

Factors influencing the management of physical education curriculum implementation at the Vietnam national university Ho Chi Minh City, Center for sport

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Abstract

An investigation into the management of Physical Education (PE) curriculum implementation at the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Center for Sport (the SC, VNU-HCM) reveals that, despite certain advantages, significant challenges persist. These obstacles stem from several key factors: a lack of synchronized infrastructure that fails to meet the diverse requirements of the PE curriculum; a teaching staff insufficient in number to accommodate the university's large student body; and leadership that has yet to fully adapt to ongoing changes. Furthermore, limitations in management mechanisms, policy frameworks, information technology integration, and administrator awareness continue to hinder progress. These systemic constraints impede management effectiveness and prevent the SC, VNU-HCM from fully leveraging its resources and developmental potential. Identifying these influencing factors and existing bottlenecks provides a crucial foundation for proposing strategic management measures. Such improvements are essential for enhancing training quality and ensuring the sustainable development of the SC, VNU-HCM.

Keywords: Influencing factors, curriculum implementation management, physical education, vietnam national university Ho Chi Minh City Center for sport

Introduction

In the broader field of sports management and PE, management activities are considered an integral part of social governance and school-based PE administration. In Vietnam, research specifically addressing the “management of PE curriculum implementation” remains limited. Most extant literature focuses on analyzing and proposing models to enhance course quality, training efficiency, and student satisfaction amidst educational reforms, or explores the administration of PE teaching and the improvement of student fitness levels.

In practice, management within undergraduate education institutions is not the sole prerogative of senior leadership but a collective responsibility distributed across a system of administrators, each fulfilling specific roles within the organizational structure. Consequently, undergraduate education management demands seamless coordination and the mobilization of collective effort to realize institutional objectives. It encompasses a series of purposeful actions - planning, organizing, directing, and monitoring - aimed at guiding faculty, staff, and students while optimizing resources (infrastructure, finance, and information) for holistic educational development.

The management of any organization is inherently shaped by various factors, particularly the ever-evolving environment. In this context, the management environment is defined as the totality of factors that exert influence on, or are influenced by, the system under a manager's purview. More broadly, it comprises the variables that administrators must monitor to fulfill their functions effectively. Depending on the analytical lens, this environment can be characterized by its constituent influencing factors. Accordingly, this study identifies the factors influencing the management of PE curriculum implementation at the SC,

VNU-HCM, aiming to foster continuous managerial improvement.

Research Methods

To achieve the research objectives, the author employed the following methodologies:

- **Document analysis method:** this method was utilized to gather, analyze, synthesize, and systematize relevant theoretical materials, thereby establishing a robust theoretical framework for the study (Le Van Lam & Nguyen Xuan Sinh. 1999; Le Quy Phuong *et al.* 2015) [9, 18]. The author conducted extensive searches across various sources, including books, textbooks, specialized journals, dissertations, theses, and other domestic and international publications. These materials focused on curriculum studies, management of PE curriculum implementation, and the multifaceted factors influencing these processes. Through this systematic review, the research focus was identified, relevant literature was curated, and the core research problems were formulated.
- **Questionnaire survey method:** as the primary empirical approach, this method was used to collect quantitative data to address the central research questions (Le Quy Phuong *et al.* 2015 [18]; Nguyen Van De & Pham Minh Hung. 2013) [15]. Data collection focused on assessing the current status of the PE curriculum, its management implementation, and the contributing factors to the present situation. Furthermore, this method evaluated the urgency and feasibility of the proposed management measures.

The survey process involved sampling, questionnaire administration, and data collection from a diverse participant pool (n = 684), including: 14 Administrators: representing seven members and affiliated institutions of VNU-HCM (including Boards of Directors and Heads of Academic Affairs) and the leadership/management staff of the SC, VNU-HCM; 26 Lecturers: currently involved in delivering the PE curriculum at the SC, VNU-HCM; 644 Students: currently enrolled in PE courses at the SC, VNU-HCM.

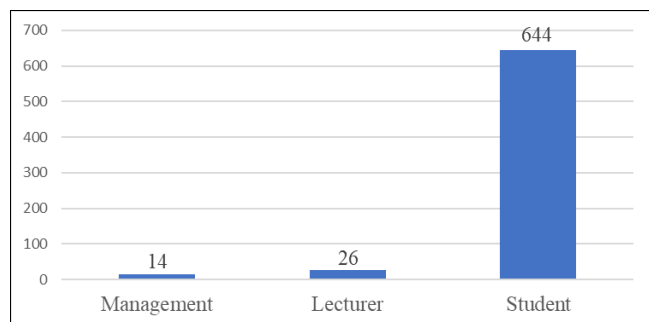


Fig 1: Distribution of interview participants

- **Data processing methods:** this method was employed to process quantitative data and qualitative information obtained from questionnaire surveys and in-depth expert interviews (Do Vinh & Huynh Trong Khai. 2008 ^[16]; Hoang Trong & Chu Nguyen Mong Ngoc. 2008) ^[16]. SPSS software was used to process and analyze the quantitative data. The statistical techniques applied in this study included descriptive statistical analyses such as mean (M), standard deviation (SD), frequency, and percentage. These analyses provided a basis for comparison, interpretation, and discussion of the research findings. In addition, qualitative data analysis was conducted using information obtained from expert interviews to interpret and support the quantitative results derived from the questionnaire survey, thereby further clarifying and substantiating the survey findings (Do Vinh & Huynh Trong Khai. 2008) ^[16].

Table 1: Scoring scale for evaluating the current state of physical education curriculum implementation management at the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Center for Sport.

Scoring scale	Average score	Rating level
5 points	4.21 – 5.0	Completely agree; it's very influential
4 points	3.41 – 4.20	Agreed; influence
3 points	2.61 – 3.40	Hesitant
2 points	1.81 – 2.60	Disagree; no effect
1points	1.0 – 1.80	Strongly disagree; completely unaffected

- **Regarding the research space:** the survey encompassed seven members and affiliated institutions under the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (VNU-HCM), whose students are enrolled in the PE curriculum at the SC, VNU-HCM. These participating institutions included: University of Technology, VNU-HCM; University of Science, VNU-HCM; University of Social Sciences and Humanities, VNU-HCM; International University, VNU-HCM; University of Information Technology, VNU-HCM;

University of Economics and Law, VNU-HCM; University of Health Sciences, VNU-HCM. The SC, VNU-HCM serves as the primary entity responsible for the direct implementation and pedagogical management of this PE curriculum.

Theoretical Basis

The management of training curriculum has evolved beyond a purely techno-economic framework to incorporate multidisciplinary perspectives, including philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, and sociology. In this context, curriculum management emphasizes supervisory and administrative functions, particularly the operationalization of educational curriculum within university settings. From this viewpoint, administrators prioritize the organization, coordination, and execution of programs over curriculum design or content analysis to ensure procedural effectiveness (Nguyen Duc Chinh. 2008) ^[14].

Extensive studies on academic administration have provided a comprehensive framework for this field. (Notably, Creswell *et al.* 1992) interviewed 200 administrators from 70 U.S. institutions; (Tucker. 1993) engaged with leaders across Florida's public university system; and (Carroll and Gmelch. 1995) conducted a large-scale survey of 1,108 administrators. Collectively, these studies suggest that while management responsibilities vary by context, they typically encompass six core domains: (1) academic unit administration, (2) curriculum management, (3) human resource management (faculty, staff, and learners), (4) fiscal and resource management (infrastructure and equipment), (5) external relations, and (6) departmental administration. Research into the efficacy of curriculum implementation has identified several critical success factors. (Egan. 2003) asserted that the strategic development of implementation plans is decisive for the success of new educational initiatives. (Conversely, Mosmar. 2001) and (Al-Oun & Qutesha. 2014) highlighted systemic challenges in PE, such as inadequate remuneration, budget constraints, insufficient infrastructure, and a lack of curricula tailored to institutional realities. Locally, (Nguyen Van Hoa. 2016) noted similar shortcomings at Can Tho University, including facility gaps and pedagogical inflexibility, emphasizing the need for innovative teaching methods and robust assessment mechanisms.

Within the SC, VNU-HCM, localized studies have addressed specific operational aspects, such as accounting practices (Le Thi Thuy. 2023) ^[8], faculty development (Do Thi Ngan. 2022) ^[4], and student sports club models (Mai Van Ngoan. 2024) ^[10]. Furthermore, (Hoang Ha *et al.* 2022) ^[7], evaluated the Center's existing capacity to deliver the undergraduate PE curriculum. However, a significant gap remains: existing research lacks a comprehensive management strategy that integrates objectives, content, pedagogy, and assessment. More importantly, there is a dearth of research identifying the specific factors that constrain current management practices.

Consequently, this study seeks to identify the factors influencing the management of PE curriculum implementation at the SC, VNU-HCM. This research is pivotal in establishing a theoretical foundation to enhance managerial efficiency, meet student needs, and align with the broader undergraduate education reforms at VNU-HCM.

Results and Discussion

1. Current state of the management of physical education curriculum implementation at the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Center for Sport

The survey and analysis regarding the current status of PE curriculum management at the SC, VNU-HCM, conducted across both student and academic/administrative cohorts, yield the following findings: (1) Awareness: participants demonstrated a high level of awareness regarding the importance and role of PE, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of the subject's educational functions; (2) Objectives: while curriculum objectives were perceived positively, there is a clear demand for greater specificity through more aligned instructional content and pedagogical methods; (3) Content: the curriculum is noted for its flexibility and elective-oriented design; however, adjustments are necessary to better suit the specific characteristics and diverse needs of VNU-HCM students; (4) Structure: the credit-based structure is deemed appropriate, though further optimization of content sequencing and time allocation is required; (5) Assessment: evaluation practices are regarded as transparent and reliable, yet more attention should be directed toward enhancing student satisfaction levels; (6) Implementation conditions: resources (finance, facilities, and personnel) were generally rated positively. Nevertheless, a discrepancy persists

between expectations and reality, particularly concerning the specialized professional expertise of the teaching staff. Synthesizing these results, it is evident that the PE curriculum management at the SC, VNU-HCM has established a robust foundation. Task delegation, inter-unit coordination, and systemic operations are functioning effectively. However, sustained investment in infrastructure and financial resources remains essential to bolster the supporting environment for PE implementation.

Regarding Directing and Leadership, the SC, VNU-HCM has shown agility in adapting implementation plans and employing motivational strategies for staff. Despite these strengths, there is room to enhance coordination capacity and resource optimization. While Monitoring and Supervision are systematically conducted - particularly in the reporting and reflection phases - the SC, VNU-HCM should increase the frequency of condition-based monitoring, strengthen evidence-based management, and refine feedback mechanisms with member institutions. Such improvements are vital for the comprehensive and sustainable enhancement of PE curriculum management.

2. Factors influencing the management of physical education curriculum implementation at the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Center for Sport

2.1 Subjective factors

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of Administrators - lecturers's evaluations regarding the influence of subjective factors on the management of physical education curriculum implementation at the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Center for Sport.

Question code	Main content	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
FIM_SF01	Administrators' awareness	40	3	5	4.48	0.716
FIM_SF02	Administrators' competence	40	3	5	4.50	0.716
FIM_SF03	Lecturers' awareness	40	3	5	4.48	0.716
FIM_SF04	Lecturers' competence	40	3	5	4.60	0.709

Cronbach's Alpha: 0.962 (with 4 survey variables)

The descriptive statistics indicate that subjective factors were rated at a high level by *Administrators - lecturers*, with mean scores ranging from 4.48 to 4.60 on a five-point Likert scale. Among these factors, lecturers' competence received the highest mean score (Mean = 4.60, SD = 0.709), suggesting that Lecturers capacity is perceived as the most influential subjective factor in the management of PE curriculum implementation.

Both administrators' awareness (Mean = 4.48) and lecturers' awareness (Mean = 4.48) were also highly rated, reflecting a shared understanding of the importance and role of PE curriculum within the university context. Similarly,

administrators' competence (Mean = 4.50) was evaluated positively, indicating that managerial capacity plays a critical role in organizing, coordinating, and directing curriculum implementation activities.

The relatively low standard deviation values across all variables (SD < 0.75) suggest a high level of consensus among respondents regarding the influence of these subjective factors. These findings confirm that human (related factors-particularly awareness and professional competence of both administrators and lecturers) constitute a fundamental determinant of effective management of PE curriculum implementation at the SC, VNU-HCM.

Table 3: Comparison of students' and Administrators - lecturers's evaluations of the influence of subjective factors "lecturers' competence" on management of physical education curriculum implementation at the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Center for Sport.

Question code	Main content	Mean $\pm$ SD		Significance level	
		Students	Administrators - lecturers	Sig.	p
FIM_SF04	Lecturers' competence	4.15 $\pm$ 0.97	4.60 $\pm$ 0.709	0.0043	< 0.05

The survey results reveal a statistically significant difference between students and Administrators - lecturers in their evaluations of lecturers' competence within the PE curriculum implementation. While students rated this factor at a relatively high level (Mean = 4.15), the Administrators -

lecturers provided a significantly higher self-evaluation (Mean = 4.60).

This disparity is statistically confirmed with a significance value of Sig = 0.0043 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the gap in perception is meaningful rather than coincidental.

Furthermore, the standard deviation among students ($SD = 0.97$) is notably higher than that of the staff ($SD = 0.709$), suggesting a greater dispersion and diversity of opinions within the student body. In contrast, the Administrators - lecturers demonstrated a higher degree of consensus in their assessments.

This finding highlights a clear perceptual gap between learners and educators regarding professional proficiency. This discrepancy may be attributed to

- **Asymmetric expectations:** students may have different benchmarks for “competence” compared to institutional standards.

- **Pedagogical interaction:** potential limitations in the quality of engagement between lecturers and students.
- **Transparency issues:** a possible lack of clarity regarding professional development and teaching practices from the students' viewpoint.

These results underscore the necessity for graduate education institutions to strengthen two-way communication mechanisms and feedback loops. Enhancing pedagogical engagement is essential to bridge this gap, fostering mutual trust and consensus, which are vital for the effective and sustainable management of PE curriculum implementation.

Table 4: Comparison of students' and Administrators - lecturers's evaluations of the influence of the “Student” factor on management of physical education curriculum implementation at the Center for Sport, VNU-HCM

Question code	Main content	Mean $\pm$ SD		Significance level	
		Students	Administrators - lecturers	Sig.	p
FIM_SF05	Students's awareness	4.18 $\pm$ 0.909	4.23 $\pm$ 0.698	0.739	> 0.05
FIM_SF06	Students's competence	4.09 $\pm$ 0.969	4.23 $\pm$ 0.660	0.371	> 0.05
FIM_SF07	Students' gender	3.47 $\pm$ 1.334	3.28 $\pm$ 1.154	0.359	> 0.05

Total valid responses: 40 lecturers and administrators, and 664 students.

Cronbach's Alpha: 0.765 (with 3 survey variables).

The results regarding students' perceptions of the program indicate that students rated this factor at a relatively high level, with a mean score of 4.18 on a five-point Likert scale, while Administrators - lecturers provided a slightly higher evaluation, with a mean of 4.23. The corresponding standard deviations were 0.909 for students and 0.698 for Administrators - lecturers, suggesting greater variability in students' perceptions compared to those of faculty. However, the independent-samples t-test revealed a Sig. = 0.739 ($p > 0.05$), indicating that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant. In other words, both groups demonstrate a high level of agreement in their assessment of students' perceptions, considering this factor to be important and reasonably well manifested in practice. With regard to students' competence, students rated themselves with a mean score of 4.09, whereas Administrators - lecturers evaluated students' competence more positively, with a mean score of 4.23. This mean difference reflects a tendency for faculty to hold a more favorable view of students' capabilities. Nevertheless, the Sig. = 0.371 ($p > 0.05$), confirming that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant. This finding indicates a relatively consistent perception of students' competence from both learners and academic staffs.

For the variable student gender, the perceived level of influence was rated at a mean of 3.47 by students, while Administrators - lecturers evaluated students' competence more positively, with a mean score of 4.23. The overall mean value for this variable was 3.28, indicating a moderate level of perceived influence. Both mean values are moderate, and the standard deviations are relatively large (1.334 for students and 1.154 for faculty), reflecting diversity in viewpoints regarding this factor. The t-test results yielded a Sig. value of 0.359, demonstrating that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups in their assessment of the role of gender in the program.

Overall, these findings suggest that student-related factors, including perceptions, competence, and gender, are evaluated positively and consistently by both students and faculty members. The absence of statistically significant differences between the two groups represents a favorable indication of shared understanding and alignment among stakeholders. This alignment provides a supportive foundation for planning and implementing policies and managerial measures aimed at improving the quality of PE curriculum implementation in undergraduate education institutions.

2.2 Objective factors

Table 5: Comparison of students' and Administrators - lecturers' evaluations of the influence of objective factors on management of physical education curriculum implementation at the Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City Center for Sport

Question code	Main content	Mean $\pm$ SD		Significance level	
		Students	Administrators - lecturers	Sig.	p
FIM_OF01	Institutional Management Mechanisms	4.15 $\pm$ 0.926	4.25 $\pm$ 0.927	0.522	> 0.05
FIM_OF02	Staff Welfare and Incentive Policies	4.19 $\pm$ 0.886	4.23 $\pm$ 0.891	0.782	> 0.05
FIM_OF03	Application of information technology	4.12 $\pm$ 0.917	4.15 $\pm$ 1.001	0.820	> 0.05

Total valid responses: 40 Administrators - lecturers, 664 students

Cronbach's Alpha: 0.928 (with 3 survey variables)

Results from the independent-samples t-test regarding the three primary objective factors influencing PE curriculum management indicate no statistically significant differences between students and Administrators - lecturers ($p > 0.05$).

The findings are detailed as follows

Institutional Management Mechanisms: students reported a mean score of 4.15 (SD = 0.92), while Administrators - lecturers rated it slightly higher at 4.25 (SD = 0.92). The t-test yielded a significance value of $p = 0.522$, confirming a high level of consensus regarding the appropriateness of the current management mechanisms within the VNU-HCM system.

Staff Welfare and Incentive Policies: perceptions were remarkably aligned, with students scoring 4.19 and Administrators - lecturers scoring 4.23. This minor variance was statistically insignificant ($p = 0.782$), suggesting that both cohorts maintain similarly positive views of existing policy frameworks.

Application of information technology: this factor received an average rating of 4.12 from students and 4.15 from Administrators - lecturers. Despite a slightly higher dispersion among Administrators - lecturers (SD = 1.001 vs. SD = 0.917), the value of $p = 0.820$ further corroborates the absence of any meaningful disparity in perception. Overall, objective factors, including management mechanisms, staff policies, and application of information technology were consistently rated at high levels across both groups ($p > 0.05$). These results reflect a robust systemic consensus, providing a stable foundation for the effective delivery and sustainable development of the PE curriculum at the SC, VNU-HCM.

Discussion

The factors influencing the implementation of the PE curriculum (management mechanisms, policy frameworks, the application of information technology, the awareness and professional competence of administrators and faculty members, as well as student-related factors) were rated at relatively high levels and demonstrated a strong degree of consensus between the two respondent groups (Administrators - lecturers and students). The results of the independent-samples t-test indicate that most observed differences between the two groups were not statistically significant, with the exception of Administrators - lecturers' professional competence, which was evaluated more highly by faculty members than by students. This finding suggests a general alignment in perceptions among key stakeholders, thereby creating favorable conditions for effective management and continuous improvement of the PE curriculum.

The observed situation can be explained by the interrelated and dialectical interaction between objective factors and subjective factors, which are shaped both by policy contexts and practical constraints, as well as by internal limitations in management and organizational capacity at the SC, VNU-HCM. From an objective perspective, Vietnamese undergraduate education in general, and VNU-HCM in particular, is experiencing a rapid expansion in enrollment scale. Each semester, more than 16,000 students participate in PE courses, a figure that far exceeds the current

organizational capacity of the SC, VNU-HCM. At the same time, national policy documents such as Decision No. 2160/QĐ-TTg (2013) ^[19] on sports development planning and Circular No. 03/2020 ^[12]/TT-BGDĐT have imposed increasingly stringent requirements regarding faculty standards and physical facilities. These include lecturer-student ratios of 1/400 by 2020 and progressing toward 1/300 by 2030, as well as minimum standards for multi-purpose gymnasiums (at least 42 × 24 meters with a height of 12.5 meters) to ensure adequate teaching conditions (MOET. 2020; Government of Vietnam. 2013) ^[19, 22]. While these standards are intended to enhance the long-term quality of PE curriculum, they simultaneously place significant pressure on the SC, VNU-HCM, given that the number of full-time lecturers remains insufficient and standardized facilities are currently limited to only three multi-purpose gymnasiums across the entire VNU-HCM system. Moreover, limited financial investment in PE curriculum has resulted in shortages of sports facilities, infrastructure, and teaching equipment. Consequently, a widening gap has emerged between policy requirements, societal expectations, and the actual implementation capacity at the SC, VNU-HCM.

From a subjective perspective, the SC, VNU-HCM has made considerable efforts to maintain operational stability and ensure a minimum level of quality. The current teaching staff is relatively young, with a high proportion aged between 36 and 45 and possessing 10–20 years of professional experience. This represents a significant advantage in terms of enthusiasm, professional foundation, and adaptability to modern teaching models that address the diverse needs of students. Management and organizational practices have also been implemented with relative effectiveness, as reflected in the high level of agreement between administrators, faculty members, and students regarding program objectives, content, and organizational mechanisms. However, a major limitation lies in the insufficient number of full-time lecturers, with the current lecturer-student ratio standing at approximately 1/552. This excessive workload may negatively affect teaching quality, constrain pedagogical innovation, and limit opportunities for curriculum improvement, research, and meaningful interaction with students.

In addition, the absence of a modern training management software system has posed challenges in class allocation, progress monitoring, data management, and coordination among training institutions. As a result, organizational processes remain largely manual, lack flexibility, and fail to optimize the use of available facilities and human resources systematically and scientifically. The discrepancy between practical demand and institutional capacity is therefore not attributable to a single factor, but rather to the combined influence of objective constraints and subjective limitations. On the one hand, large student enrollment, high policy standards, and limited investment resources create significant external constraints that are difficult to resolve in the short term. On the other hand, the internal capacity of the SC, VNU-HCM -particularly in terms of staffing levels, management models, and information technology application-remains insufficient to compensate for these deficiencies.

The interaction of these factors has led to a situation in which the PE curriculum is implemented on a limited scale, with each training institution offering only 2 to 6 sport

disciplines out of the 14 prescribed PE disciplines. This not only reduces curriculum diversity and attractiveness but also directly affects students' freedom of choice, training needs, and equity in access to PE curriculum.

In summary, the current situation reflects the inevitable outcome of the interplay between objective factors (policy frameworks and information technology application) and subjective factors (human resources, management approaches, lecturer availability, and student demand). Identifying these underlying causes provides an essential foundation for the SC, VNU-HCM, to develop both short-term and long-term solutions, including policy advocacy, internal capacity strengthening, and strategic planning aimed at achieving sustainable and comprehensive development.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Among the factors influencing the management of the PE curriculum implementation, lecturers' professional competence was rated as having the strongest impact (Mean = 4.60). Other factors including management mechanisms, policy frameworks, information technology application, administrators' and lecturers' awareness, and students' awareness—also received high levels of agreement. The independent-samples t-test revealed no statistically significant differences between students and Administrators - lecturers, except for the factor of lecturers' competence, which was rated more highly by faculty members than by students.

The findings also reveal systemic limitations arising from the interaction between objective factors and subjective factors, including large-scale enrollment, stringent policy requirements, limited investment in facilities and finance, an insufficient number of full-time lecturers, excessive teaching loads beyond standard norms, and the lack of modern information technology applications. These constraints hinder the optimal utilization of existing resources and contribute to reduced program diversity and limited responsiveness to students' needs and course selection rights (e.g., subject availability and scheduling conflicts).

Overall, the current situation reflects a dialectical relationship between positive awareness and constrained implementation conditions, as well as between growing demand and limited institutional capacity. While these challenges pose significant difficulties, they also present opportunities for the SC, VNU-HCM, to pursue comprehensive improvements, including enhanced communication strategies, increased resource investment, expanded use of information technology in management, and the refinement of monitoring and evaluation systems.

The findings of this study provide an important empirical and theoretical foundation for proposing a system of feasible solutions aimed at improving the effectiveness of managing and implementing the PE curriculum at the SC, VNU-HCM.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The article is the research work of the author group. The data and results are honest, not overlapping with other researchs.

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