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EVALUATING THE CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING MORAL EDUCATION THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN HO CHI MINH CITY

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ABSTRACT

Teaching Moral Education through experiential learning brings important benefits in fostering the qualities of primary school students and meets the inevitable requirements of Vietnam's 2018 General Education Curriculum. This study surveyed 16 primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City to examine the current status of ensuring the conditions for implementing experiential teaching, focusing on six key factors. The findings indicate that the overall mean score reached 3.78 out of 5, which is at the level of "meeting the requirements" but has not yet attained the "good" level. On that basis, the study proposes six management measures, with particular emphasis on the measure of organizing supervision and evaluation. The findings provide primary schools with a basis for self-assessment and improvement of teaching conditions, thereby contributing to the enhancement of Moral Education quality for students.

KEYWORDS: experiential teaching, Moral Education, teaching conditions, primary schools, Ho Chi Minh City

1. INTRODUCTION

Moral education for primary school students has always been identified as a central task within the national education system [5, 8]. In the context of implementing the 2018 General Education Curriculum, educational goals have shifted strongly toward the development of learners' qualities and competencies, thereby requiring fundamental changes in teaching methods and forms of instructional organization [1, 2]. At the primary level, Moral Education plays a key role in shaping foundational behavioral norms and moral values, thus providing a solid basis for the holistic development of students' character [4, 7].

Teaching through experiential learning is grounded in the educational theories of scholars such as John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and especially David Kolb. According to Kolb [6], experiential learning is a

process of learning through experience, including four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. This approach enables students not only to understand moral standards but also to participate directly in real-life situations and activities in order to develop appropriate attitudes and behaviors [4]. The conditions required for teaching Moral Education through experiential learning include the competence of teachers and school administrators, students' learning motivation, physical facilities and information technology infrastructure, an open-designed teaching program, and close coordination among schools, families, and communities [3].

As the country's largest economic, cultural, and educational center, Ho Chi Minh City has consistently taken the lead in educational innovation. In practice, the implementation of Moral Education through experiential learning in primary schools across the city has yielded many positive results. However, certain limitations remain, particularly in teachers' capacity to organize experiential activities, the facilities available for experiential teaching, and the coordination among educational forces [3, 5]. Although numerous studies have addressed experiential teaching in general and Moral Education in particular, comprehensive and systematic studies evaluating the conditions for implementation at the primary level, especially in Ho Chi Minh City, remain relatively limited.

In response to the requirements of educational reform under the 2018 General Education Curriculum and the practical situation in Ho Chi Minh City, this study was conducted to evaluate the current status of ensuring the conditions for teaching Moral Education through experiential learning, thereby proposing appropriate management measures. The study findings are significant both theoretically and practically: they contribute to systematizing the theoretical foundations of managing Moral Education teaching through experiential learning; provide an overall picture of the current situation in primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City; and propose feasible and effective management measures for schools to consider and apply in practice, thereby contributing to the improvement of Moral Education quality for students.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a mixed-methods approach combining theoretical research and practical investigation. From a theoretical perspective, the research team collected, analyzed, and systematized both domestic and international scientific literature related to experiential teaching, Moral Education, and educational management. From a practical perspective, the study conducted a questionnaire survey with 77 school administrators from primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City, using a five-point Likert scale to assess six groups of teaching conditions. In addition, the study included in-depth interviews with 10 school administrators and 15 teachers, analyzed educational activity products, and processed the data using SPSS with descriptive and inferential statistics to ensure reliability and scientific validity.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Theoretical basis for ensuring the conditions for teaching Moral Education through experiential learning

Teaching Moral Education through experiential learning is the process of organizing educational activities in which students directly participate in real or simulated situations and contexts, thereby forming and developing moral qualities, life skills, and the capacity to adapt to life [1, 2]. According to Kolb's theory of experiential learning [6], the learning process includes four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. This approach is consistent with the psychological characteristics of primary school students, helping them not only understand moral standards but also experience them in practice so that such understanding can be transformed into positive behaviors and attitudes [4, 7]. A basic characteristic of experiential teaching is its student-centered orientation, emphasizing learners' experience, sharing, feedback, and application [5].

The conditions for ensuring the implementation of Moral Education through experiential learning include six basic groups of factors: (1) teachers' awareness and competence; (2) school administrators' awareness and competence; (3) students' learning motivation and attitudes; (4) physical facilities, teaching equipment, and information technology infrastructure; (5) an open-designed teaching program; and (6) coordination among schools, families, and communities [3, 8]. These conditions interact closely with one another, in which the competence of teachers and school administrators plays a central role in organizing and coordinating experiential activities [4], while facilities and technology serve as effective means of creating rich and engaging experiential learning environments [3].

Managing these conditions plays a decisive role in the quality and effectiveness of teaching Moral Education through experiential learning [5]. According to educational researchers [3], [7], teaching management should encompass the entire process, from planning, implementation, and direction to inspection and evaluation. Among these functions, supervision and evaluation are particularly important, as they help schools promptly identify strengths to be promoted and limitations to be addressed, thereby ensuring that implementation is aligned with the intended objectives, content, methods, and forms of instructional organization and meets the requirements of educational reform under the 2018 General Education Curriculum [1, 2].

3.2. Current status of ensuring the conditions for teaching Moral Education through experiential learning

The survey results on the current status of ensuring the conditions for teaching Moral Education through experiential learning in 16 primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City are presented in the following table:

Table 2.16. School administrators' evaluation of the conditions for teaching Moral Education through experiential learning in primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City

Content	1		2		3		4		5		Mean	SD	Rank
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%			
1. Teachers' awareness and competence in teaching Moral Education through experiential learning	0	0,0	0	0,0	34	44,1	25	32,4	18	23,3	3,79	0,795	4
2. School administrators' awareness and management competence in teaching Moral Education through experiential learning	0	0,0	0	0,0	32	41,6	25	32,4	20	25,9	3,84	0,807	3
3. Students' learning motivation and attitudes toward Moral Education	0	0,0	1 1	14,3	21	27,3	25	32,4	20	25,9	3,70	1,007	5
4. School facilities, teaching equipment, IT infrastructure, software, and materials supporting the teaching of Moral Education through experiential learning	2	2,6	4	5,2	18	23,4	29	37,7	24	31,2	3,90	0,988	2
5. The school's Moral Education teaching program	2	2,6	4	5,2	17	22,1	28	36,4	26	33,8	3,94	0,998	1

designed in an open orientation													
6. Coordination among school, family, and community in teaching Moral Education through experiential learning	0	0,0	1 6	20,8	21	27,3	25	32,4	15	19,5	3,51	1,027	6
Overall mean											3,78		

The survey findings show that primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City have basically ensured the conditions for teaching Moral Education through experiential learning at the level of “meeting the requirements” (Mean = 3.78/5). Among these conditions, the open-designed teaching program received the highest rating (Mean = 3.94), followed by physical facilities and information technology infrastructure (Mean = 3.90). However, field-based teaching activities remain limited, facilities are uneven across schools, especially in suburban areas, and the application of advanced technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) in teaching is still highly limited.

The evaluation of staff competence indicates that school administrators demonstrated relatively strong awareness, but their strategic planning and resource mobilization capacities remain limited (Mean = 3.84). Teachers showed positive awareness of methodological innovation, yet their competence in organizing real experiential activities remains inadequate (Mean = 3.79). The two lowest-rated factors were students’ learning motivation (Mean = 3.70) and coordination among school, family, and community (Mean = 3.51). The main causes stem from social perceptions of the subject and the fact that coordination is still rather formalistic and lacks a systematic structure.

Overall, primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City have shown positive changes in awareness and have initially reformed their programs toward experiential learning. Nevertheless, limitations in teachers’ organizational competence, ineffective coordination among educational forces, and students’ insufficient learning motivation remain barriers that need to be addressed in order to improve the quality of teaching Moral Education through experiential learning.

3.3. The measure of organizing supervision and evaluation in the implementation of teaching Moral Education through experiential learning

Based on the findings of the current-status investigation, the research team proposes six management measures to improve the quality of teaching Moral Education through experiential learning, among which the measure of organizing supervision and evaluation is considered pivotal in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of the innovation process. The objective of this measure is to help schools collect information on the actual implementation process, compare it with the proposed plan, identify strengths to encourage and promote, and detect limitations for timely adjustment. Through this process, the quality of teaching Moral Education through experiential learning can be improved, thereby contributing to the successful implementation of the 2018 General Education Curriculum.

In terms of content, principals should direct the establishment of a supervision team, criteria, and comprehensive evaluation content for implementing the teaching plan. The supervision content should include: the development of the school teaching plan and the plan for each grade level; teachers' lesson plans with requirements regarding themes, objectives, forms of experience, and methods of implementation; the process of classroom teaching organization with methodological innovation and the level of student participation; the ensuring conditions such as teacher competence, technological infrastructure, and learning resources; the assessment of students' learning outcomes; and coordination among schools, families, and communities.

The implementation of this measure should be carried out in four specific steps. First, principals should direct the design of evaluation tools with clear criteria at different levels, while also establishing standards for students' required qualities and competencies and standards for lesson planning. Second, a specific supervision and evaluation plan should be developed in terms of objectives, content, and implementation procedures. Third, regular supervision should be conducted through reviewing lesson plans, classroom observation, and professional records for timely adjustment. Finally, periodic supervision and summative review should be carried out to draw lessons learned and use the evaluation results to adjust teaching plans in subsequent stages.

To ensure the effectiveness of this measure, several conditions need to be met. School administrators must have a deep understanding of the curriculum and possess competence in supervision and evaluation. Teachers need to correctly recognize the role of supervision, actively engage in self-evaluation, and innovate their teaching methods. In addition, supervision results must be reported honestly, objectively, and fairly in order to motivate the staff. Schools should also establish mechanisms for timely encouragement and recognition for teachers who perform well, while providing support and consultation for those who still face difficulties during implementation.

4. CONCLUSION

The study on the current status of ensuring the conditions for teaching Moral Education through experiential learning in primary schools in Ho Chi Minh City has achieved important results. In theoretical terms, the study systematized the theoretical framework of experiential teaching, the ensuring conditions, and the content of managing Moral Education teaching at the primary level, thereby contributing to the body of educational science knowledge. In practical terms, the survey findings from 16 primary schools show that the teaching conditions were evaluated at the level of “meeting the requirements” (Mean = 3.78), in which the open-designed program and physical facilities received the highest ratings, while coordination among educational forces, students’ learning motivation, and teachers’ teaching competence still revealed many limitations. Based on the findings, the research team proposes six management measures, emphasizing the pivotal role of organizing supervision and evaluation in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of the innovation process.

The study has theoretical significance in strengthening the scientific foundation for managing Moral Education teaching through experiential learning, while also having practical significance by providing an overall picture of the current situation and specific suggestions for primary schools in strengthening investment in facilities, developing students’ learning motivation, improving teacher competence, and enhancing coordination among school, family, and community. Future research should expand the scope of investigation to more localities, conduct experimental studies on the effectiveness of the proposed management measures, and explore the application of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) in teaching Moral Education through experiential learning.

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