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THE CURRENT STATUS OF UTILIZING METHODS AND TOOLS TO ASSESS TEACHERS' COMPETENCY IN ORGANIZING EXPERIENTIAL AND CAREER-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES IN VIETNAMESE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Trinh Thuy Giang[1]*, Truong Thi Hoa[2], Nguyen Thi Thanh Hong[3], Mai Quoc Khanh[4], Le Thi Hoang Lan[5], Nguyen Nam Phuong[6], Nguyen Duc Giang[7]

[1,2,3,4,5,6] Hanoi National University of Education, Hanoi, Vietnam

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Abstract: **Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities is an official educational component within the newly implemented General Education Program in Vietnam. Assessing teachers' competency in organizing these activities has garnered significant interest among Vietnamese secondary schools, given that this represents a novel and vital instructional capacity required to implement this specific educational content. Furthermore, to enhance teachers' organizational capacity and elevate general educational quality, there is an urgent need for scientific and accurate evaluation of this competency across all institutions. This paper focuses on investigating the current status of using assessment methods and tools to evaluate teacher competency in organizing experiential and career-oriented activities in Vietnamese secondary schools. The findings aim to assist educational institutions in conducting formal, standardized, and synchronized assessments, thereby establishing an empirical baseline for targeted professional development and pedagogical quality improvement.**

Keywords: **Competency, experiential activities, career orientation, competency assessment.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities constitute a mandatory educational component within secondary schools in Vietnam. The outcomes of these activities serve as a foundational element in shaping and developing students' personality traits. Consequently, teachers' competency in organizing these sessions must be regularly reviewed and evaluated to facilitate their continuous professional development, thereby meeting the rigorous demands of Vietnam's ongoing educational reforms.

Evaluating teachers' competency in managing experiential and career-oriented activities has become a core concern for secondary schools. This is because it represents a newly introduced pedagogical capacity required to deliver a novel and crucial component of the revised national curriculum. Without formal assessment mechanisms, educational administrators and instructors lack the empirical data necessary to guide professional development and self-directed upskilling. However, in reality, most Vietnamese secondary schools have yet to implement standardized, formal or synchronized assessment frameworks for this specific competency. As a result, schools lack a rigorous baseline to devise institutional training strategies that meet modern quality standards.

This study delves into the empirical status of using assessment methods and tools for evaluating teachers' organizational competency in experiential and career-oriented activities across Vietnamese secondary schools. It aims to provide institutions with a scientific, precise, objective, and standardized framework for evaluation - an essential driver for optimizing teacher performance.

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2. RESEARCH CONTENT

2.1. Theoretical Framework and Key Concepts

Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities: This refers to a core educational component in the new Vietnamese General Education Program [1], modeled after David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory [3]. Accordingly, this is an educator-directed, designed, and facilitated activity that offers students opportunities to engage with real-world contexts, experience positive emotions, leverage prior knowledge, and synthesize interdisciplinary skills. Students utilize these capacities to fulfill assigned tasks or solve real-world problems appropriate to their age group. Through this process, lived experiences are transformed into new knowledge, insights and skills, fostering creative potential and adaptability to daily life, environments and future professions. These activities actively cultivate core student values, general competencies and specialized capacities; their content is systematically structured around students' relationships with themselves, society, nature and occupations [1], [12].

Competency: The successful execution of a task or the effective resolution of real-life problems based on the integration, mastery and mobilization of specific knowledge, skills and attitudes [4], [5], [7].

Competency in Organizing Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities: The successful and effective execution of learning experiences for students, underpinned by the integration and mastery of pedagogical knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to experiential and career guidance methodologies [9], [10], [11].

Educational Evaluation: The process of gathering and processing systemic information regarding learners' activities, from which qualitative judgments and conclusions are derived to calibrate and improve teaching and learning practices [6], [8].

Competency Assessment: The process of gathering and interpreting data on the performance of target subjects, culminating in evaluative judgments to adjust and refine their operations under specific structural conditions.

Assessing Competency in Organizing Experiential and Career-Oriented Activities: The systematic process of collecting and processing data concerning teachers' performance in organizing these activities, thereby offering empirical conclusions to optimize instructional execution under specific school environments.

Assessment Method: The systematic approach or technique deployed by an evaluator to gather and process data regarding the subject being evaluated. In this context, it refers to how evaluators gather and analyze data on the instructional process of teachers conducting experiential and career-oriented sessions [4].

Assessment Tool: The instruments, materials, or mechanisms utilized by the evaluator to gather and process data on the subject. Here, it denotes the specific instruments used to collect and analyze information regarding the process of teacher-led experiential and career-oriented activities [4], [5], [6], [7].

2.2. Research Methodology and Survey Design

Survey Sample: The survey sample was selected via randomized sampling among active teachers in charge of experiential and career-oriented activities, alongside school administrators (including Department Heads and Principal Boards) across lower and upper secondary schools in Hanoi, Thanh Hoa, Lao Cai, and Vinh Long. The final sample size was 1,460 participants.

Survey Objectives: The inquiry aimed to diagnose the current status of using assessment methods and tools to evaluate teachers' competency in organizing these activities, subsequently proposing strategic interventions to optimize school-based evaluations.

Survey Content: Evaluating the frequency and implementation patterns of assessment methods and tools designed to measure teachers' organizational competency within secondary education settings.

Survey Methods: A mixed-methods design was employed, combining a quantitative questionnaire with qualitative semi-structured interviews. Specifically:

Questionnaire Method: A structured survey consisting of open-ended and close-ended items was developed to evaluate the deployment frequency of assessment methods and tools. Administered to secondary school teachers and administrators, it utilized a 5-point Likert scale.

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Interview Method: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected instructors and academic administrators (Department Heads and Vice Principals of Academic Affairs). This technique captured nuanced qualitative insights regarding the operational deployment of these evaluation instruments.

Timeline: The field research was carried out from October 2025 to January 2026.

Measurement Scale: A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the frequency of utilizing assessment methods and tools, calibrated as follows: *Very Frequently, Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely,* and *Never*.

Level 1: Never (Mean score: 1.00 to 1.80)

Level 2: Rarely (Mean score: 1.81 to 2.60)

Level 3: Occasionally (Mean score: 2.61 to 3.40)

Level 4: Frequently (Mean score: 3.41 to 4.20)

Level 5: Very Frequently (Mean score: 4.21 to 5.00)

Data Processing: We used SPSS 20.0 software with the arithmetic mean parameter. The mean value was calculated using the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{x_1y_1 + x_2y_2 + x_3y_3 + \cdots + x_ny_n}{\mathrm{N}}$$

In this formula, $\bar{X}$ represents the mean score, N represents individual weighted frequency values, The average of the values used to rank the average score $\bar{X}$. Mean scores were utilized to establish ordinal rankings among criteria.

Data Analysis Protocol:

Step 1: Screening response sheets from respondents.

Step 2: Discarding invalid or incomplete sheets.

Step 3: Entering valid data into the computer-based SPSS software.

Step 4: Executing statistical analysis commands within SPSS.

Step 5: Consolidating and translating raw data metrics.

Step 6: Presenting and analyzing the tabulated data.

Step 7: Deducing critical research conclusions.

2.3. Survey Results and Discussion

2.3.1. Current Status of the Utilization of Assessment Methods

Based on the aforementioned sample and metric scale, the quantitative data gathered regarding the deployment of competency assessment methods are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Frequency of utilizing assessment methods for teachers' competency in organizing experiential and career-oriented activities

Assessment methods	Very frequently		Frequently		Occasionally		Rarely		Never		$\bar{X}$	Rank
	Qty.	%	Qty.	%	Qty.	%	Qty.	%	Qty.	%		
Question and answer method	152	10,4	191	13,1	583	39,9	180	12,3	354	24,2	2,73	1
Observation method	135	9,2	192	13,2	594	40,7	179	12,3	360	24,7	2,70	2
Written assessment method	47	3,2	132	9,0	599	41,0	241	16,5	441	30,2	2,39	3
Product-based assessment of educational activities	48	3,3	134	9,2	596	40,8	240	16,4	442	30,3	2,23	4
Average score for the criteria											2,51	

Table 1 indicates several key trends:

Rank 1: Oral Assessment ($\bar{X}$= 2,73) emerged as the most frequently employed method among those surveyed. The response rate peaked at the "Occasionally" level (39,9%). Notably, the aggregated percentage of "Very Frequently" and "Frequently" usage reached 23,5%, which was the highest across all methods.

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Qualitative Insight: Interviewed teachers explained that this method is highly prioritized due to its procedural flexibility. It can be dynamically integrated directly into the flow of experiential activities to rapidly check students' immediate perceptions, emotional responses, or instantaneous feedback. Because it is highly convenient and does not require complex, time-consuming preparations, it occupies the top rank.

Rank 2: Observation Method ($\bar{X}$ = 2,70) held the second position, closely following oral assessment. The majority of answers clustered around "Occasionally" (40,7%), while the cumulative active usage ("Very Frequently" + "Frequently") sat at 22,4%. A mean of 2,70 indicates that secondary institutions broadly acknowledge the strategic importance of this method and apply it with relative regularity.

Qualitative Insight: Interviews with lower secondary school teachers and administrators in Hanoi revealed that experiential and career guidance paradigms emphasize behavioral modification, attitudinal development, and peer interaction. Therefore, direct observation serves as an optimal tool to measure authentic, real-time performance.

Rank 3: Written Examination ($\bar{X}$= 2,39) placed third, dropping significantly below the composite mean threshold (2,51). The percentage of respondents who "Never" utilized this method was high, reaching 30,2%. Regular deployment ("Very Frequently" and "Frequently") accounted for a meager 12,2%, whereas "Occasionally" remained the dominant selection (41,0%).

Qualitative Insight: Teachers in Lao Cai province pointed out that written tests (such as reflective essays, theoretical summaries, or knowledge-based multiple-choice quizzes) are rarely prioritized when evaluating experiential activity execution. This form of education is inherently participatory and interactive, rather than centered on rote memorization of paper-based theory.

Rank 4: Product-Based Educational Assessment ($\bar{X}$ = 2,23) sat at the bottom of the rankings. A substantial 30,3% of respondents reported "Never" employing this approach, and 16,4% used it "Rarely". Active usage ("Very Frequently" and "Frequently") represented only 12,5%. This lowest score implies that assigning and managing complex student products remains restricted, or that instructors face significant difficulties in constructing reliable assessment rubrics for tangible deliverables, leading to an aversion to its application.

General Evaluation and Strategic Recommendations:

A cross-methodological analysis indicates that the "Occasionally" designation dominates across all four methods, ranging tightly between 39,9% and 41,0%. This reveals that competency assessments for experiential activity orchestration in secondary schools are non-systemic and fragmented rather than continuous and structurally integrated.

The composite mean ($\bar{X}$ =2,51) resides at the lower-middle boundary. Assessment practices remain anchored to traditional, low-effort execution methods (basic oral questioning, rudimentary observation) instead of shifting toward contemporary, digitally transformed, or authentic product-based evaluation methods.

Recommendation: Schools and educators must pivot their focus away from spontaneous oral questioning and invest heavily in compiling structured rubrics for educational product evaluation, which more accurately capture a teacher's genuine organizational capability.

2.3.2. Current Status of the Utilization of Assessment Tools

In alignment with the aforementioned investigation of methods, the study mapped the usage of specific evaluation tools. The statistical distribution is presented in Table 2:

Table 2. Frequency of utilizing assessment tools for teachers' competency in organizing experiential and career-oriented activities

Assessment tools	Very frequently		Frequently		Occasionally		Rarely		Never		$\bar{X}$	Rank
	Qty.	%	Qty.	%	Qty.	%	Qty.	%	Qty.	%		
Educational Activity Products	47	3,2	133	9,1	596	40,8	241	16,5	443	30,3	2,38	4
Questions	151	10,4	192	13,2	580	39,7	183	12,5	354	24,2	2,73	1
Case-study Exercises	47	3,2	132	9,0	599	41,0	241	16,5	441	30,2	2,39	3
Checklist	57	3,9	142	9,7	573	39,2	247	16,9	441	30,2	2,40	2
Rubric	38	2,6	124	8,5	419	28,7	577	39,5	302	20,7	2,33	5
Average score for the criteria											2,45	

Overall, the aggregate mean for all evaluation tools sits at 2,45, falling within the "Rarely Used" band (from 1,81 to 2,60). This demonstrates that the deployment of tools to measure teachers' competency in managing these activities is critically LOW. Instructors show minimal proactive diversification of tools. The detailed breakdown reveals:

Questioning Items (avarage score = 2,73) achieved the top position among tools used in practice, yet its operational frequency remains capped at the "Occasionally Used" level.

Checklists with an average score of 2,40; Situational Tasks with an average score of 2,39; and Educational Products with an average score of 2,38 clustered closely together below the baseline average, indicating they are rarely utilized. Intriguingly, while approximately 39% to 41% of instructors claim to utilize these tools "Occasionally," nearly 30% "Never" employ them. Although these instruments are highly effective for measuring experiential, hands-on outputs (such as portfolio items or applied problem-solving), drafting precise grading criteria or engineering authentic case scenarios demands substantial time and advanced pedagogical expertise, causing teachers to avoid them.

Criteria-Based Assessment Sheets / Rubrics with an average score of 2,33 occupied the absolute lowest rank. The "Rarely" option for this tool garnered the highest concentration in the data set (39.5%), while regular deployment was critically low. This outcome occurs because Rubrics represent an advanced evaluation tool requiring rigorous decomposition of sub-competencies, performance indicators, and behavioral milestones. This reflects a deficit in teachers' skills regarding Rubric design, compounded by time constraints and large classroom sizes that hinder individual tracking.

The empirical data reveal that teachers consistently lean toward rapid, traditional mechanisms (Questioning) rather than technically demanding, modern instruments (Checklists, Rubrics, Situational Tasks), despite the latter being the actual "keys" to accurately measuring teacher efficacy in experiential contexts.

Strategic Recommendations:

Educational institutions and administrative bodies must conduct targeted professional workshops instructing teachers on how to design and utilize simplified, efficient Checklists and Rubrics.

Establish an open-access academic repository. Creating a shared database of situational tasks and product evaluation templates will allow educators to reference, customize, and immediately execute tools, alleviating individual planning workloads.

3. CONCLUSION

The current status of utilizing assessment methods and tools for evaluating teachers' organizational competency in experiential and career-oriented activities indicates that secondary schools rely heavily on basic, convenient, and easily executed techniques that offer minimal utility for authentic competency measurement (i.e., oral questioning and simple observation). Conversely, highly effective methods that offer substantial utility for tracking practical capabilities such as product-based evaluation and situational written testing are underutilized due to institutional anxiety regarding procedural complexity or a lack of methodological training. This imbalance directly mirrors the status of assessment tools. Consequently, questions and basic checklists are the most common instruments used by schools, yet even these are deployed infrequently. Advanced instruments, including case studies, Rubrics, and educational activity products, are used even less due to their structural complexity in design and application.

Given these findings, secondary schools must urgently intensify professional training for both instructional staff and educational managers. Workshops should focus on developing competencies in assessment methodologies, specifically focusing on the technical skills required to design and deploy modern competency-based assessment tools, as these represent the two most critical drivers for successful educational evaluation.

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