Professional Development Management in School-Based Psychological Counseling for Teachers: Current Practices and Proposed Interventions in Semi-Boarding Primary Schools Serving Ethnic Minorities in Muong Nhe District, Dien Bien Province

By

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Abstract

In recent years, the development of school psychological counseling competencies for primary school teachers has gained increased attention, particularly in ethnic minority semi-boarding schools in remote areas of Vietnam. This study aims to examine the current state of management in professional development activities related to school psychological counseling for teachers at semi-boarding ethnic minority primary schools in Muong Nhe District, Dien Bien Province. Using a mixed-method approach, quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 36 educational administrators, 360 teachers, 180 parents, and 360 students. The data were processed and analyzed using SPSS 22.0. The findings reveal several limitations in current practices, notably a lack of structured training programs and reliance on teachers' personal experience. Based on the analysis, the study proposes targeted management solutions to enhance the effectiveness of capacity-building programs. The results contribute to the broader discourse on teacher professional development and the promotion of holistic education in the context of ongoing educational reform in Vietnam.

Keywords: *School psychological counseling, teacher professional development, educational management, ethnic minority education, primary education.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. International Research

School-based psychological counseling has been globally acknowledged as a vital element within comprehensive student support systems designed to safeguard mental well-being and foster holistic student development. Research by Durlak and colleagues (2011) indicates that when schools implement structured social and emotional learning (SEL) initiatives, these programs substantially enhance student behavior, attitudes, and academic performance. Their meta-analysis, which included data from nearly 270,000 students, revealed that participants in SEL programs showed significantly stronger social skills, more constructive attitudes, fewer behavioral issues, and higher academic achievement than their peers in control groups.

In many developed nations, school counseling responsibilities are typically assigned to professionals with formal training in educational psychology. By contrast, in several developing contexts, this role is often delegated to teachers—many of whom have not received specialized psychological training.

This mismatch has contributed to a noticeable shortfall in the quality of mental health support services available to students. Green et al. (2013) argue that teachers should undergo continuous professional development that incorporates both psychological expertise and sensitivity to local cultural contexts, especially in regions marked by ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity.

Additional studies, such as that by Suldo et al. (2010), further support the assertion that teachers' counseling competencies are closely tied to students' mental wellness and academic engagement. These findings underscore the importance of establishing robust professional development frameworks to strengthen teachers' capacity for providing psychological support in contemporary educational environments.

1.2. Research in Vietnam

In Vietnam, school psychological counseling has garnered growing attention over the past decade, especially following the issuance of official guidance by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET, 2019) on implementing psychological support in general education institutions. Despite this

progress, most current schoolteachers—particularly those in remote or ethnic minority boarding schools—have not received in-depth training in psychological counseling.

According to Nguyen Van Trao (2018), while the role of teachers in providing psychological support to students has increasingly been acknowledged, their counseling capacity largely relies on personal experience. Many teachers lack professional skills and access to modern counseling methods. Furthermore, training programs are often fragmented, misaligned with practical needs, and insufficiently tailored to the sociocultural contexts of different localities.

Le Thi Hoa (2021), in a study on the management of teacher training programs, emphasized that the effectiveness of professional development in psychological counseling is closely tied to how these activities are organized and governed—from the school level up to provincial education departments. Factors such as training content, delivery methods, instructor qualifications, and monitoring mechanisms play a crucial role in ensuring the quality of these initiatives (https://doi.org/10.25073/2588-1116/vnies.431).

In ethnic minority areas such as Muong Nhe District in Đien Bien Province, teachers face not only professional limitations but also challenges related to language barriers, cultural differences, and insufficient infrastructure. Research by Phan Thi Thu Hien and Nguyen Thi Mai Lan (2020) highlighted numerous obstacles in implementing school counseling at ethnic boarding schools, including the lack of specialized personnel, inadequate instructional materials, and limited expert support. These constraints underscore the urgent need for more effective management solutions to design and implement context-appropriate training programs.

From both domestic and international studies, it is evident that school counseling competence is a foundational pillar in delivering holistic education. However, there remains a notable gap in systematic research, especially at the primary level and within the ethnic semi-boarding school context. Assessing the current situation and proposing management strategies for enhancing teachers' counseling competencies in primary ethnic boarding schools in Mường Nhé District can help address this research gap and contribute meaningfully to educational governance in under-resourced areas.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher developed a survey instrument comprising both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The study was conducted across 15 ethnic minority semi-boarding primary schools in Muong Nhe District, including: Leng Su Sin, Chung Chai No. 1, Chung Chai No. 2, Tran Van Tho, Nam Po, Nam Vi, Muong Toong No. 1, Muong Toong No. 3, Nam Ke No. 1, Nam Ke No. 2, Huoi Lech, Pa My, Quang Lam, Sin Thau, and Sen Thuong. The sample consisted of 45 school administrators, 450 teachers, 300 parents, and 300 students from Grades 4 and 5. Quantitative statistical methods were applied for data analysis. To examine the current situation, the study employed the percentage calculation method using the following formula: $\% = \frac{a}{b} \times 100\%$

The method of calculating the weighted mean is based on the following formula: $\overline{X}j = \dfrac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} f_i x_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} f_i}$

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Conceptualizing Teachers' Competence in School Psychological Counseling

Teachers' competence in school psychological counseling can be defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, and professional attributes that enable them to support students in addressing psychological, academic, behavioral, and developmental challenges within the school environment (Nguyen Thi My Loc, 2016). According to Dinh Thi Kim Thoa et al. (2021), this competency comprises several core components: (1) understanding of student and developmental psychology; (2) communication and active listening skills; (3) the ability to identify and address psychological issues; (4) ethical standards and empathetic disposition; and (5) the capacity to collaborate with families and both internal and external support systems.

In the context of contemporary education, teachers are not merely conveyors of academic content—they are also mentors and facilitators of students' personal development and emotional resilience (Tran Thi Bich Lieu & Nguyen Van Hoa, 2020). This evolving role underscores the necessity for teachers to undergo systematic and ongoing professional development to strengthen their counseling competencies. Such training should be tailored to students' age-specific needs and regional characteristics, particularly in areas with large populations of ethnic minority students.

3.2. Managing Teacher Professional Development Activities

According to Nguyen Cong Khanh (2020), managing professional development activities involves the processes of planning, organizing, directing, and evaluating training programs aimed at enhancing teachers' professional expertise and competencies. In the context of school counseling, management activities must be scientifically grounded, practical, and responsive to the development needs of each locality. The core components of professional development management include: (1) identifying training needs based on actual surveys, (2) designing appropriate training programs and materials, (3) selecting flexible organizational methods (such as in-person workshops, online courses, or on-site training), and (4) monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of training (Nguyen Thi Thanh & Tran Van Hanh, 2022).

In ethnic minority semi-boarding schools, management activities should emphasize the socio-cultural specificities, such as language differences, local customs, and infrastructure conditions. Adopting flexible management models that place teachers at the center, encourage self-directed learning, foster professional growth, and enhance the role of school administrators is a suitable direction (Phan Thi Thu Hien & Nguyen Thi Mai Lan, 2020).

3.3. Theoretical Foundations of Holistic Education and the Need for Psychological Support

Holistic education is the core objective of the new general education curriculum, aimed at the simultaneous development of students' intellectual, physical, ethical, and social capabilities (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018). Among these, psychological and social factors play a foundational role in helping students adapt to the learning environment, exhibit positive behavior, and develop self-regulation skills. Numerous studies, both domestic and international, indicate that students—especially at the primary level—who do not receive timely psychological support are more likely to experience stress, confusion, and have their academic performance negatively impacted (Durlak et al., 2011). Therefore, building a competent teaching staff with psychological counseling skills and effectively managing the professional development process is a prerequisite for achieving the goal of holistic education.

3.4. Survey Results

Table 1. Survey on the Forms of School Psychological Counseling Applied by Teachers in the Process of Educating Students

No.	Content	Evaluation Opinions						Total Score	$\overline{X}$	Ranking
		Very Suitable		Suitable		Not Suitable				
		Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%			
1	How do you assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of direct psychological counseling?	660	60,27	338	30,87	97	8,86	2753	2,51	3
2	How do you evaluate the use of school psychological counseling through internet platforms?	138	12,60	606	55,34	351	32,05	1977	1,81	5
3	How do you assess the integration of psychological counseling content into subject lessons?	397	36,26	340	31,05	356	32,51	2227	2,04	1
4	How do you assess the effectiveness of special talks, seminars, or student forums in school psychological counseling?	396	36,16	350	31,96	349	31,87	2237	2,04	2
5	How do you assess the establishment and operation of information channels or providing materials to support school psychological counseling?	387	35,34	356	32,51	352	32,15	2225	2,03	4
	$\overline{X}$								2,09	

The results from Table 1 indicate that students primarily evaluate the application of two forms of school psychological counseling by teachers: counseling integrated into lesson content $\overline{X}$ = 2,04 and counseling through specialized talks $\overline{X}$ = 2,04. These forms are commonly implemented during class activities or through specific topics developed by professional groups. Other forms, such as the establishment of information channels and the provision of materials (X = 2,03), direct counseling $\overline{X}$ = 2,51 and counseling through the internet $\overline{X}$ = 1,81 are perceived by students as less frequently implemented. However, overall, all forms of counseling are being conducted at a moderate level.

This suggests that, in primary schools in general, the selection and implementation of school psychological counseling methods lack variety and do not fully align with the psychological characteristics and individual needs of students.

Counseling activities currently focus mainly on group-based methods within the classroom, while individual counseling, indirect counseling (via phone or the internet), and collaboration with families and specialized centers have not received adequate attention.

The monotony and lack of flexibility in organizing school psychological counseling may reduce the effectiveness of the approach, limiting student-teacher interaction, which in turn negatively impacts the quality of psychological support in schools. Therefore, in the process of managing and developing teachers' competencies, it is essential to guide and support them in selecting and combining counseling methods in a flexible manner that suits different student groups, to improve the practical effectiveness and attractiveness of school psychological counseling activities.

Table 2. Survey on the Effectiveness of Planning for the Development of School Psychological Counseling Competency for the Teaching Staff

No.	Content	Evaluation Opinions						Total Score	$\overline{X}$	Ranking
		Frequently		Sometimes.		Never				
		Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%			
1	Does the school develop a plan for enhancing school psychological counseling competency for teachers based on the guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Training, especially regarding the professional standards for primary school teachers?	803	73,33	223	20,37	69	6,30	2924	2,67	2
2	Does the school conduct surveys and assess the school psychological counseling competency of primary school teachers before developing the competency development plan?	462	42,19	454	41,46	179	16,35	2473	2,26	7
3	In the process of planning the competency development for school psychological counseling for teachers, does the school clearly define the objectives, content, and methods of development?	575	52,51	462	42,19	58	5,30	2707	2,47	3
4	Does the school anticipate plans for preparing facilities, technical equipment, and financial resources for the school psychological counseling competency development activities?	578	52,79	447	40,82	70	6,39	2698	2,46	5
5	Does the school plan to invite experts or select lecturers to conduct the development of school psychological counseling competency for teachers?	810	73,97	216	19,73	69	6,30	2931	2,68	1

6	Has the school drafted a plan for the development of school psychological counseling competency for teachers?	575	52,51	454	41,46	66	6,03	2699	2,46	4
7	Does the school anticipate methods for testing and evaluating the results of the school psychological counseling competency development for teachers?	570	52,05	454	41,46	71	6,48	2689	2,46	6
	$\overline{X}$								**2,49**	

The survey results presented in Table 2 show that, according to the assessments of the survey participants, the planning of the psychological counseling competency development for primary school teachers in these schools achieved an average level, with an overall mean score $\overline{X}$ = 2,49. However, the implementation of specific aspects within the planning process shows significant differences.

Specifically, two areas were rated highly: (1) the development of the training plan based on the guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Training $\overline{X}$ = 2,67, with 73,33% of responses rating it as "frequent"; and (5) the planning for inviting experts or selecting speakers to conduct the training $\overline{X}$ = 2,68, with 73,97% of responses rating it as "frequent."

In contrast, other areas such as (2) surveying and assessing the psychological counseling competency of teachers $\overline{X}$ = 2,26, with 42,19% rating it as "frequent"; (3) defining the objectives, content, and forms of the training $\overline{X}$ = 2,47, with 52,51% rating it as "frequent"; (4) planning the preparation of facilities, technical equipment, and financial resources $\overline{X}$ = 2,46, with 52,79% rating it as "frequent"; (6) drafting the training activity plan, with 52,51% rating it as "frequent" and (7) planning the methods for testing and evaluating the results of the training, with 52,05% rating it as "frequent," were all rated at an average level.

The causes of this situation may stem from the schools' reliance on directives from higher authorities and local governments, while the funding from districts and provinces is limited and slow to be implemented. Furthermore, determining the necessary tools and equipment for the training activities presents challenges, as the administrative staff and teachers involved in psychological counseling work are often dual-role employees, lacking in-depth knowledge and specialized skills in this area. This leads to inadequate preparation of appropriate materials and tools.

In addition, the selection of teachers to participate in the training is also problematic due to the imbalances in the teacher workforce, which results in complications in choosing teachers for direct participation in the psychological counseling activities, making this process more complex and challenging for the schools.

Table 3. Survey on the Current Status of Organizing Professional Development Activities for Teachers in School Psychological Counseling

No.	Content	Evaluation Opinions						Total Score	$\overline{X}$	Ranking
		Frequently		Sometimes		Never				
		Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%			
1	To what extent has the school identified and categorized the necessary activities during the organization of psychological counseling competence training for primary school teachers?	780	71,23	239	21,83	76	6,94	2894	2,64	5
2	How has the school established an	785	71,69	239	21,83	71	6,48	2904	2,65	3

	organizational structure to implement psychological counseling competence training for primary school teachers?								
3	How has the training program on psychological counseling competence for primary school teachers been designed and operated?	474	43,29	454	41,46	167	15,25	2497	2,28	4
4	How has the assignment of responsibilities to administrators and teachers in the psychological counseling competence training been carried out?	478	43,65	457	41,74	160	14,61	2508	2,29	2
5	How has the school collaborated with stakeholders (experts, parents, social organizations) during the implementation of psychological counseling competence training for primary school teachers?	467	42,65	462	42,19	166	15,16	2491	2,27	6
6	How well have the necessary resources (finance, facilities, materials) been ensured for the training activities on psychological counseling competence for primary school teachers?	790	72,15	239	21,83	66	6,03	2914	2,66	1
	$\overline{X}$								2,47	

The survey results presented in Table 3 indicate that the organization and implementation of professional development activities aimed at enhancing psychological counseling competencies for primary school teachers were evaluated at a

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moderate level, with an overall mean score of $\overline{X}$ = 2,47. However, there were significant differences in the implementation levels across specific aspects. Notably, the components that received higher evaluations include: The identification and categorization of essential activities to achieve the training objectives $\overline{X}$ = 2,64, with 71,23% of respondents reporting frequent implementation. The establishment of an organizational structure for professional development $\overline{X}$ = 2,6), with 54,84% indicating frequent implementation. The provision of necessary resources (financial, infrastructural, and material) to support the training activities $\overline{X}$ = 2,66, with 72,51% reporting frequent availability. In contrast, several aspects were rated at an average level, including: The development and operation of the training program $\overline{X}$ = 2,28, with only 43,29% of respondents reporting frequent implementation. The assignment of responsibilities to administrators and teachers in the training process $\overline{X}$ = 2,29, with 43,65% indicating frequent implementation. The collaboration with internal and external stakeholders during the implementation process $\overline{X}$ = 2,27, with 42,65% reporting frequent involvement.

The moderate evaluations of these components may stem from challenges in coordinating between internal actors (subject teachers, school staff, administrators) and external partners (healthcare institutions, adolescent health counseling centers, parents) in organizing professional development activities. Moreover, the lack of sufficient resources and limitations in the effective design and operation of training programs have negatively impacted the quality of implementation.

In summary, while the organization of professional development activities for enhancing psychological counseling competencies among primary school teachers has achieved some positive results, certain limitations remain. Moving forward, closer leadership and supervision from primary school principals are essential to improving the effectiveness of these activities—particularly in the areas of program design and execution, clear task assignment for staff and teachers, and stronger collaboration with relevant internal and external stakeholders.

Table 4. Survey on the Current Status of Leadership in Implementing Professional Development Activities for Teachers in School Psychological Counseling

No.	Content	Evaluation Opinions						Total Score	$\overline{X}$	Ranking
		Frequently		Sometimes		Never				
		Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%			
1	To what extent has the school leadership directed the development of content and training programs aimed at enhancing psychological counseling competencies for teachers?	462	42,19	462	42,19	171	15,62	2481	2,27	5
2	To what extent has the school leadership implemented the training program in accordance with the proposed plan?	528	48,22	490	44,75	77	7,03	2641	2,41	3
3	How effectively has the school leadership guided the selection of appropriate methods and training formats tailored to the school's specific context?	793	72,42	254	23,20	48	4,38	2935	2,68	1
4	To what extent has the school leadership enhanced supporting conditions (facilities, materials, equipment) for the implementation of the training program?	462	42,19	331	30,23	302	27,58	2350	2,15	7
5	How actively has the school leadership facilitated inter-sectoral coordination and the involvement of stakeholders	528	48,22	462	42,19	105	9,59	2613	2,39	4

	(parents, psychological experts, social organizations) in the training process?								
6	To what extent has the school leadership implemented policies and regulations related to professional development in psychological counseling for teachers?	793	72,42	247	22,56	55	5,02	2928	2,67	2
7	How effectively has the school leadership directed the design and development of content for professional training programs in psychological counseling for teachers?	402	36,71	354	32,33	339	30,96	2253	2,06	6
	$\overline{X}$								**2,37**	

The survey results presented in Table 4 reveal that the leadership of primary school principals in organizing professional development activities to enhance psychological counseling competencies (PCC) for teachers was rated at a moderate level, with an overall mean score of $\overline{X}$ = 2,37. However, there were notable variations in the level of implementation across different aspects. Specifically, the components receiving higher evaluations include: Item 3: Leadership in selecting training methods and formats appropriate to the practical context of the school $\overline{X}$ = 2,68, wit 72,42% of respondents indicating frequent implementation. Item 6: Leadership in implementing policies and regulations related to professional development activities $\overline{X}$ = 2,67, also with 72,42% reporting frequent execution. Conversely, the components receiving lower levels of implementation include: Item 1: Direction in the development of content and training program $\overline{X}$ = 2,27, with only 42,19% of responses indicating frequent implementation. Item 2: Direction in executing training programs according to the planned schedule $\overline{X}$ = 2,41, with 48,22% indicating frequent execution. Item 4: Guidance in enhancing supporting conditions (facilities, materials, equipment) for program implementation $\overline{X}$ = 2,15, with 42,19% reporting frequent implementation. Item 5:

Leadership in promoting inter-sectoral collaboration and participation from relevant stakeholders $\overline{X}$ = 2,39, with 48,22% evaluating it as frequent. Item 7: Direction in monitoring and assessing teachers during and after the training process $\overline{X}$ = 2,06, wit only 36,71% indicating frequent application.

These findings suggest that while primary school principals have initially demonstrated a leadership role in managing PCC activities, this role has not yet been comprehensively or consistently realized. The limitations in scope and effectiveness of implementation have affected the organization, operation, and coordination of PCC activities—including task execution, resource mobilization, and evaluation mechanisms.

In conclusion, although school principals have shown concern for leading the implementation of professional development in psychological counseling for teachers, several aspects remain inadequately addressed. The direction and coordination efforts are sometimes fragmented, and interdepartmental collaboration lacks flexibility, resulting in suboptimal effectiveness. Therefore, specific and targeted measures are needed to enhance the leadership capacity and effectiveness of school administrators in this area moving forward.

Table 5. Survey on the Current Status of Monitoring and Evaluation in Professional Development Activities for Teachers in School Psychological Counseling

No.	Content	Evaluation Opinions						Total Score	$\overline{X}$	Ranking
		Frequently		Sometimes		Never				
		Quantity	%	Quantity	Quantity	%	Quantity			
1	To what extent has the school developed clear and specific criteria for monitoring and evaluating professional development activities in psychological counseling for primary school	519	47,40	462	42,19	114	10,41	2595	2,37	1

	teachers?								
2	Are the forms of assessment applied reasonable and able to clearly determine teachers' achievement levels based on the established criteria?	578	52,79	394	35,98	123	11,23	2645	2,42	3
3	Does the school regularly conduct assessment activities in line with the process of developing psychological counseling competencies for primary school teachers?	420	38,36	370	33,79	305	27,85	2305	2,11	6
4	During the training process, does the school monitor and supervise activities to collect evidence and information for evaluation purposes?	476	43,47	347	31,69	272	24,84	2394	2,19	4
5	Are the results from monitoring and evaluation activities used to positively adjust the content of training programs in alignment with actual needs?	790	72,15	239	21,83	66	6,03	2914	2,66	2
6	Does the school summarize and reflect on each training phase to timely adjust psychological counseling competency development activities more effectively?	468	42,74	462	42,19	165	15,07	2493	2,28	5
	$\overline{X}$								2,34	

The survey results presented in Table 5 indicate that the monitoring and evaluation of professional development activities in school psychological counseling (PCC) for primary school teachers—under the responsibility of school principals—were generally assessed at a moderate level, with an overall mean score of $\overline{X}$ = 2,34. However, there were significant variations in the implementation levels across specific components.

Notably, the highest-rated aspect was the use of evaluation results to revise and improve training content, which received a mean score of $\overline{X}$ = 2,66 with 72,15% of respondents stating that this was "frequently" implemented. In addition, the adoption of appropriate evaluation methods and reflection after each training phase were also rated at relatively favorable levels, with 50,32% and 58,06% of respondents, respectively, indicating frequent implementation.

Conversely, areas such as the development of clear evaluation criteria, regular monitoring aligned with training progress, supervision of PCC activities, and systematic review post-training received lower mean scores, ranging from $\overline{X}$ = 2,11 to 2,42. The percentage of respondents reporting these activities as being "frequently" implemented varied from 38,36% to 52,79%, suggesting that key components of the monitoring and evaluation process are still not being executed effectively or consistently.

According to feedback from respondents, one of the primary reasons for this situation is the heavy workload at the end of the academic year, which limits principals' ability to directly

supervise, track, and evaluate the training activities of individual teachers. As a result, the responsibility for evaluation is often delegated to subject departments, which compile and submit reports. This approach tends to lack depth and does not adequately reflect the actual quality or effectiveness of the training provided.

Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that while monitoring and evaluation activities have been incorporated

into the training programs to develop psychological counseling competencies for teachers, several limitations still exist. Therefore, it is essential to design and implement clear, practical, and evidence-based evaluation mechanisms to ensure the training process is genuinely effective and contributes to enhancing teachers' capacity in school psychological counseling.

Table 6. Assessment of Factors Influencing the Management of Professional Development in School Psychological Counseling Competency for Teachers

No.	Content	Evaluation Opinions						Total Score	$\overline{X}$	Rankin
		Highly Influential		Influential		Not Influential				
		Quantity	%	Quantity	Quantity	%	Quantity			
1	The extent to which the local socio-economic conditions facilitate the implementation of PCC development programs for teachers.	470	42,92	462	42,19	163	14,89	2497	2,28	6
2	Teachers' ability to apply knowledge and skills from training programs into practical school counseling tasks.	836	76,35	239	21,83	20	1,83	3006	2,75	2
3	Availability and modernity of facilities and equipment supporting PCC development activities in schools.	693	63,29	354	32,33	48	4,38	2835	2,59	5
4	Relevance and effectiveness of current policies and regimes applied to teachers engaged in PCC work.	814	74,34	266	24,29	15	1,37	2989	2,73	3
5	Effectiveness of planning and organizing PCC professional development activities by school principals.	851	77,72	223	20,37	21	1,92	3020	2,76	1
6	Teachers' awareness of the importance of enhancing school psychological counseling competencies in teaching practice.	810	73,97	239	21,83	46	4,20	2954	2,70	4
									2,63	

The results presented in Table 6 indicate that, according to the evaluation of the survey participants, the majority of the investigated factors exert a considerable influence on the management of professional development in psychological counseling for teachers at primary schools.

Specifically, the factors assessed as having a high level of influence include: the professional qualities and competencies of teachers who perform school psychological counseling activities $\overline{X}$ = 2,75; the adequacy and modernity of physical facilities and equipment serving training activities $\overline{X}$ = 2,59; the appropriateness and effectiveness of existing policies and

regimes for teachers $\overline{X}$ = 2,73; the managerial capacity of school principals $\overline{X}$ = 2,76 and the training needs of teachers $\overline{X}$ = 2,70. Notably, the proportion of respondents who rated these factors as "very influential" ranged from 63,29% to 77,72%, indicating that these are critical factors in ensuring the effectiveness of training management practices.

In contrast, the factor concerning the socio-economic conditions of the local area was evaluated as having a lower degree of influence, with an average score of $\overline{X}$ = 2,28. Only 42,92% of the respondents considered this factor to be "very influential"; 42,19% assessed it as "influential," and 14,89% believed it had "no influence." The relatively limited impact of this factor may be attributed to the fact that many of the surveyed localities are socio-economically disadvantaged. In these areas, investment in education in general and in the professional development for school psychological counseling in particular remains constrained and heavily dependent on state budgets and external organizational support.

Nonetheless, from a broader perspective, local socio-economic conditions still play a foundational role, indirectly affecting the quality of professional development activities through the ability to mobilize financial resources, improve physical infrastructure, and foster stakeholder participation.

Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that in order to enhance the effectiveness of managing professional development in school psychological counseling for primary school teachers, it is essential to focus on developing teachers' competencies and professional qualities, strengthening the managerial capabilities of school principals, ensuring the adequacy of facilities and equipment, and implementing timely and appropriate support policies that are aligned with the practical needs of the teaching staff.

3.5. General Assessment of the Management of School Psychological Counseling Capacity Training for Teachers in Semi-Boarding Ethnic Minority Primary Schools in Muong Nhe District, Dien Bien Province

Strengths:
Educational authorities and school administrators have initially recognized the importance of school psychological counseling in supporting students' mental well-being. Some schools have organized training sessions and thematic workshops to raise awareness and provide basic skills for teachers. Despite their dual responsibilities, many teachers have demonstrated responsibility and initiative in learning from effective counseling models.

Limitations:
There is a lack of long-term planning and systematic content for developing school psychological counseling competencies. Current training remains formalistic, with limited follow-up assessments to evaluate its effectiveness. Many school facilities remain underdeveloped, with inadequate resources and equipment for counseling activities. Furthermore, many teachers in charge of school counseling have not received specialized training and lack the necessary skills to manage such activities effectively.

Underlying causes:
Muong Nhe is a remote and mountainous area with poor transportation infrastructure, which hinders the implementation of centralized training programs. There is a shortage of specialized personnel at both district and school levels. Funding for counseling and teacher training activities remains limited. Moreover, the coordination between schools and external support organizations in building specialized training programs has not been effective.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING CAPACITY TRAINING FOR TEACHERS IN SEMI-BOARDING ETHNIC MINORITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MUONG NHE DISTRICT, DIEN BIEN PROVINCE

4.1. Enhancing awareness and responsibility among educational managers and teachers regarding psychological counseling

It is essential to organize training courses and thematic seminars to raise awareness among managers and teachers about the significance of school psychological counseling, particularly for ethnic minority students facing psychological, communicative, and integration difficulties. Recognizing this task as an official school function will help change perceptions and encourage practical engagement.

4.2. Developing a systematic and locally appropriate training plan

The district Department of Education and Training should coordinate with schools to develop a long-term training plan that is aligned with the local context of ethnic minority regions. The training should focus on:

Skills to identify students' psychological issues early
Communication techniques and support strategies for students with psychological difficulties

Basic counseling methods and collaboration with parents, communities, and experts

Training can be delivered in various formats: in-person, online, or through school-based professional groups on counseling.

4.3. Establishing and strengthening a core team of counseling-oriented teachers

Select and train a group of teachers with strong pedagogical, communication, and psychological skills to take on or support school counseling. These core members can serve as bridges between students, teachers, and parents, and can also help mentor colleagues in their schools.

4.4. Strengthening coordination between schools, families, and communities

Psychological counseling is only effective when there is strong collaboration between schools, families, and the broader community. Awareness campaigns and thematic

sessions should be organized for parents to help them identify and respond to students' psychological issues. At the same time, schools should seek support from local authorities, social organizations, school health services, and psychological experts.

4.5. Applying technology and digital resources in psychological counseling

Given the lack of professional counseling experience among teachers, digital resources such as e-libraries, scenario-based materials, video tutorials, and electronic manuals on school psychology should be developed for teachers' self-study and reference. Anonymous feedback tools (suggestion boxes, internal social media, counseling a**pps, etc.) can also help students express their concerns more easily.**

4.6. Adding specialized staff and timely support mechanisms

In large-scale schools or those with a high number of boarding students, it is necessary to assign full-time or part-time staff dedicated to school counseling. The district education department should provide regular professional support, organize periodic training, and establish a district-level counseling hotline to assist both teachers and students when needed.

5. CONCLUSION

School psychological counseling plays a vital role in ensuring students' mental health and comprehensive development, especially in remote and mountainous regions like Muong Nhe, where ethnic minority students face numerous psychological and social challenges. Enhancing teachers' counseling capacity through structured, context-based training management is essential to meet the learner-centered educational orientation.

The study reveals that current training still has limitations in terms of content, methods, and inter-sectoral coordination. These shortcomings stem from the unique conditions of the region, including limited human resources, insufficient awareness, and lack of supportive mechanisms.

To address these issues, it is necessary to implement a set of integrated solutions: raising awareness, designing long-term training plans, building a core team of teachers, strengthening educational partnerships, and leveraging technology. Improving the effectiveness of school psychological counseling capacity management will not only contribute to enhancing education quality but also promote sustainable social and human development in ethnic minority and mountainous regions.

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