The Management of Subject-Specific Group Activities in High Schools in Vinh Long Province

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ABSTRACT:
Managing subject-specific group activities in high schools plays a core role and is considered a process of purposeful and goal-oriented influence by principals to achieve schools' educational objectives. Currently, the management of subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province has been implemented and has achieved certain results. However, there remain several limitations that affect the quality of teaching and learning in these schools. For instance, the capacity of management staff in managing subject-specific group activities is still limited; group leaders have not been adequately trained in managing such activities; and insufficient attention has been given to the planning and training of subject-specific group leaders. Therefore, there is a need for specific and appropriate solutions to improve the effectiveness of managing subject-specific group activities, thereby enhancing educational quality.

Keywords: subject-specific group, academic management.

1. Introduction

The activities of subject-specific groups in high schools are regulated in Article 14 of Circular No. 32/2020/TT-BGDDT, which governs the organizational structure of high schools, including subject-specific groups [1]. Heads of subject-specific groups are appointed by principals and operate under their management and direction to carry out various academic tasks within the groups. These heads are accountable to principals for the teaching quality of teachers as well as the learning outcomes of students under the responsibility of the group. Through subject-specific group heads, principals are able to manage the educational activities of both teachers and students in a close, accurate, and effective manner within the school context. The management of subject-specific group activities in high schools has been addressed by numerous studies. Some authors have proposed seven solutions for educational development in the period 2011-2020, among which the development of teaching and managerial staff - particularly in managing academic activities - is emphasized, highlighting the core role of managing schools' academic development activities [2]. In a study assessing the current situation of managing subject-specific group leaders in high schools in Loc Binh district, Lang Son province, five solutions were proposed, with particular emphasis on planning, appointing, and developing subject-specific group

leaders [3]. Another study analyzing the management of subject-specific group leaders by high school principals in An Phu district, An Giang province proposed four management measures, notably underscoring the importance of pedagogical organizational measures [4].

At present, the management of subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province has been implemented and has achieved certain results. However, several limitations remain, which affect the quality of teaching and learning as well as sustainable development. Therefore, this study aims to analyze and evaluate the current situation of managing subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province and to identify the causes of these limitations, thereby proposing appropriate solutions to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the current context.

2. Study

2.1. Subjects and scope of study

- Survey participants: The survey participants included managers and teachers, with a total sample size of 137 respondents. Among them were 42 managers (including principals, vice principals, and heads of subject-specific groups) and 95 teachers from five high schools. The survey aimed to assess the current situation of managing subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province.

- Scope of the study: The study focused on the management of subject-specific group activities at five high schools in Vinh Long Province. The survey was conducted during Semester 1 of the 2024–2025 academic year.

2.2. Study method

The primary method of data collection was a questionnaire survey. The collected data were analyzed using mathematical statistical techniques implemented in Microsoft Excel. A five-point Likert scale was employed to quantify the level of assessment, with scores ranging from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum). The scale was categorized into five levels as follows:

Level	Meaning	Score
1	Very unimportant / Weak / Very ineffective	1
2	Not important / Average / Ineffective	2
3	Less important / Fair / Fairly effective	3
4	Important / Good / Effective	4
5	Very important / Very good / Very effective	5

Average score = (level 1 x 1 point + level 2 x 2 points + level 3 x 3 points + level 4 x 4 points)/N (where N was the total number of survey participants). The distance value was calculated according to the formula (Max – Min)/n = (5-1)/5 = 0.8

The assessment of the level of each factor was based on the average score value of that factor. The average score was categorized into levels and presented as follows:

From 1.00 to 1.80: Weak

From1.81 to 2.60: Average

From 2.61 to 3.40: Fair

From 3.41 to 4.20: Good

From 4.21 to 5.00: Very good

2.3. The current situation of the management of subject-specific group activities in Vinh Long province's high schools

2.3.1. The awareness of the importance of managing subject-specific group activities in Vinh Long province's high schools

Managers and teachers who were well aware of the importance of managing subject-specific group activities were better able to manage, organize, and implement teaching in alignment with the goals and tasks of their schools' educational programs, as well as to build and maintain a consistent and systematic curriculum.

Table 1. Survey results on the current awareness of the importance of managing subject-specific group activities at Vinh Long Province High Schools

NO	ASSESSMENT CONTENT	AVERAGE ($\bar{X}$)	Rank
1	Contributing to improving the quality of general education	4.99	1
2	Contributing to the professional development for teachers within groups	4.81	2
3	Helping teachers and schools become proactive in choosing content and methods for active teaching	4.20	4
4	Assisting in planning the effective use of teaching aids and equipment	4.75	3
5	Serving as the basis for personnel organization and appointment	4.81	2
6	Helping to enhance the spirit of democratic cooperation between team members	4.12	6
7	Determining appropriate goals and activities	4.18	5

The survey results presented in Table 1 indicate that the majority of managers and teachers perceived the management of subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province as important to very important (average score ≥ 4.12), and no respondents considered it unimportant. In particular, both managers and teachers rated the role of managing subject-specific group activities in "contributing to improving the quality of general education" at a very high level (average score = 4.99). Additionally, several aspects were also evaluated by most respondents as very important, including "contributing to the professional development of teachers within groups," "serving as a basis for personnel organization and appointment," and "assisting in planning the effective use of teaching aids and equipment." Other aspects were rated as important, with average scores ranging from 4.12 to 4.20, such as "helping teachers and schools become proactive in selecting content and methods for active teaching," "determining appropriate goals and activities," and "enhancing the spirit of democratic cooperation among team members." These findings indicate that the management of subject-specific group activities constitutes a vital component of the organizational structure of high schools and contributes significantly to improving the quality of education and training. Therefore, it can be concluded that managing subject-specific group activities plays a key role in schools' educational activities.

2.3.2. The current situation of planning subject-specific group activities in Vinh Long province's high schools

In managing subject-specific group activities, planning subject-specific group is a very important step to help managers monitor and evaluate the progress of individuals' and groups' tasks and, at the same time, to properly implement the set goals and professional content, put professional activities into order, help subject-specific groups and teachers become fully aware that seriously implementing the general education curriculum is a mandatory task within schools.

Table 2: The current situation of planning subject-specific group activities in Vinh Long province's high schools

NO	ASSESSMENT CONTENT	AVERAGE ($\bar{X}$)	RANK
1	Making annual, monthly and weekly plans for subject-specific group activities	4.90	1
2	Making plans for improving management skills of subject-specific group leaders	2.40	7
3	Defining goals and tasks for subject-specific groups	3.28	4
4	Making plans for the expected work arrangement and implementation time	3.35	3
5	Making plans for inspecting subject-specific group activities	4.85	2
6	Making plans for setting indicators of subject teaching quality	2.55	5
7	Planning the appointment of subject-specific group leaders and deputy group leaders according to regulations	2.31	6

According to the survey results presented in Table 2, several aspects of planning were highly rated by both managers and teachers. Specifically, "making annual, monthly, and weekly plans for subject-specific group activities" achieved an average score of 4.90, while "making plans for inspecting subject-specific group activities" received an average score of 4.85. These activities have been routinely implemented in high schools in Vinh Long Province. The surveyed schools place considerable emphasis on planning, recognizing it as a fundamental management function closely associated with the orientation of future goals and actions. At the same time, effective planning enables subject-specific groups to identify and implement other management functions, thereby contributing to the overall effectiveness of schools.

However, several aspects were rated at only fair to average levels, with mean scores ranging from 2.31 to 3.35. These aspects include "defining goals and tasks for subject-specific groups," "making plans for work allocation and implementation timelines," "planning for the improvement of management skills of subject-specific group leaders," "planning the appointment of subject-specific group leaders and deputy group leaders in accordance with regulations," and "developing plans for setting indicators of subject teaching quality."

Notably, "planning the appointment of subject-specific group leaders and deputy group leaders in accordance with regulations" received the lowest mean score (2.31). This finding indicates that many schools have not yet established a systematic and scientific approach to managing subject-specific group activities. Planning processes are often formalistic and lack coherence among activities. Coordination among members within subject-specific groups, as well as between these groups and other departments in the school, remains limited. In particular, insufficient attention has been paid to planning for the development of subject-specific groups and to the training of subject-specific group leaders. Consequently, schools may face difficulties in developing high-quality subject-specific groups, and the absence of a well-prepared successor workforce may negatively affect academic activities and the overall quality of teaching.

2.3.3. The current situation of organizing and implementing subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long province

Organizing subject-specific group activities involves developing and implementing documents and regulations related to subject-specific groups for all members (such as sector regulations, professional guidelines, and operational charters of institutions and

units). It also includes formulating clear and specific plans for subject-specific group activities and assigning tasks to responsible personnel in accordance with their capacities, thereby maximizing the effectiveness of these activities.

Table 3: The current situation of organizing and implementing subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long province

NO	ASSESSMENT CONTENT	AVERAGE ($\bar{X}$)	RANK
1	Disseminating regulations related to subject-specific groups to all members	4.98	1
2	Assigning tasks appropriate to the capacity of individuals and departments	2.60	4
3	Effective coordination between departments and subject-specific groups	4.92	2
4	Ensuring work to be assigned fully and promptly	4.83	3
5	Implementing the principle that principals delegate authority to subject-specific group leaders	2.54	6
6	Designing organizational structures that are appropriate to the demtermined goals and functions.	2.58	5

The survey results presented in Table 3 indicate that three aspects were rated at a very good level, with mean scores ranging from 4.83 to 4.98. These aspects include "disseminating regulations related to subject-specific groups to all members," "effective coordination between departments and subject-specific groups," and "ensuring that tasks are assigned fully and promptly." These results suggest that principals have effectively implemented and communicated relevant documents to subject-specific groups. In addition, subject-specific groups maintain close coordination with one another, fostering linkages between professional departments, Party organizations, and unions within schools to achieve educational objectives. Furthermore, the assignment of tasks to subject-specific groups is carried out in a timely and comprehensive manner, enabling these groups to perform their functions effectively.

However, many managers and teachers expressed the view that the organization of subject-specific group activities remains suboptimal, with performance rated only at an average level. The mean scores range from 2.54 to 2.60 for aspects such as "assigning tasks appropriate to the capacity of individuals and departments," "implementing the principle of delegating authority from principals to subject-specific group leaders," and "designing organizational structures aligned with defined goals and functions." These findings indicate that task assignments to subject-specific groups have not consistently matched individuals' competencies, and organizational structures have not been appropriately established. This is reflected in the formation of subject-specific groups and the allocation of teachers to these groups, which lack innovation and have not effectively enhanced the performance of group activities. Furthermore, schools have not given sufficient attention to the delegation of authority to subject-specific groups, despite the need to strengthen the management of subject-specific group activities in high schools.

3.4. The current situation of subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long province

Principals' direction of subject-specific group activities is a critical component of school management. High school principals need to provide close guidance and oversight to ensure that subject-specific groups effectively implement and perform their assigned tasks.

Table 4: The current situation of directing subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long province

NO	ASSESSMENT CONTENT	AVERAGE ($\bar{X}$)	Rank
1	Ways of directing subject-specific group activities	4.20	**1**
2	Providing directions for academic groups to implement professional regulations	2.55	7
3	Providing directions for academic groups to carry out teaching activities	2.49	8
4	Providing directions for activities to evaluate students' learning outcomes	4.17	3
5	Providing directions for activities to tutor weak students and foster good students	4.12	4
6	Providing guidance on academic activity records	2.58	6
7	Providing directions for academic development activities for teachers	2.60	5
8	Providing direction for the development of subject-specific groups into cohesive and academically strong units	4.19	2

The survey results presented in Table 4 indicate that the direction of subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province was rated at a good level. The mean scores were relatively high across several aspects, including "ways of directing subject-specific group activities," "providing directions for activities to evaluate students' learning outcomes," "providing directions for activities to support weak students and foster high-achieving students," and "providing direction for the development of subject-specific groups into cohesive and academically strong units." These results suggest that school management boards have provided clear and comprehensive guidance, both in written and verbal forms. They have effectively identified students in need of additional support as well as those requiring further academic enrichment. Notably, management boards consistently offer close and effective direction based on the principles of solidarity and strong academic cohesion within subject-specific groups. They also provide clear orientations for group activities and ensure that such activities are implemented in alignment with the schools' overall plans and objectives.

However, several aspects were rated at only an average level, with mean scores ranging from 2.49 to 2.60. These aspects include "providing directions for subject-specific groups to implement professional regulations," "providing guidance on academic activity records," "providing directions for subject-specific groups to carry out teaching activities," and "providing directions for teachers' professional development activities." These findings indicate that the direction of subject-specific group activities has not been fully effective. In particular, it has not provided adequate guidance for the implementation of curriculum allocation, the organization of periodic subject-specific group activities, documentation and record-keeping, management of teachers' professional records, and the monitoring and evaluation of students' learning outcomes. This situation also reflects limitations in the capacity to direct and manage academic activities, thereby hindering the full realization of the intended role of subject-specific group management.

3.5. The current situation of inspecting and evaluating subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long province

Inspection and evaluation constitute the final stage in the management of subject-specific group activities. Their purpose is to identify strengths and weaknesses in the implementation process, thereby facilitating timely adjustments, reinforcing the execution of plans, and supporting teachers through professional development to perform their tasks more effectively.

Table 5 : The current situation of inspecting and evaluating subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long province

NO	ASSESSMENT CONTENT	AVERAGE $\bar{X}$	Rank
1	Supervising teachers' pedagogical activities according to professional regulations	4.20	1
2	Various forms of testing and assessment	2.01	8
3	Having specific inspection plans based on the yearly and semester inspection plans	3.82	4
4	Inspecting and evaluating students' learning outcomes	4.18	2
5	Designing tools and means to inspect the subject-specific group activities	2.60	5
6	Checking records of subject-specific groups according to regulations	4.12	3
7	Determining the criteria for measuring and evaluating the inspection results of subject-specific groups	2.51	6
8	Training and implementing professional plans for inspectors	2.49	7

The survey results indicate that the inspection and evaluation of the management of subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province were rated at a good level, with mean scores ranging from 3.82 to 4.20. The evaluated aspects include "supervising teachers' pedagogical activities in accordance with professional regulations," "developing specific inspection plans aligned with annual and semester plans," "inspecting and evaluating students' learning outcomes," and "checking subject-specific group records in accordance with regulations." These findings reflect the efforts of school management personnel in effectively fulfilling their supervisory and evaluative responsibilities.

However, in practice, several difficulties and challenges remain in the implementation process. Some aspects were rated at only an average level, with mean scores ranging from 2.01 to 2.60. These include "designing tools and methods for inspecting subject-specific group activities," "determining criteria for measuring and evaluating inspection results," and "training and implementing professional plans for inspectors." Notably, "diversifying forms of testing and assessment" received the lowest mean score (2.01). This indicates that current inspection and evaluation practices primarily focus on regular and periodic inspections, lacking diversity and innovation. Many inspection activities are formalistic, time-consuming, and do not yield substantial outcomes. Moreover, inspection and evaluation methods remain insufficiently flexible, leading to difficulties in addressing practical situations.

In summary, the survey results on the current situation of managing subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province indicate that, although managers and teachers demonstrate a high level of awareness of the importance of managing academic activities, the implementation of these activities still presents several limitations. This is reflected in the fact that most aspects—from planning to organizing, directing, and evaluating subject-specific group activities—were rated at only an average level. The quality of managing subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province currently exhibits several shortcomings that require attention. These include the quality of planning, the organization and implementation of management plans, the direction of subject-specific group activities, and the inspection and evaluation processes. The underlying reasons for these limitations include the relatively limited capacity of management staff in managing subject-specific group activities, as well as the insufficient training of subject-specific group leaders in areas such as activity management and teaching management. In addition, schools have not adequately focused on the planning, training, utilization, and evaluation of subject-specific group leaders based on a scientific approach to personnel management. Therefore, it is

essential to enhance the management capacity of high school principals and vice principals, improve the effectiveness of planning, provide systematic training for subject-specific group leaders, strengthen their management competencies, and develop appropriate evaluation criteria.

3. Conclusion

The management of subject-specific group activities plays a crucial role, as the quality of education and the development of high schools largely depend on its effectiveness. Managing subject-specific group activities is a purposeful, systematic, and goal-oriented process led by school principals, aimed at achieving the educational objectives of high schools. In particular, principals are responsible for key management functions, including planning subject-specific group activities, organizing their implementation, directing activities in alignment with the schools' educational orientation and development goals, and conducting inspection and evaluation in accordance with educational requirements. The analysis of the current situation of subject-specific group activities in high schools in Vinh Long Province indicates that the managerial role of principals is both evident and significant. Principals have implemented management activities in a relatively comprehensive manner, contributing to the effective operation of subject-specific groups and addressing various academic issues. However, certain limitations in the management of subject-specific group activities still persist. Therefore, in the coming period, school managers need to strengthen measures for managing subject-specific group activities, continuously enhance their managerial capacity, and improve the effectiveness of inspection and evaluation to ensure timely adjustments and draw lessons from practice. At the same time, it is necessary to create conditions for subject-specific groups to operate effectively, thereby contributing to the improvement of teaching quality in high schools.

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