoretical and practical considerations that proposing an adaptive model for managing instructional change becomes essential — one that is both scientifically rigorous and attuned to Vietnam's specific educational conditions — in order to help schools organize, oversee, and sustain the renewal of teaching activities in a continuous, effective, and enduring manner.

3.1.2. Structure and internal logic of the model

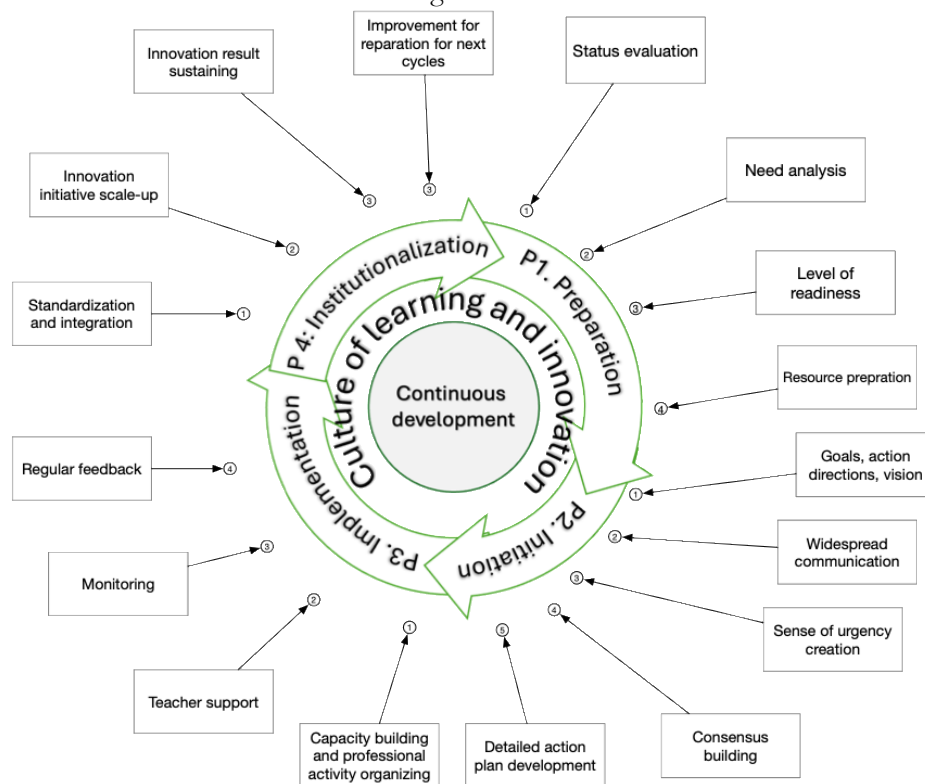


Figure 1. A model for managing instructional change at upper secondary schools adapted to the Vietnamese educational context

The structure and internal logic of the model are explained as follows. The model is designed as a closed, continuous cycle that reflects the entire process of managing instructional change in the direction of developing a learning culture and sustaining continuous innovation. Its structure comprises four main phases operating according to the PDCA principle (Plan–Do–Check–Act), with the central circle — Continuous Development —

embodying the core philosophy: schools do not engage in change as a one-time event, but instead continuously learn, reflect, and improve through each successive cycle.

Phase 1 – Preparation

This is the foundational phase, in which the school establishes the conditions and readiness necessary for the change process. Key activities include: surveying the current state of teaching and analyzing

the strengths and weaknesses of existing instructional practices; analyzing the change-related needs of both teachers and students on the basis of real data; assessing the readiness of staff and the organization in terms of awareness, capacity, and available resources; and preparing the enabling conditions required — including physical facilities, human resources, funding, and implementation timelines. This phase helps the school accurately map its context, gauge its internal capacity, and cultivate an organizational readiness for innovation, thereby laying the groundwork for the initiation phase.

Phase 2 – Initiation / Plan

This phase sets the direction and catalyzes the change process, with the aim of defining goals and building collective commitment. Core activities include: articulating the vision, objectives, and action orientation for instructional innovation in alignment with the requirements of the 2018 General Education Curriculum; communicating broadly to build shared awareness and belief in the value and meaning of change; creating a sense of urgency that helps teachers recognize the necessity of reform; and fostering consensus and collective commitment through professional development activities, seminars, experience-sharing sessions, and participatory decision-making mechanisms. The outcome of this phase is a concrete action plan with clearly defined goals, performance indicators, timelines, and assigned responsibilities.

Phase 3 – Implementation / Do

This is the pivotal phase that determines the effectiveness of the entire change process. Activities are centered on: building teachers' innovation capacity through professional learning activities, lesson study, and the development of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs); supporting teachers throughout the implementation process by providing time, learning resources, and professional guidance; maintaining regular monitoring and feedback loops among school leadership, subject departments, and teachers; and evaluating progress and outcomes against pre-established instructional evidence and criteria. This phase embodies the spirit of distributed leadership and continuous

professional support, helping to translate change from institutional intent into concrete classroom practice.

Phase 4 – Institutionalization / Check–Act

The goal of this phase is to consolidate, standardize, and sustain the gains of innovation — embedding change as an enduring part of the school's culture. This phase also serves as the entry point back into the next iteration of Phase 1, thereby closing and renewing the cycle. Key activities include: standardizing and integrating innovation outcomes into the school's internal regulations, procedures, and evaluation systems; scaling effective initiatives across other subject departments and year groups; sustaining and disseminating innovation results through incentive mechanisms, periodic monitoring, and ongoing professional support; and reflecting, refining, and preparing for the next cycle — closing the PDCA loop and opening a new phase of development. This phase underscores the imperative of continuous learning and continuous development as the foundation for achieving sustainable instructional change.

3.1.3. Significance and Value of the Model

The adaptive change management model for teaching activities not only inherits the principles of Fullan's framework and Deming's PDCA cycle of continuous improvement, but has also been localized to suit the specific characteristics of educational management in upper secondary schools in Vietnam's North Central region. The model represents a systemic approach in which change is not merely an administrative directive imposed from above, but is internalized by the school as it transforms into a genuine learning organization — one that develops the sustained capacity for self-directed learning and continuous improvement.

Central to the model is the repositioning of teachers as the driving force of change — active agents of reform rather than passive subjects to be managed. Operationalizing this model fosters teacher initiative, creativity, and professional accountability, while simultaneously strengthening distributed leadership, whereby principals, heads of subject departments, and key teachers collectively share

responsibility for leading instructional innovation. Furthermore, the model establishes responsive feedback mechanisms and flexible adaptation at every level — from individual classrooms and subject departments to the school as a whole — enabling the change process to be both sustainable and attuned to the specific conditions of each educational institution.

Most critically, the model contributes to cultivating a school-wide culture of learning and innovation, in which continuous improvement is embraced as a core organizational value. By operating within this framework, upper secondary schools will be better positioned to strengthen their change leadership capacity, sustain ongoing professional development, and ensure that their teaching practices remain aligned with the 2018 General Education Curriculum and responsive to the demands of international integration — advancing toward an education system characterized by lifelong learning and sustainable development.

3.2. Solutions for Managing Instructional Change at Upper Secondary Schools in Accordance with the Proposed Model

3.2.1. Developing Context-Sensitive Action Plans for Instructional Change Tailored to Each Upper Secondary School

a. Objectives of the solution

This solution aims to support upper secondary schools in developing action plans for instructional change that are specific, feasible, and grounded in each school's actual conditions. It further seeks to promote the effective use of available resources, strengthen accountability and transparency, and contribute to improving both the quality and the long-term sustainability of the instructional change process.

b. Content and implementation process

The action plan is developed in accordance with Deming's (1986) Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) quality management cycle, integrated with SWOT analysis, to ensure a process that is scientifically sound, practically grounded, and sufficiently flexible to respond to changing conditions. The cycle comprises the following steps: analyzing the

school's context and identifying change needs (SWOT analysis); defining specific objectives and expected outcomes (logic model); formulating a detailed action plan (Plan); implementing and monitoring progress (Do–Check); and evaluating, adjusting, and refining the plan (Act). Following each cycle, the school draws lessons, refines its approach, and updates the plan for the subsequent phase, thereby ensuring ongoing flexibility and responsiveness to real-world conditions.

c. Implementation conditions

For this solution to be implemented effectively, the following conditions are required: school principals must be equipped with competencies in strategic planning and change management, including the ability to apply Fullan's framework and contemporary management tools; subject departments must be empowered and encouraged to take an active role in developing detailed departmental plans; and Departments of Education and Training must provide clear planning framework guidelines while establishing timely mechanisms for support, monitoring, and feedback.

d. Expected outcomes

The implementation of this solution is expected to yield the following results: each upper secondary school will have a scientifically rigorous, feasible, and reality-based action plan that accurately reflects the school's specific innovation needs; the planning capacity and systems thinking of both school managers and teachers will be strengthened; teacher initiative and sense of professional responsibility toward instructional reform will be enhanced; and the continuity and sustainability of the change process will be secured, advancing the school toward the development of a genuine culture of innovation.

3.2.2. Building Teacher Consensus and Commitment Throughout the Process of Instructional Change

a. Objectives of the solution

This solution aims to cultivate among teachers a genuine, cognitively grounded consensus and a proactive disposition toward instructional change. In doing so, it seeks to build trust, foster positive attitudes, and strengthen a spirit of collaboration

within the teaching staff — helping teachers move from a passive stance to one of voluntary engagement and creative participation in reform. At the same time, it contributes to forming a school-wide culture of continuous learning and improvement, establishing the foundation for sustainable and lasting change.

b. Content and implementation process

To achieve meaningful impact, this solution is implemented through a four-step action cycle that integrates two parallel management tracks: (1) internal communication — building trust and shared understanding; and (2) motivation, empowerment, and capacity development. These two tracks correspond respectively to the initiation and implementation phases in Fullan's model. The four steps of the cycle are: initiating trust and unifying awareness; developing a collaborative and experience-sharing environment; motivating, empowering, and recognizing teachers' contributions; and maintaining and institutionalizing a culture of consensus.

c. Implementation conditions

Effective implementation of this solution requires the following conditions: principals must possess transformational leadership capacity, a sound understanding of organizational psychology, and well-developed skills in communication, inspiration, and conflict resolution; dedicated time and space for professional learning activities — including PLCs, mentoring, and feedback sessions — must be formally incorporated into the school's official schedule; mechanisms for rewards, performance evaluation, and delegation of authority must be transparent and equitable; and professional support must be available from Departments of Education and Training, as well as from higher education institutions and research organizations providing training in innovative teaching practices.

d. Expected outcomes

The implementation of this solution is expected to yield the following results: teachers will develop a more unified awareness and a genuinely positive attitude toward instructional innovation, with reduced apprehension and less passive resistance to

change requirements; teachers' level of active engagement and professional accountability will increase, with teachers taking ownership in designing, implementing, and refining their instructional practices; a collaborative, experience-sharing, and mutually supportive professional environment within the teaching staff will be established and strengthened, sustaining the momentum of continuous instructional innovation; and the principal's leadership role in managing change will be reinforced, evidenced by a growing capacity to mobilize teacher participation, foster motivation, and maintain collective commitment to reform.

3.2.3. Organizing Capacity-Building Programs to Enhance Teachers' Competencies for Driving Instructional Change

a. Objectives of the solution

This solution aims to strengthen teachers' capacity for instructional change, equipping them to meet the demands of the 2018 General Education Curriculum and the broader context of ongoing educational reform. Through systematic capacity-building activities, teachers develop the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to engage in reflective practice, collaborative inquiry, and innovative teaching. The solution also contributes to building a teaching workforce with solid professional competencies — one that is ready to adapt to and lead change — thereby creating the foundation for the sustainable improvement of teaching practices across the school.

b. Content and implementation process

This solution is implemented in accordance with Deming's Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle, ensuring continuity and coherence with the preceding two solutions. The cycle comprises the following steps: developing a capacity-building plan targeting teachers' competencies for instructional change; organizing and delivering capacity-building activities for teachers; monitoring and providing feedback on the capacity-building process; and adjusting, institutionalizing, and scaling up the outcomes of the capacity-building program.

c. Implementation conditions

For this capacity-building solution to be implemented effectively, synchronized enabling conditions are required at every level — from school leadership to subject departments and individual teachers. These conditions encompass: the principal's change leadership capacity; the proactive engagement of subject departments; the development of a core group of lead teachers; adequate organizational structures and physical facilities; mechanisms for recognition and encouragement; and sustained support from educational management authorities and teacher education institutions.

d. Expected outcomes

Implementing this solution is expected to: strengthen teachers' practical competencies for innovating their instructional practices; foster a school-wide culture of professional learning and knowledge-sharing through professional learning communities (PLCs); enhance teacher initiative, confidence, and creativity in delivering the 2018 General Education Curriculum; establish a continuous professional development system that meaningfully links individual capacity growth with the school's broader innovation goals; and contribute to consolidating the overall sustainability of the instructional change process, helping the school evolve into a genuine learning organization.

3.2.4. Implementing Instructional Change in a Synchronized and Coherent Manner, Centering Teachers in Their Pivotal Role

a. Objectives of the solution

This solution aims to ensure that the implementation of instructional change is carried out in a synchronized, substantive, and effective manner across all components of the teaching and learning process. In doing so, it seeks to promote teachers' centrality, initiative, and creativity — helping them become genuine agents, rather than mere recipients, of change. At the same time, the solution strengthens coordination among subject departments, forging meaningful connections across the management–teaching–learning continuum, and advancing the quality and

sustainability of instructional innovation throughout the school.

b. Content and implementation process

To implement instructional change in a synchronized and effective manner, this solution is organized according to Deming's (1986) Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle, flexibly integrated with Kotter's (1996) incremental change approach. This framework ensures scientific rigor, continuous oversight, and responsive feedback, while creating genuine opportunities for teachers to perform their professional roles as facilitators of learning and reflective practitioners. The cycle comprises the following steps: developing a plan for instructional change; organizing the implementation of the instructional change plan; monitoring, evaluating, and providing feedback on the progress of instructional change; and adjusting, scaling, and institutionalizing the outcomes of instructional change.

c. Implementation conditions

Effective implementation requires the following conditions: principals must be competent in change management and proficient in applying modern management tools such as PDCA, KPIs, and multi-source feedback; lead teachers must be trained in the skills of organizing lesson study, peer mentoring, and collegial evaluation; communication mechanisms must be transparent, ensuring that feedback is engaged with constructively rather than treated as administrative inspection; and material resources and time must be allocated appropriately so that innovation activities do not compete with or displace teachers' regular professional responsibilities.

d. Expected outcomes

This solution is expected to yield the following results: instructional innovation activities across the school will be implemented in a coherent and coordinated manner — with clear alignment across management levels, subject departments, and individual teachers — thereby reducing fragmented and piecemeal reform efforts; teachers' agency and professional ownership in the innovation process will be clearly elevated, with teachers actively

engaged in designing, implementing, reflecting on, and refining their instructional practices; the quality of instructional innovation will improve, as evidenced by gains in student engagement and learning positivity, more effective lesson organization, and greater alignment between teaching, assessment, and evaluation; a well-functioning system of monitoring, feedback, and continuous improvement will be established and sustained at the school level, enabling timely adjustments to innovation activities on the basis of instructional evidence; and instructional renewal will become a regular, self-sustaining feature of school life, contributing to the formation of an organizational culture of continuous learning and improvement that meets the contemporary demands of educational reform.

3.2.5. Conducting Continuous Assessment and Adaptive Improvement of Instructional Change at Upper Secondary Schools

a. Objectives of the solution

This solution aims to establish a systematic mechanism for regular assessment, feedback, and improvement within the process of instructional innovation — enabling schools and teachers to diagnose the current state of change, make timely adjustments, and sustain the change process in a durable and coherent manner.

b. Content and implementation process

For the assessment and ongoing adjustment of instructional change to be conducted in a scientifically rigorous, objective, and effective way, implementation must address two principal areas of content: (a) developing a criteria framework for evaluating the outcomes of instructional change, and (b) designing a structured process for adjusting and improving instructional change within the school.

The criteria framework is constructed around the core components of teaching and learning activities, encompassing: teaching objectives; instructional content; teaching methods; forms of instructional organization; testing and assessment of learning outcomes; enabling conditions for teaching

activities; and the teaching practices of teachers and the learning activities of students.

The process for adjusting and improving instructional change is designed to be cyclical, anchored in evidence-based feedback and a commitment to continuous learning. It comprises five fundamental steps: analyzing the current state of instructional change; developing a plan for adjustment and improvement; organizing and implementing the adjustment and improvement process; evaluating the results of the adjustments and improvements made; and utilizing and disseminating the improvement outcomes across the school.

c. Implementation conditions

For this solution to be implemented effectively, the following enabling conditions must be in place: the principal's demonstrated capacity and active leadership role; clearly defined assessment mechanisms and instruments; the empowered and proactive engagement of subject departments; the establishment of multi-source feedback mechanisms; adequate organizational structures and technological support; and access to external professional expertise and advisory support.

d. Expected outcomes

The implementation of this solution is expected to yield the following results: a systematic assessment–feedback–improvement cycle will be established, enabling the school to monitor and guide instructional innovation in a proactive, scientifically grounded, and transparent manner; teachers will develop professional reflective capacity — learning to self-assess, identify areas for growth, and continuously refine their instructional practice; subject departments will operate according to a continuous learning cycle, creating meaningful connections among assessment, adjustment, and experience-sharing, thereby strengthening the collective capacity for instructional innovation; the quality and sustainability of the instructional innovation process will be enhanced, as assessment becomes a natural and embedded dimension of the school's professional culture; and the formation of an organizational learning culture will be advanced — one in which every member of the school

community shares responsibility for monitoring, providing feedback, and driving improvement toward a high-quality, innovation-oriented school.

3.2.6. Institutionalizing and Sustainably Maintaining the Outcomes of Instructional Change at Upper Secondary Schools

a. Objectives of the solution

This solution aims to ensure that the renewal of teaching practices at upper secondary schools is maintained continuously and systematically, becoming an enduring part of the school's organizational culture. In this way, the outcomes of reform are not merely stabilized, but are actively developed, disseminated, and leveraged to achieve sustained improvements in teaching quality.

b. Content and implementation process

To implement this solution effectively, it is necessary to: develop a strategy for maintaining and scaling the outcomes of instructional innovation; institutionalize innovation outcomes into the school's internal mechanisms, policies, and regulations; cultivate an organizational learning culture and an active community of practice; sustain professional support and external oversight; and establish a system for storing and analyzing instructional innovation data.

c. Implementation conditions

Effective implementation of this solution requires the following conditions: the unwavering commitment and proactive leadership of school leaders — particularly the principal — in sustaining the goals of reform and embedding them into institutional policy; adequate and stable resources, including an annual budget for PLC activities, experience-sharing workshops, and the maintenance of digital infrastructure; a teaching staff with strong capacities for self-directed learning, self-regulation, and collegial collaboration, ready to engage actively in professional learning and knowledge-sharing; and an interdisciplinary coordination mechanism linking the school, Departments of Education and Training, teacher education universities, and educational organizations, in order to establish a sustained loop of professional support and external oversight.

d. Expected outcomes

The implementation of this solution is expected to yield the following results: the outcomes of instructional renewal will be institutionalized into the school's system of internal documents, regulations, and procedures, ensuring both legal grounding and institutional stability; an organizational learning culture will take root — one in which all members regularly reflect, learn, and refine their teaching practices; teachers' capacity for innovation and professional collaboration will be maintained, disseminated, and continuously strengthened through PLC activities and communities of practice; the school will develop into a genuine learning organization, capable of sustaining, expanding, and upgrading evidence-based instructional initiatives; and the outcomes of innovation will be durably maintained and replicated, contributing to comprehensive improvements in the school's overall educational quality.

The six proposed solutions for managing instructional change do not function in isolation. Rather, they are interconnected, forming a synchronized, sequentially ordered, and continuously revolving system that reflects the modern management cycle embodied in the PDCA model (Plan–Do–Check–Act) and Fullan's three phases (Initiation–Implementation–Institutionalization), while operating in full alignment with the proposed model for managing instructional change at upper secondary schools adapted to the Vietnamese educational context. Each solution fulfills a specific function, while simultaneously serving as both a precondition for and an outcome of the other solutions — together forming a unified and flexible operating mechanism.

3.3. Assessing the Necessity and Feasibility of the Proposed Solutions

3.3.1. Purpose of the survey

The purpose of the survey was to collect information on the perceived necessity and feasibility of the proposed solutions for managing instructional change at upper secondary schools. On this basis, the survey served to further validate the reliability of those solutions rated highly by

respondents, and to refine any solutions deemed insufficiently appropriate.

3.3.2. Survey content and methodology

a. Survey content

The survey addressed two core questions: Are the proposed solutions genuinely necessary for managing instructional change at upper secondary schools in the current context? And are the proposed solutions feasible for implementation in managing instructional change at upper secondary schools today?

b. Survey methodology and rating scale

The survey instrument was a structured questionnaire employing a five-point rating scale, as follows: Very Unnecessary / Very Infeasible (Level 1); Unnecessary / Infeasible (Level 2); Somewhat Necessary / Somewhat Feasible (Level 3); Necessary / Feasible (Level 4); and Very Necessary / Very Feasible (Level 5). These levels correspond to the following score ranges: Level 1: 1.00–1.80; Level 2: 1.81–2.60; Level 3: 2.61–3.40; Level 4: 3.41–4.20; and Level 5: 4.21–5.00. Survey data were processed using the following statistical measures: arithmetic mean (M), standard deviation (SD), and Pearson correlation coefficient.

c. Respondents

The survey was administered to 21 school managers (Principals and Vice-Principals) and 413 teachers from six upper secondary schools in Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, and Ha Tinh provinces in Vietnam's North Central region, for a total of 434 respondents.

d. Survey results on the necessity and feasibility of the proposed solutions

Table 1. Assessment of the necessity of the proposed solutions (n = 434)

No.	Solution	M	SD	Level
1	Developing context-sensitive action plans for instructional	4.48	0.83	5

No.	Solution	M	SD	Level
	change tailored to each upper secondary school			
2	Building teacher consensus and commitment throughout the process of instructional change	4.54	0.82	5
3	Organizing capacity-building programs to enhance teachers' competencies for driving instructional change	4.62	0.78	5
4	Implementing instructional change in a synchronized and coherent manner, centering teachers in their pivotal role	4.60	0.81	5
5	Conducting continuous assessment and adaptive improvement of instructional change	4.18	0.86	4
6	Institutionalizing and sustainably	4.14	0.87	4

No.	Solution	M	SD	Level
	maintaining the outcomes of instructional change			
Total		4.43	0.83	5

The survey results indicate that, overall, the proposed solutions were rated at a high level of necessity ($M = 4.43$; $SD = 0.83$), reflecting strong consensus among school managers and teachers regarding the importance of managing instructional change in today's educational context. Among the six solutions, "Organizing capacity-building programs to enhance teachers' competencies for driving instructional change" received the highest rating ($M = 4.62$; $SD = 0.78$), indicating that developing teachers' innovation capacity is regarded as the foremost priority. This was followed by "Implementing instructional change in a synchronized and coherent manner, centering teachers in their pivotal role" ($M = 4.60$; $SD = 0.81$) and "Building teacher consensus and commitment throughout the process of instructional change" ($M = 4.54$; $SD = 0.82$). Notably, all three of these highest-rated solutions center on teachers' role, competencies, and professional agency — underscoring that teacher empowerment is the pivotal factor in successful educational reform.

The solution "Institutionalizing and sustainably maintaining the outcomes of instructional change at upper secondary schools" received the lowest necessity rating ($M = 4.14$; $SD = 0.87$). While this score still falls within the high range, it suggests that school managers and teachers have yet to devote sufficient attention to the institutionalization and consolidation phase of reform — precisely the stage that Fullan's model identifies as most critical to ensuring the long-term sustainability of change.

Table 2. Assessment of the feasibility of the proposed solutions ($n = 434$)

No.	Solution	M	SD	Level
1	Developing context-sensitive action plans for instructional change tailored to each upper secondary school	4.18	0.86	4
2	Building teacher consensus and commitment throughout the process of instructional change	4.48	0.83	5
3	Organizing capacity-building programs to enhance teachers' competencies for driving instructional change	4.60	0.81	5
4	Implementing instructional change in a synchronized and coherent manner, centering teachers in their pivotal role	4.54	0.82	5
5	Conducting continuous assessment and adaptive improvement of	4.14	0.87	4

No.	Solution	M	SD	Level
	instructional change			
6	Institutionalizing and sustainably maintaining the outcomes of instructional change	4.09	0.89	4
Total		4.34	0.85	5

The data presented in Table 2 yield the following observations.

In terms of feasibility, the proposed solutions were collectively rated at a high level ($M = 4.34$; $SD = 0.72$), reflecting that the solutions are not only theoretically sound but also practicably implementable within the real conditions of upper secondary schools in Vietnam's North Central region.

The solution rated highest in feasibility was "Organizing capacity-building programs to enhance

teachers' competencies for driving instructional change" ($M = 4.60$; $SD = 0.81$), attributed to its direct relevance to practical needs and its capacity to be delivered through existing professional development systems. Two other solutions also achieved high feasibility scores: "Implementing instructional change in a synchronized and coherent manner, centering teachers in their pivotal role" ($M = 4.54$; $SD = 0.82$) and "Building teacher consensus and commitment throughout the process of instructional change" ($M = 4.48$; $SD = 0.83$). These results demonstrate broad professional consensus around the centrality of teachers as the primary drivers of instructional reform.

By contrast, "Institutionalizing and sustainably maintaining the outcomes of instructional change at upper secondary schools" received the lowest feasibility rating ($M = 4.09$; $SD = 0.89$). This may be attributed to the fact that this phase demands a degree of policy stability, long-term resource commitment, and sustained support mechanisms — conditions that many upper secondary schools currently find difficult to meet.

e. Correlation between the necessity and feasibility of the proposed solutions

Drawing on the data from Table 1 and Table 2, Figure 1 presents a comparative visualization of the necessity and feasibility ratings for each proposed solution.

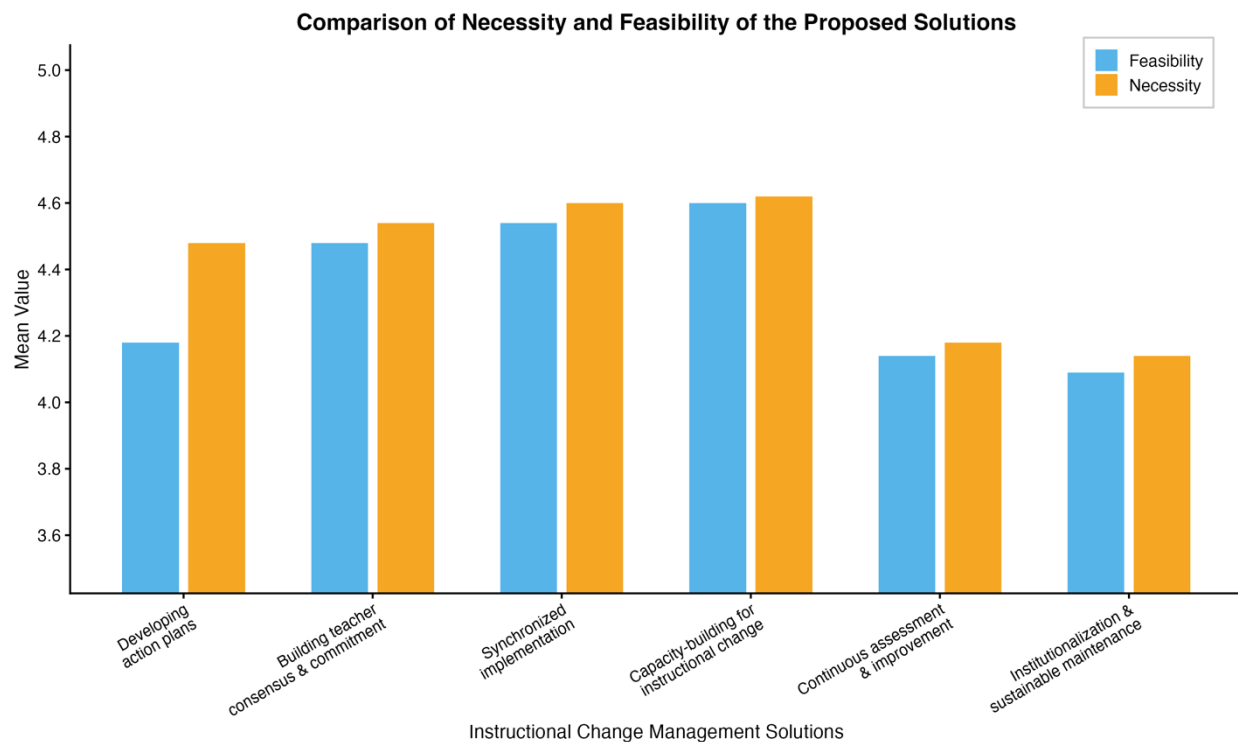


Figure 2. Comparison of necessity and feasibility ratings of the proposed solutions

Figure 2 reveals that the necessity and feasibility ratings of the solutions follow closely parallel trends. Mean values range from 4.1 to 4.6, reflecting a high degree of consensus among school managers and teachers regarding both the appropriateness and the practical applicability of the proposed change management solutions for instructional reform at upper secondary schools. Among all six solutions, "Organizing capacity-building programs to enhance teachers' competencies for driving instructional change" achieved the highest scores on both dimensions (Necessity = 4.62; Feasibility = 4.60). This result confirms that developing teachers' innovation capacity serves as a critical pillar of change management — sustaining teacher motivation and professional agency throughout the process of educational reform in general and instructional change in particular. The two solutions "Implementing instructional change in a synchronized and coherent manner, centering teachers in their pivotal role" and "Building teacher consensus and commitment throughout the process of instructional change" also achieved high mean values (above 4.5), reflecting unified professional awareness of the centrality of teachers in driving instructional improvement.

By contrast, "Institutionalizing and sustainably maintaining the outcomes of instructional change at upper secondary schools" received the lowest scores on both dimensions (Necessity = 4.14; Feasibility = 4.09). This reflects the reality that many upper secondary schools continue to face significant difficulties in sustaining and institutionalizing reform outcomes — particularly with regard to policy mechanisms, internal regulations, and long-term resource commitments — which is precisely the phase that Fullan identifies as pivotal to ensuring the sustainability of educational change.

Table 3. Pearson correlation between the necessity and feasibility of the proposed solutions

Correlation variable	N	Mean	SD	P
Necessity of the proposed solutions	434	4.430	0.710	
Feasibility of the proposed solutions	434	4.340	0.720	
Pearson Correlation	0.859			$p < 0.01$

The findings presented in Figure 1 are further corroborated by the Pearson correlation analysis in Table 3, where the coefficient $r = 0.859$ ($p < 0.01$) demonstrates a very strong positive correlation between the two variables — indicating that solutions rated as more necessary are also consistently perceived as more feasible. These results are consistent with the research of Fullan (2007) and Hallinger (2011), both of whom argue that sustainable change in education is only achievable when perceived necessity and practical feasibility are closely aligned — particularly within the school environment, where people remain at the heart of all innovation.

4. Discussion

Interpret the results in relation to objectives and literature: The findings of this study strongly support the proposed model and the six associated solutions for managing instructional change. The survey results indicated high overall ratings for both necessity ($M = 4.43$) and feasibility ($M = 4.34$), demonstrating a robust consensus among educators regarding the practical value of these interventions. The highest-rated solution across both dimensions was organizing capacity-building programs to enhance teachers' competencies (Necessity = 4.62; Feasibility = 4.60). This aligns closely with Fullan's theoretical emphasis on placing teachers at the center of the change process, proving that empowering educators is widely recognized as the most critical factor in successful reform. Conversely, institutionalizing and sustainably maintaining the outcomes received the lowest ratings for both necessity ($M = 4.14$) and feasibility ($M = 4.09$). This finding accurately reflects the practical difficulties upper secondary schools face in sustaining reform outcomes through long-term resource commitments and policy stability, a challenge extensively documented in Fullan's change phases. Furthermore, the very strong positive Pearson correlation ($r = 0.859$, $p < 0.01$) between necessity and feasibility confirms Hallinger's argument that sustainable educational change relies heavily on the close alignment between perceived need and practical execution.

Explain implications for theory, practice, or policy: Theoretically, this study validates the

integration of Fullan's three phases of change and Deming's PDCA cycle within the specific context of upper secondary education in Vietnam. Practically, it equips school principals and managers with a coherent, six-step actionable framework to transition from ad-hoc planning to systematic, continuous improvement in instructional management. From a policy perspective, the findings highlight an urgent need for educational authorities to formulate better support mechanisms and allocate dedicated resources specifically for the "institutionalization" phase, which educators currently perceive as the most challenging step to execute and maintain.

Address limitations of the study: While the findings are robust, the study's primary limitation is its geographical scope, as the sample is restricted to 434 participants from six upper secondary schools in the North Central region (Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, and Ha Tinh provinces). Consequently, the statistical results may not fully represent the diverse educational contexts across all regions of Vietnam. Additionally, the study relies on cross-sectional self-reported survey data. Future research could incorporate longitudinal designs to track the actual long-term implementation and institutionalization of these management solutions.

5. Conclusion

Drawing on a synthesis of Fullan's theoretical framework, Deming's PDCA cycle, and the practical realities of upper secondary schools in Vietnam's North Central region, this paper has proposed a model for managing instructional change at upper secondary schools adapted to the Vietnamese educational context. The model demonstrates that the process of instructional change must be operated as an organizational learning cycle — one in which schools do not merely implement reform, but continuously learn, reflect, and improve through each successive iteration. The paper also puts forward six key management solutions, organized according to the internal logic of the innovation cycle and the dialectical relationships among the components of the management process. Together, these six solutions constitute a unified whole that comprehensively addresses every stage of the

change process — from preparation and orientation through implementation, evaluation, adjustment, and the institutionalization of outcomes. The solution system not only equips schools to organize and lead the change process in a deliberate and structured manner, but also contributes to cultivating a sustainable culture of innovation within the school. Survey findings from 434 school

managers and teachers across six upper secondary schools in Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, and Ha Tinh provinces in Vietnam's North Central region confirm that the proposed solutions are both highly necessary and highly feasible. Moreover, a very strong positive correlation was found between the necessity and feasibility ratings across all six solutions.

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