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**DEVELOPING THE TEAM OF DEPARTMENT
HEADS IN TEACHER-TRAINING HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF
EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION**

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THE RESEARCHER'S PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC

1. Nguyen An Hoa, Hoang Si Hung, Vu Van Hung (2015), *Review of research into the development of department heads at universities*, Journal of Education, No. 363 (Period 1-8/2015), p.4.
2. Thai Van Thanh, Nguyen An Hoa (2017), *Fostering management competence for the team of department heads at universities of education to meet the requirements of educational innovation*, Journal of Education Sciences, No. 144 September 2017, p.20.
3. Nguyen An Hoa (2017), *Some issues on developing the team of department heads at universities of education to meet the requirements of education reform*, Proceedings of the scientific conference: Fostering teachers and educational administrators to meet the requirements of general education reform, Thai Nguyen University, pp.166,175.
4. Nguyen An Hoa (2020), *Creating working motivation to promote the role of department heads at universities of education*, Journal of Educational Equipment, Special Issue- September 2020, p.7-9.
5. Nguyen An Hoa (2021), *The current situation of the department management competence of the team of department heads at universities of education*, Journal of Science - Saigon University, No. 76 (April 2021)
6. Nguyen An Hoa (2015), *Some solutions to managing and improving the quality of in-service training at Vinh University*, Journal of Former Teachers, No. 99 (Term 7/2015), p.23.
7. Lan Chi Le, Xuan Ngoc Le, Van Loc Vo, Hoa An Nguyen and Xuan Thi Thanh Cao (2021), *Improve the Professional Ability of Khmer Ethnic Minority Secondary School Teachers in Southwestern Vietnam to Meet the Educational Reform Requirements*, International Journal of Educational Sciences, Volume 33, Number 1-3, April, May, June 2021, p. 59-63.

INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale for choosing the research topic

Developing the team of department heads is a very important task that affects not only human resource management activities but also professional activities, directly affecting the output of teacher-training higher education institutions.

The development of educational administrators in general and department heads in higher education institutions, in particular, is not really based on quality and competence factors. The team of department heads shall make detailed plans on training and retraining; department development strategies such as program development, team development, etc. These skills are collectively known as management and leadership competence; however, these competencies, including both professional qualifications and management competencies have hardly been trained and fostered. The working method of the department heads is still mainly based on experience and self-improvement as they have not been trained in management and leadership competence.

In an environment where department heads are in dire need of evaluation criteria and standards to detect, train and foster professional, managerial and leadership competencies, there is currently no interest in developing a standard system of these qualities and competencies. This shows the need for research and development of department heads based on quality and competence standards.

It is for the above reasons that we chose the research topic: *"Developing the team of department heads in teacher training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation"* for the doctoral thesis with the aim of building theory, assessing the current situation of the development of department heads in higher education institutions, and then proposing solutions to overcome the limitations, and contribute to the development of department heads of teacher training higher education institution.

2. Research aims

On the basis of research on the theory and reality of staff development in teacher-training higher education institutions, the thesis aims to clarify achievements, shortcomings and limitations in the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; analyze objective and subjective causes which lead to the shortcomings and limitations; and propose some solutions to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions, ensuring sufficient quantity and quality in order to contribute to improving the quality of teacher training and retraining to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

3. Participants and object of the research

3.1. Research participants: Heads of departments in teacher-training higher education institutions.

3.2. Research object: Developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

4. Scientific hypothesis

4.1. The development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions in our country should be based on a competency framework of department heads. The competency framework is both a basis for building a set of assessment criteria and for determining specific contents for developing a team of department heads effectively.

4.2. The development of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions in Vietnam still has limitations and inadequacies in response to the requirements of education and training reform. If we can systematize and clarify some theoretical issues about human resource development and labor characteristics, quality and competence of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; investigate and properly assess the current situation of the problem as a basis for proposing and synchronously implementing solutions, it is possible to develop the team of department heads in higher education institutions, sufficient in quantity and synchronous in structure, to raise the quality of the management staff, meeting the requirements of educational innovations today.

5. Research tasks

5.1. Review relevant research on the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to systematize the research results that have been achieved, and at the same time clearly identify the existing problems that the thesis needs to solve.

5.2. Study theories on human resource development, staff development, and department head development in universities in general and in teacher-training institutions in particular in order to build a theoretical framework for the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

5.3. Investigate, survey and evaluate the current situation of the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

5.4. Propose synchronous, necessary and feasible solutions to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions in Vietnam in order to improve the quality of management staff to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

5.5. Carry out experiments to objectively assess the urgency and feasibility of the proposed solutions and to finalize the solutions so that they can be more effective when implemented in practice.

6. Research scope

- Scope of content: The thesis only focuses on researching issues related to the development of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions in order to contribute to the successful implementation of educational innovation requirements on the development of teachers and educational administrators, which has been identified by the Party and State as a key and breakthrough task: "Developing the contingent of educators and managers to meet the requirements of reforming education and training". The thesis focuses on systematizing and linking theoretical issues related to the development of educational managers such as labor characteristics and personality models of department heads, and the current situation of department heads development. This is the basis for proposing a competency framework for department heads and solutions for planning, appointment, use, training and retraining, mechanisms and policies.

- Scope of space: the research, survey and experiment of the thesis were conducted in a number of Pedagogical Universities and universities with teacher training faculties, namely Hanoi National University of Education, Vinh University, University of Education - Hue University, Ho Chi Minh City University of Education, Saigon University and Dong Thap University.

- Scope of time: the study conducted a survey of the current situation from May 2019 to May 2020.

- Testing the solutions: "Training and fostering professional competence, management and leadership competence for department heads to meet the requirements of educational innovation".

7. Methodology and research methods

7.1. Methodology: Systematical approach; Standard-based approach; Human resource development-based approach; Practical approach.

7.2. Research methods: Group of theoretical research methods; Group of practical research methods; Mathematical statistical methods.

8. Points to be defended in the thesis

8.1. Developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions is the development of human resources for education management. Therefore, the content and method of developing this team must be based on the content and method of human resource development in general and on the characteristics of professional management labor and the personality model of the department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

8.2. The development of a competency framework and a set of competency standards for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions according to their positions and professional titles, which both ensures state regulations and suits the characteristics of teacher-training higher education

institutions, is a prerequisite for developing the contingent of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

8.3. The current team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions still has shortcomings, limitations and inadequacies in some aspects of quality, competence, structure, etc.; it has not met the requirements of developing a contingent of educational administrators. Proposing solutions to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions needs to comply with the logic of the research, the working environment and the relationship between research, training and management.

9. Contributions of the thesis

9.1. Theoretical contributions

The thesis contributes to generalizing and supplementing research on the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions according to the theory of human resource development. Specifically, the thesis has:

- Synthesized the basic factors affecting the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.
- Built a competency framework for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions, including a system of core competency standards such as professional competence, pedagogical competence, scientific research competence and scientific research organization competence, professional management competence, leadership competence, competence for social activities, international cooperation competence; accordingly proposed a set of standards, assessment levels (indicators) and evidences to evaluate the department heads.
- Developed the content and process of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

9.2. Practical contributions

The thesis has built relatively comprehensive and authentic assessment indicators on the actual situation of the team and the actual situation of the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

Five synchronous solutions have been developed to contribute to the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions. The thesis has also proposed the development of a set of standards as a tool for assessing department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions appropriately in the current context, and proposed programs and methods of organizing competence building for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

The thesis can be used as a resource for educational administrators and school administrators, students and researchers in the field of education management.

10. Structure of the thesis

In addition to the introduction, conclusion and recommendations, appendices, and references, the thesis consists of 3 chapters:

Chapter 1: Theoretical basis of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

Chapter 2: The current situation of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

Chapter 3: Some solutions to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

Chapter 1

THEORETICAL BASIS FOR DEVELOPING THE TEAM OF DEPARTMENT HEADS IN TEACHER-TRAINING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

1.1. Literature Review: Research on orientation and requirements for university management staff development; Studies on the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation; The problems raised in the thesis.

1.2. Basic concepts in the thesis: Heads of departments and team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; the development of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

1.3. The team of department heads in higher education institutions who meet the requirements of educational innovation

1.3.1. Educational innovation, meeting the requirements of educational innovation and requirements for the team of department heads

1.3.1.1. Educational innovation: Educational innovation is the renovation of major, core and urgent issues, from viewpoints and guiding ideas to objectives, contents, methods, mechanisms, policies, and conditions to ensure implementation. Within the research scope of the thesis, the purpose of researching the topic of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions is to offer some solutions to contribute to the development of the teaching staff and educational administrators in

teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

1.3.1.2. *The requirements set for the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions:* Heads of departments have a great and very important role in ensuring the quality of teacher training and retraining via developing strategies for department development; directing the construction and development of training programs; organizing the training process; making plans to develop the teaching staff; organizing and managing scientific research activities of lecturers; promoting international cooperation in the field of pedagogical training; advising the faculty and the university to build a motivating environment for lecturers.

1.3.1.3. *Functions, duties and powers of the Head of Department:* Regulations on the organization and operation of the Department are specified in the regulations on the organization and operation of the university. The university's charter, issued under Decision No. 70/2014/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister, clearly states the five tasks of the Department.

1.3.3. *Labor characteristics of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions:* Managerial labor of department heads in teacher-training institutions closely combines science and art. The managerial labor of the department heads in a teacher-training higher education institution is decisive, responsive and innovative. Department heads need to focus on professional development for lecturers in their management work; promote and encourage lecturers to do scientific research; engage lecturers in building a quality culture in the department; The managerial labor of department heads is highly practical.

1.3.4. *Personality model of a department head in a teacher training institution*

In order to well accomplish the goals of higher education, it is necessary to build a personality model for the department heads, determine the requirements for quality and competence, and then develop a set of standards for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

In this thesis, the personality model of a department head in a teacher-training higher education institution includes the following characteristics: Teacher, scientist, manager and leader, social activist and provider of education, science and technology services to the community and an international integrator in the field of teacher training and retraining.

1.3.5. *Competency framework of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions*

The thesis proposed a competency framework for the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions, including five groups of competencies, namely professional and pedagogical competence; competence of scientific research, competence of management

and leadership, competence of social activities and provision of educational, scientific and technological services to the community and competence of international integration in higher education (see Table 1.1).

1.4. Developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

1.4.1. The need to develop department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions: The development of department heads in the current context is a very urgent job to meet the following requirements: human resource development in teacher-training higher education institutions, educational program renewal, directing and managing the development of training programs in the direction of developing learners' competence, improving the quality and efficiency of scientific research and application in the current context, and international integration in training, retraining and accreditation of teacher training quality.

1.4.2. Orientations to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

- To develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions, it is necessary to first help this team promote its active and creative role and exploit to the fullest extent the competence and potential of the team so that they can devote the most to the realization of the institution's educational goals.

- The development of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions must aim at serving the interests of the university, the community and society, and at the same time must ensure satisfactory material and spiritual benefits for them.

- The development of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions must meet the immediate and long-term goals of the university, and at the same time must be carried out according to a unified process on the basis of regulations and laws of the State.

- The development of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions must ensure sufficient quantity, uniformity in structure, standards and above standards, to meet the needs of both increasing the scale and improving the quality and effectiveness of education.

1.4.3. The subjects managing the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions: The subjects managing the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet educational innovation are: Rectors; Heads of the functional departments; Dean of Faculty

1.4.4. Contents of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation: Determining the competency framework of department heads;

Formulating schemes and plans for developing the team of department heads; Appointment and re-appointment of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; Training and fostering to improve the quality of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; Using the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; Incentives and policies for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; Evaluation of department heads in teacher training institutions.

1.4.5. Factors affecting the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

Some basic subjective and objective factors affect the development of this team.

Summary of Chapter 1

The team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions has a great role in managing and leading the department to successfully fulfill the pedagogical objectives of the university, improve the quality of teacher training and retraining, and meet the requirements of educational innovation.

Contents of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions include the following issues: Planning for the development of department heads; Appointment and re-appointment of department heads; training and fostering to improve the quality of department heads; Using the team of department heads; Improving the policies and assessment of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

Factors affecting the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions include objective factors and subjective factors, in which, the subjective factors include the perception and competence of department heads.

Chapter 2

THE CURRENT SITUATION OF DEVELOPING THE TEAM OF DEPARTMENT HEADS IN TEACHER-TRAINING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

2.1. Overview of teacher training in higher education institutions in Vietnam: History of the development of teacher training institutions in Vietnam; The system of teacher-training higher education institutions in Vietnam today.

2.1.3. Operational status of teacher-training higher education institutions

2.1.3.1. Achievements:

The position and role of teacher-training higher education institutions have been confirmed; The competence of the teaching staff has already been enhanced; Training has focused on quality; Quality assurance is focused on; Scientific research and international cooperation have many positive signals; The autonomy and social responsibility of the universities are enhanced.

2.1.3.2. Limitations and shortcomings

In the past few years, the recruitment of pedagogical majors has faced many difficulties; there exist regional disparities; the training target for the universities of education still exceeds the recruitment demand even though the Ministry of Education and Training has cut the annual quota; the training has not yet met the requirements of reforming the general curriculum; in some teacher-training higher education institutions, the teaching staff has not met the requirements.

Mechanisms and policies on autonomy are insufficient and unsynchronous; some contents are inconsistent; there are not enough policies and strong mechanisms to exercise autonomy, leading to difficulties in the management and administration of the universities.

2.2. Overview of the situation investigation

2.2.1. The purpose of the investigation:

To conduct a survey of the necessary subjects to get a complete description of the current situation of the team of department heads, the status of the development work, and the factors that have a great impact on the development of this team in the teacher training institution. The investigation results help to detect limitations and causes of limitations in management activities. Reasonable solutions will be proposed to contribute to improving the quality of the department heads as well as the quality of training and fostering management staff.

2.2.2. Survey content:

Actual situation of quantity, structure and quality of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; The current situation of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; Factors affecting the development of the department heads.

2.2.3. Survey respondents, sample size and locations

The survey was conducted on 229 people, including 79 heads of departments of the faculties of teacher education; 61 managers at levels of the university, faculty, department, and functional departments; and 89 lecturers from Universities of Education or Faculties of Education.

About the survey area: The survey was conducted in 06 universities: Hanoi National University of Education, Vinh University, Hue University of

Education - Hue University, Ho Chi Minh City University of Education, Saigon University and Dong Thap University.

2.2.4. Survey methods and rating scales

- Method of polling by questionnaire; Methods of discussion and interview.
- The rating scales used: The evaluation criteria are built according to the survey content and the competency framework which has been built on the theoretical basis; each content will have a number of indicators to clarify the problem of the criteria.

2.3. Current situation of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

2.3.1. The structure of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

2.3.1.1. Structure of professional qualifications and skills of department heads

- Regarding the trained professional qualifications of the department heads in the teacher-training higher education institutions, they are relatively in accordance with the regulations on qualifications for the working position. There are 63.77% of department heads holding a doctorate degree and 36.23% holding a master's degree in the right discipline. Many of the department heads have the title of Associate Professor.

- Regarding the level of political theory, foreign languages, and informatics, more than 62% of department heads have intermediate levels of political theory; the rest are elementary and have knowledge of state management. The foreign language and IT skills of the department heads generally meet the requirements for the standards of professional titles.

2.3.1.2. Structure of age, gender, and seniority of department heads

- The structure of the department heads in terms of age and gender: The age of the department heads is fairly evenly distributed among the elderly, middle-aged and young, specifically from 45-60 years old 36.23%, from 35-45 years old 44.93% and under 35 years old 18.84%.

- Structure of the team of department heads in terms of teaching seniority and department management:

+) In terms of seniority in teaching of the department heads: the percentage of department heads with 5 to 10 years of teaching seniority is the highest at 42.03%, followed by 10-15 years of teaching seniority at 30.43%, 15 - over 20 years of teaching seniority at more than 20%, less than 5 years of teaching seniority at over 5%.

+) The seniority of department management: The seniority of department management is mainly in the range from less than 5 years to 15 years at 98.65%. However, it is found that the seniority of department management from over 10 years to over 15 years is still quite high (nearly 19%).

2.3.2. Political qualities, ideology, morality, lifestyle

Regarding the political, ideological, ethical and lifestyle qualities of the department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions, a survey was conducted on four qualities: 1. Obeying the guidelines and policies of the Party and the State; 2. Love the job, be dedicated to the teaching profession; 3. Sense of responsibility in work, solidarity and cooperation with colleagues; 4. Sense of self-study and self-improvement. Each quality consists of many criteria with a rating from high to low.

2.3.3. Professional competence of department heads

The survey was conducted on the professional competence of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions with 6 specific competencies: (1) Knowledge of training and retraining programs, (2) Professional qualifications, (3) Pedagogical skills, (4) self-study and creativity, (5) Foreign language skills and information and communication technology (ICT) application, (6) Scientific research skills. Correspondingly, each competence has criteria with evaluation levels from high to low.

2.3.4. Department management competence of department heads in teacher training institutions

Regarding department management competence, we conducted a survey on 8 specific competencies: fostering and developing the teaching staff; managing teaching activities; managing the department's assets; developing educational environments; administrative management; managing emulation and commendation; building management information system; Checking and assessment. In each competence, we built criteria with corresponding evaluation levels from high to low.

2.3.5. Department management competency

Department management competence was surveyed on 5 specific competencies: (1) Analysis and forecasting; (2) Strategic vision; (3) Design and implementation; (4) Be decisive and brave to innovate and adapt to new tasks; (5) Plan activities. Each competence has many criteria with corresponding assessment levels.

2.3.6. The competence of social activities and international cooperation of the department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

The thesis investigated the competence of social activities and international cooperation of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions, including the competence of social activities and the competence to build and develop relationships and support the community. Each criterion has many sub-criteria; the investigation results will be presented in detail according to each criterion.

2.3.7. Summarize the average scores of the qualities and competencies of the department heads

- Political and moral qualities ranked first with an average score of 3.58/4.00. This is an outstanding advantage of the team, which needs to be nurtured and developed further because there are still a few department heads who were not evaluated well in this criteria.

- Professional competence ranked second with 3.20/4.00 points. This is also one of the criteria that is highly rated and considered as an advantage of the department heads.

- Ranked third is department management competence with 3.19/4.00 points; this is a competence that is rated relatively evenly across the criteria.

- Department management competence ranked fourth with 3.14/4.00 points. In this criterion, the decisiveness and innovation ability of the department heads was rated quite low with 2.97/4.00 points.

- The two lowest rankings are social activity competence (3.08 points, 5th place) and international cooperation competence (2.98 points, 6th place). These two competencies were not rated at a high level in most of the criteria (with only 3.10 points or less).

2.4. The current situation of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

2.4.1. The status of the awareness of managers and lecturers about the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions:

Universities have not really paid enough attention to raising the awareness of managers and lecturers about the development of department heads. Only 22.27% of the respondents stated that it had been carried out very effectively and 35.37% said that it is effective; 36.24% of respondents said that this work has not been effective and there are 6.12% of the respondents claimed that universities have not yet paid attention to this work. The average score for this criterion is in the 5th position with 1.74 points.

2.4.2. The current situation of planning and development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions:

Survey results show that only 19.65% of the respondents agreed that planning is very effective and 20.09% agreed it is effective, reaching a total of 39.74%. However, up to 58.52% of the respondents said that in teacher training higher education institutions, this work had already been done but it was not effective. There are also 1.75% of the opinions that the universities have not yet paid attention to the planning of department heads. The ranking result of this criterion is ranked 8th with 1.58 points.

2.4.3. Actual situation of appointment, dismissal and use of department heads

The survey results showed that only 20.09% of the respondents said that the universities performed this work very effectively; 32.75% said that

the appointment of department heads was effective; 43.23% of the respondents said that this work had been done but the efficiency is not high and there are also 3.93% of the opinions that the universities have not paid enough attention to the appointment of the department heads. The average score of this criterion is 1.69, ranked seventh. The dismissal of department heads is still limited, with only 14.85% of the respondents saying that this work had been done very well and 32.31% said that this work had been done well. 29.69% stated that it had been implemented but not yet effective and a large proportion of 23.14% stated that teacher-training higher education institutions have not paid attention to the dismissal of staff. This criterion achieved an average score of 1.39 points, ranking 11th.

The use of department heads has been paid attention to; however, the percentage of respondents who agreed that this work is reasonable and the right person was used for the right job is only 59.39%; 21.40% of the respondents chose *Very Effective*; 37.99% chose *Effective*. There are still up to 34.06% of the opinions that the universities have implemented this work but the efficiency is not high and 6.17% of the respondents said that the universities have not paid enough attention to the use of department heads. This criterion is ranked 5th.

2.4.4. Current situation of training and retraining department heads

Regarding the training to improve professional qualifications, management qualifications and leadership competence for the department heads, it was assessed to be quite effective with 27.07% of the opinions being *very effective* and 38.86% of the opinions being *effective*. However, there are still many universities that have not done this work effectively, accounting for 20.52%; there are also 13.54% of the opinions that universities have not really paid attention to this work. This criterion has an average score of 1.79, ranking 3rd. The survey results on the training of management competence, political theory, foreign language proficiency, ICT competence, etc. for department heads are similar. In teacher-training higher education institutions, this criterion is rated the highest with 33.62% of the responses for *very effective* and 42.79% *effective*. However, there are still some universities that have not implemented effectively with 20.09% of opinions and 3.49% of opinions that teacher-training higher education institutions have not been interested in this work. This criterion has an average score of 2.07 points, ranked first.

In addition, the effectiveness of the self-study and self-improvement of the department heads was also evaluated as *ineffective*. The percentage of respondents who chose *very effective* is 25.33% and for *effective* it is 34.06%. The figure for *not effective* in self-study and self-improvement activities is 26.20%. 14.41% of the respondents said that department heads are not interested in self-study and

self-improvement to improve their own competence. The result of this criterion is ranked 6th with a score of 1.70 points.

2.4.5. The current situation of assessment and punishment of department heads

Regarding the criteria for organizing the assessment of department heads, 18.78% of the respondents said that the implementation was *very effective*, 23.58% said that it was *effective*, 39.74% were *not effective*, and 17.90% of the respondents said that the universities have not paid much attention to this work. The result of this criterion is ranked 10th with 1.43 points. Regarding the punishment criteria for department heads, the survey results also greatly underestimate the effectiveness of this work in teacher-training higher education institutions. Only 14.85% of the respondents thought that the implementation is *very effective*, and 28.38% thought that the implementation is *effective*. Up to 31.44% of the respondents rated this work as *not really effective*, and especially 25.33% said that universities had never paid attention to this work. This criterion has an average score of 1.33 points, ranked 12th.

2.4.6. Current status of policies to encourage, reward, build up the environment and create working motivation for the team of department heads

The implementation of policies and incentives for department heads has been of great interest in teacher-training higher education institutions with 23.58% of respondents rating it as *very effective*, 35.81% saying it is *effective*, and 33.19% saying it is *not very effective*. In particular, there are still 7.42% of the comments that the universities have not paid attention to the policies and incentives for department heads. This criterion has an average score of 1.76, ranked 4th.

Regarding the issue of motivation and building a favorable working environment for the department heads, 22.71% said that the implementation was *very effective*, 38.43% *effective*, 36.68% *not effective* and 2.18% said that the universities have not paid attention to motivating and building a favorable working environment for the department heads. The average score of this criterion is 1.83, ranked 2nd.

Regarding the organization for department heads to visit and learn management experiences abroad, only 43.16% said that the universities have paid attention and implemented effectively; 22.25% of the comments are that the universities have not paid attention and have not implemented this activity to improve the competence of the department heads. The results for this criterion ranked last (13th) with 1.08 points.

2.5. The current situation of factors affecting the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

All of the surveyed factors were assessed to be influential at a fairly high rate. Among the factors, incentives and policies for department heads

ranked first; decentralization of education management ranked second; guidelines and policies of the Party and State on the development of department heads and the content and form of training and retraining ranked third. These three criteria are considered to have a great influence on the development of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions. Other criteria also have a great influence meanwhile the factors of culture, local traditions and customs were assessed as having the least influence.

2.6. General assessment of the current situation of developing department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

2.6.1. Achievements

- Most of the department heads have a sense of training and improving their political, ethical, and lifestyle qualities, a spirit of service, and a sense of self-study in order to improve the quality of the staff and contribute to the development of the university.

- The development of department heads has been gradually focused on, and teacher training institutions have taken some basic measures to develop department heads and have achieved certain results.

- The team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions is constantly being developed in both quantity and quality.

- The work of selecting and appointing department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions has been paid attention to, followed the correct procedure, ensuring to fully meet the requirements of the mission of training and fostering teachers of the university/faculty.

- The training and fostering of department heads have also been paid attention to and implemented in a variety of ways by teacher-training higher education institutions, and have been somewhat effective.

Reasons for achievements

- The team of department heads is appointed and transferred from lecturers to managers. Most of them have high prestige; high professional and pedagogical qualifications; experience in training and retraining, scientific research and technology transfer; a solid political acumen; and good moral qualities.

- Over the past years, the Party and State have developed and implemented many guidelines and policies to develop the contingent of teachers and educational administrators in general, and department heads in particular. Researchers have also studied the issue of developing department heads.

- All universities attach great importance to the professional qualifications of lecturers in general and administrators in particular.

- In recent years, many department heads have visited, exchanged and gained experience in training management, and scientific research in countries

in the region and developed countries. This also partly helps the department head team to become more mature and brave.

2.6.3. Limitations and shortcomings

The competence and quality of the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

In addition to the achievements that the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions is increasingly improving, they still have a number of limitations and shortcomings. Specifically:

- Some department heads still work based on experience, are slow to innovate, and are affected by the centralized administrative mechanism.

- Several department heads also have a conservative mentality and an exclusionary mindset while the new mechanism requires department heads to accept both the new and the old, and accept competition in cooperation for better training and fostering quality.

- There are not many department heads who are open-minded to new things; dare to commit and take risks; and dare to think, dare to do.

- There are very few department heads who are able to negotiate, sign and cooperate with universities, institutes or educational organizations of countries in the region and the world in terms of training; exchange expertise and experience in training and fostering teachers, scientific research, and competence building for lecturers.

- Many department heads are still limited in applying information technology in management, teaching or using foreign languages fluently in expertise, management and international cooperation, thus not meeting the requirements of innovating teacher training and retraining.

The current situation of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

Although teacher training institutions have paid attention to developing department heads, and there have been many activities to develop department heads, the effectiveness has not been high. Specifically:

- The teacher-training higher education institutions have not paid much attention to the organization of research and concretization of the appropriate competency framework for the department heads. Universities, in the development of department heads, still mainly attach importance to their professional capabilities; however, have not paid much attention to other competencies such as leadership, management, social activities, and international cooperation.

- The planning and development of department heads have not been thoroughly and deeply implemented. In some universities, the planning is neither based on reality nor approved by the faculty or the teaching staff of the department. Sometimes, planning is a formality.

- The recruitment, appointment and use of department heads have not been highly effective.

- Decentralization and assignment of responsibilities are still superficial, not focusing on maximizing the capacity of this team in developing education, training and fostering activities, scientific research as well as improving the training quality of the university.

- The inspection and evaluation of department heads have not been paid due attention; standard-based inspection and evaluation have not been carried out; the assessment of department heads is still mainly qualitative and slightly quantitative.

The working mechanism, remuneration policies, and motivational activities for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions have not been completed and lack synchronization. Motivation policies have been built; however, they are not clear to the department heads.

Causes of limitations

The shortcomings and limitations in the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions stem from the following reasons:

- The characteristics of managerial labor and the role of the department head have not been properly understood and promoted.

- Staff planning is not done well; basic surveys have not been carried out to support the staff planning. The staff planning is not strategic in the long-term; not regular; and not associated with the training and retraining, the arrangement and use of the staff.

- The facilities of teacher-training higher education institutions are still inadequate and outdated, greatly affecting the teaching and scientific research of this team.

- In some teacher-training higher education institutions, several departments have only a few members, including the department head, making the selection and promotion of the department head very difficult. This leads to the belief that there is no need to plan or develop a team of department heads.

Summary of Chapter 2

In a teacher-training higher education institution, all levels from the Board of Rectors, deans to faculty members are aware of the importance of developing the team of department heads and agree that this is a task that needs to be given special importance if it is to make a breakthrough in the university's development. However, in general, the development of department heads has not been synchronized, unified and focused. Some of the staff development contents of the universities are considered quite effective such as raising awareness about the role of department heads or

training and fostering activities; however, there are still many other issues that have not been paid attention to. In addition, activities to develop department heads have not been carried out in a scientific manner. Especially, there is no specific system of standards and competencies for the department heads, making other activities limited, and the checking and evaluation are still formal.

Many factors affect the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions. Among these factors, the guidelines, viewpoints and policies of the Party and State on the development of the contingent of educational administrators; requirements for the fundamental and comprehensive renovation of education & training; economic factors, culture, customs and habits; the interest of the managers in the development of department heads, the cultural environment and the financial potential of the university are issues that need to be considered when proposing solutions to develop department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

In order to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the current requirements of educational innovation, it is necessary to research and propose scientific, feasible solutions and creatively and effectively deploy them in accordance with the conditions of each university.

Chapter 3

SOME SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOP THE TEAM OF DEPARTMENT HEADS IN TEACHER-TRAINING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

3.1. Principles of proposing solutions

The proposal of solutions to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions is based on the following principles: ensuring objectiveness; ensuring comprehensiveness; ensuring practicality; ensuring efficiency; and ensuring feasibility.

3.2. Solutions to develop the team of department heads in teacher training institutions

3.2.1. Solution 1: Organize the development of standards as a basis for developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

Develop standards for department heads, specifying detailed requirements for their qualities and capabilities to meet the requirements of educational innovation in the current context. The standards of department heads are also the basis for all levels of management to set out planning,

training and retraining and evaluation; and the basis for department heads to self-assess and self-improve their qualities and capabilities to meet the requirements of educational innovation.

3.2.2. Solution 2: Plan the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

The goal of this solution is to help teacher training institutions build the team of department heads sufficient in quantity, synchronous in structure and good in quality.

3.2.3. Solution 3: Manage and build a mechanism for appointment, dismissal and use of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

The goal of the solution is to step by step perfect the mechanism for developing department heads, creating conditions and motivation for department heads to strive, study, train, and meet the standards, thereby promoting dynamism in staff work and fulfilling their department management tasks.

3.2.4. Solution 4: Organize training to improve professional competence, management competence and leadership for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions

The goal of the solution is to foster and update knowledge and experience for department heads, thereby contributing to the formation and improvement of management skills for department heads, overcoming negative aspects, promoting positive aspects, compensating for deficiencies and shortcomings of department heads in the process of operation, creating new qualities and comprehensive development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

3.2.5. Solution 5: Create working motivation to promote the role of department heads in teacher training institutions

The goal of the solution is to create working motivation to promote the role of department heads in teacher training and retraining and educational innovation on the basis of material and spiritual encouragement in accordance with the financial competence and development of the teacher training institutions. This will help encourage department heads to work with high productivity, quality and efficiency, promoting their talents in the context of fundamental and comprehensive innovation in education.

3.3. Investigate the urgency and feasibility of the proposed solutions

3.3.1. Survey purpose

The purpose of the survey is to collect information regarding the evaluation of the urgency and feasibility of the proposed solutions for developing department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions,

hence adjusting inappropriate solutions or confirming the reliability of the evaluated solutions.

3.3.2. Survey content

The survey content includes:

- Are the proposed solutions really urgent for the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions?
- Are the proposed solutions really feasible for the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions?

3.3.3. Survey method

Ask for opinions using a questionnaire with 5 rating scales:

- Very urgent, urgent, undecided, not very urgent and not urgent
- Very possible, feasible undecided, not very feasible and not feasible.

3.3.4. Respondents

- Managers at university, faculty and departmental levels of teacher-training higher education institutions: 47 people
- Lecturers in teacher training institutions: 81 people
- Heads of the department of teacher-training higher education institutions: 62 people

Total: 190 people

3.3.5. Survey results on the urgency and feasibility of the proposed solutions

3.3.5.1. Urgency of the proposed solutions

The survey results show that the respondents have interest, agreement and appreciation for the urgency of the proposed solutions. Actually, over 90% of the respondents agreed that all the five solutions are *very urgent* or *urgent*. The solutions with a high percentage of people appreciating the urgency are: Organize training to improve professional competence, management competence and leadership for the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; Create working motivation to promote the role of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; Organize the development of standards as a basis for developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions with more than 51% to more than 70% of the respondents considering them very urgent. The average score is from 3.46 - 3.67/4.00 points.

3.3.5.2. Feasibility of proposed solutions

The survey results show that the respondents have a consensus and high appreciation for the feasibility of the proposed solutions. In terms of percentage, all solutions have a feasibility rate of over 87%. Four solutions are rated by 89.5% to more than 96% of the respondents as feasible. The average score of 3.30 to nearly 3.5/4.00 points also shows that the solutions are considered highly feasible.

3.4. Organization of the experiment

3.4.1. Experiment purpose

In order to verify the effectiveness, feasibility and necessary conditions to implement one of the proposed solutions.

3.4.2. Experiment hypothesis

It is possible to improve the quality of department heads in a teacher-training higher education institution if the solution "Organize training to improve professional competence, management and leadership competence for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions" is appropriately applied.

3.4.3. Experiment content, participants and time

3.4.3.1. Content and method of the experiment

i) Experiment content

The solution "Organize training to improve professional competence, management competence and leadership for the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions".

ii) Experiment method

The experimental group participated in training activities to improve their skills in making strategic plans for department development according to the content designed by the researcher. The experiment was conducted once, at the same time and with the same rating.

Procedure:

- Ask for permission from the universities to conduct the experiment; Develop a plan for training department heads; Administer a pre-test to examine the knowledge and skills of the experimental groups in two universities; Conduct online training for department heads at the two universities, conduct a post-test after each content and require the participants to write essays after completing the training, grade and calculate the average score of the whole course using the formula:

$(\text{Average test score} * 40\%) + (\text{Essay score} * 60\%)$

(The average score of the whole course is rounded off)

- Analyze and evaluate the collected data.

3.4.3.2. Experiment participants

The sample of experiment participants is 43 department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions (Table 3.4).

3.4.3.3. Experiment time

- Time to conduct the pre-test for the entire sample: October 2020

- Time to conduct training and the post-test for the experimental groups: November-December 2020.

3.4.4. Standards and assessment scales: i) Assessment of knowledge; ii) Assessment of skills.

3.4.5. Analyze test results

3.4.5.1. Parameter conventions and calculation formulas

- For the knowledge level of the department heads, the experiment data were calculated by percentage according to the following formulas and parameters: Average score; Variance; Standard Deviation; coefficient of variation; The parameters t and F.

- For the skill level of department heads, we calculated the percentage of the participants who achieved good, average, and weak grades in each skill. Then we calculated the corresponding score: Fair (3 points); Average (2 points); Weak (1 point).

3.4.5.2. Analysis of the pre-test results

i) The results of the pre-test in terms of knowledge

The knowledge level of the department heads regarding making strategic plans for departmental development did not really meet the requirements. Specifically, the percentage of department heads assessed at Good and Fair levels was just over 39%, Average 48.84%, and Weak 11.63%.

ii) Results of the pre-test in terms of skills

Initial skill level of the experimental group: the percentage of department heads assessed at Fair level was 23.54%, Average 50.29%, and Weak 26.16%.

3.4.5.3. Analyze the results of the post-test quantitatively

i) Results of the post-test in terms of knowledge level

The post-test results regarding the knowledge level of department heads:

+) The average score (\bar{x}) of the experimental group after being trained was much higher than before: $7.51 > 6.26$;

+) The coefficient of variation (CV%) of the experimental group as well as the combined mean score after the experiment were all smaller than the coefficient of variation of the group before the experiment;

+) From the above results, it can be seen that the knowledge level of the experimental group has improved significantly after being trained.

ii) Results of the post-test regarding the skills of department heads

The results in terms of skills of the experimental group after being trained increased significantly. Specifically, the percentage of department heads assessed at the Good level was higher: $38.46\% > 23.54\%$, meanwhile the percentage of department heads assessed at the Weak level was lower: $11.26\% < 26.16\%$.

3.4.5.4. Analyze the experiment results qualitatively

Conducting a post-experiment investigation in higher education teacher training institutions, we collected and analyzed the information and made some general comments as follows:

- Deploying training activities for department heads at teacher-training higher education institutions applying the above-proposed measures has contributed to improving the quality of this team.

- The team of department heads at teacher-training higher education institutions have gained a proper understanding of the basic issues of department development planning activities, contributing to improving the effectiveness of management, leadership and department development in the teacher-training higher education institutions.

- Along with knowledge training, department heads were also trained in the skills of making strategic plans for department development. After the training sessions, the skills of the team of department heads at teacher training higher education institutions have been remarkably improved.

- The improvement of knowledge and skills in making strategic plans for department development has a great impact on the effectiveness of department management and leadership to meet the requirements of current educational innovation.

Summary of Chapter 3

1. Department heads have an important role in ensuring the quality of teacher training and fostering, doing scientific research, developing training specialties as well as advising teacher-training higher education institutions to effectively manage training majors, lecturers and students. To develop the team of department heads sufficient in quantity, synchronous in structure, and good in quality to meet the requirements of educational innovation, it is necessary to synchronously implement the proposed solutions.

2. All the proposed solutions, via experiment and survey, are assessed to be very urgent and highly feasible and can be deployed in practice to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

3. The thesis, although only testing one of the five solutions, has confirmed its effectiveness in improving the knowledge and skills of department heads in teacher training institutions, and at the same time has a positive impact on the development of department heads in teacher training institutions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusion

1.1. The results of the thesis have contributed to clarifying the theoretical basis of the issue of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions. More specifically, the thesis has:

- Clearly defined the role of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the current requirements of a fundamental and comprehensive renovation of education.

- Built up the labor characteristics of department heads; the personality model of department heads; a framework of competence for department heads

in teacher-training higher education institutions in response to educational innovation requirements; the need to develop department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

- Clearly defined the orientation and content of developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; pointed out the basic factors affecting the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

1.2. The thesis has surveyed, analyzed and clarified the practical basis of developing department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions:

- Outlined a fairly comprehensive and highly accurate picture of the current situation of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions in terms of quantity, structure, quality and competence.

- Assessed relatively accurately the current situation of the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

- Pointed out the achievements, shortcomings and causes of the current situation of developing department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

1.3. Based on the theoretical and practical results of the research, we have proposed five solutions to the development of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions, specifically: (1) Organizing the development of standards as a basis for developing the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; (2) Formulating a master plan for the contingent of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; (3) Manage the development of mechanisms for appointment, dismissal and use of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; (4) Organize training to improve professional competence, management competence and leadership for the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions; (5) Create working motivation to promote the role of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet educational innovation.

The results of the survey and expert consultation on the urgency and feasibility of the proposed solutions show that the solutions are generally assessed as very urgent and highly feasible, and they can be deployed to develop the team of department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions.

The urgency and feasibility were further confirmed by the results of the experiment on one of the five solutions "Organize training to improve professional, managerial and leadership competencies for department heads in teacher-training higher education institutions to meet the requirements of educational innovation".

2. Recommendations

2.1. For the Ministry of Education and Training

2.2. For teacher-training higher education institutions