

Creating a Mentally Prepared Teaching Environment through Efficient Quality Assurance Measures

^{1*}Delfina A. Ampung

¹Sulu State University, Jolo, Sulu 7400, Philippines
delfinaampung@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examined how institutional quality assurance (QA) practices influence the mental preparedness of public-school teachers, focusing on their psychological readiness, emotional capacity, and instructional behavior. Using a qualitative exploratory design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 licensed teachers in Western Mindanao, Philippines. Findings reveal that QA functions as both a source of pressure and support. On one hand, documentation demands, classroom observations, and inconsistent implementation of standards contribute to heightened anxiety, cognitive fragmentation, and emotional fatigue, affecting teachers' ability to sustain instructional focus. On the other hand, clear guidelines, structured systems, mentoring, and collaborative feedback enhance teachers' confidence, sense of control, and preparedness. The results further indicate that prolonged exposure to QA processes reshapes teaching practices. Teachers become more structured and aligned with formal standards but also more cautious and less spontaneous in their instructional approaches. Many participants reported developing personal coping strategies, such as time management and task segmentation, to manage competing demands. These findings are interpreted through the lenses of the Job Demands–Resources theory, Cognitive Load Theory, and Self-Determination Theory, which explain how institutional demands and supports shape teachers' psychological functioning and professional behavior. The study highlights the need to balance accountability with teacher well-being. It underscores that QA systems are most effective when implemented as supportive and developmental mechanisms rather than purely compliance-driven processes. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how institutional practices influence teaching conditions and offer insights for designing more sustainable and teacher-centered QA frameworks.

Keywords: Mental preparedness, Teaching environment, Quality assurance, Efficiency, Instructional readiness

1. Introduction

Creating a mentally prepared teaching environment extends beyond instructional competence and classroom management; it requires attention to the psychological conditions under which teachers perform their roles. In contemporary educational systems, teachers are not only facilitators of learning but also subjects of institutional accountability mechanisms designed to ensure instructional quality. In the Philippine context, quality assurance (QA) processes—such as lesson plan reviews, classroom observations, and performance evaluations—are systematically embedded within daily teaching routines (Ancho, 2019). While these mechanisms aim to standardize and enhance teaching effectiveness, emerging scholarship suggests that they also shape teachers' emotional and cognitive states in ways that are not yet fully understood (Lekule, 2021).

Existing literature presents QA as a double-edged construct. On one hand, structured and well-communicated QA systems can support professional growth, improve instructional alignment, and foster reflective practice (Elassy, 2015; Williams, 2024). On the other hand, studies indicate that rigid

implementation, excessive documentation, and inconsistent enforcement may contribute to heightened stress, reduced autonomy, and emotional fatigue among teachers (Chow et al., 2023; Gunawardena et al., 2024). Within the Philippine basic education system, these tensions are further intensified by institutional frameworks such as School-Based Management and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which emphasize accountability while often increasing administrative workload (Maca, 2020). As noted by Nwoko et al. (2024), the cumulative demands of compliance-related tasks may undermine teacher well-being, particularly in contexts where support systems are limited or unevenly applied.

The concept of mental preparedness—encompassing emotional stability, cognitive readiness, and instructional confidence—has been identified as a critical determinant of teaching effectiveness (Agyapong et al., 2022). However, much of the existing research treats mental preparedness as an individual attribute rather than as an outcome shaped by institutional environments. In practice, teachers operate within complex systems where instructional responsibilities are intertwined with administrative expectations, requiring continuous emotional regulation and cognitive adjustment (Muehlbacher et al., 2022). This intersection raises a critical concern: while QA mechanisms are designed to enhance instructional quality, their implementation may inadvertently compromise the very psychological conditions necessary for effective teaching.

This study was grounded in established frameworks that explain how institutional structures influence psychological functioning in professional contexts. Drawing from the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) theory, quality assurance (QA) practices were conceptualized as either job demands (e.g., documentation, evaluations) that may contribute to strain, or job resources (e.g., feedback, mentoring) that enhance motivation and readiness (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Complementing this, Cognitive Load Theory posits that excessive administrative requirements can increase extraneous cognitive load, limiting teachers' capacity to focus on instructional tasks and thereby affecting their mental preparedness (Sweller, 1988). Additionally, Self-Determination Theory highlights how institutional practices shape motivation through the fulfillment or frustration of autonomy, competence, and relatedness; rigid or compliance-driven QA systems may undermine these needs, whereas supportive and collaborative approaches may strengthen them (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Together, these frameworks provide a coherent lens for understanding how QA mechanisms can either support or hinder teachers' psychological readiness depending on their structure and implementation.

Despite growing attention to teacher well-being, there remains a significant gap in understanding how specific QA practices influence teachers' mental preparedness, particularly within the Philippine public school setting. Prior studies have largely examined QA in terms of compliance, performance outcomes, or institutional effectiveness, with limited focus on its psychological implications for teachers' day-to-day instructional readiness (Aragasi et al., 2021; Sohail et al., 2023). Moreover, existing research seldom differentiates between QA practices that support teachers and those that contribute to cognitive overload and emotional strain. This lack of nuanced understanding limits the ability of policymakers and school leaders to design QA systems that are both effective and sustainable.

Addressing this gap, the present study examined how institutional QA practices influenced the mental preparedness of public-school teachers in Zamboanga City, Philippines. Specifically, it sought to (1) explore teachers' psychological responses to common QA mechanisms, and (2) identify which QA practices enhanced or hindered their sense of preparedness, confidence, and emotional stability in performing instructional duties. By foregrounding teachers' lived experiences, this study contributed to a more contextualized understanding of QA as both a regulatory and developmental process.

Ultimately, this research positioned quality assurance not merely as a tool for compliance, but as a critical factor in shaping the psychological environment of teaching. Insights from this study aimed to inform the design of QA systems that balance accountability with teacher well-being, thereby promoting instructional effectiveness, professional sustainability, and a more mentally supportive educational environment.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative exploratory design to examine how quality assurance (QA) practices influence the mental preparedness of teachers within the Philippine basic education system. This approach was appropriate for capturing participants' lived experiences, emotional responses, and cognitive interpretations of institutional processes. It enabled an in-depth exploration of how QA mechanisms interact with teachers' psychological readiness in real instructional contexts. The design is consistent with interpretive qualitative approaches used to uncover context-specific meanings and social influences (Abdurasul et al., 2025).

2.2. Research Instrument

Data were collected using a semi-structured interview guide developed from the study's research objectives and reviewed by experts in the field of education. The instrument included open-ended questions focusing on (1) the psychological effects of QA processes and (2) the perceived influence of specific QA practices on teachers' confidence, preparedness, and emotional well-being. This format allowed flexibility in probing responses while maintaining consistency across participants, consistent with qualitative interviewing practices that emphasize depth and contextual richness (Cuilan et al., 2024).

2.3. Research Respondents and Sampling Design

A total of 30 licensed public-school teachers from Western Mindanao, Philippines were selected through purposive sampling. Participants were teaching at either the basic and higher education levels and had at least one year of experience under the basic and higher education QA system. This ensured that all participants had sufficient exposure to QA-related practices such as classroom observations and performance evaluations. Purposive sampling was used to obtain information-rich cases capable of providing relevant and experience-based insights (Aguirre et al., 2023).

2.4. Data Gathering Procedure

Interviews were conducted through in-person meetings and secure online platforms, depending on participant availability. Prior to participation, respondents were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and ethical considerations, including voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time. With consent, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and completeness of data. This approach aligns with qualitative data collection practices that emphasize direct participant engagement and contextual understanding (Fernandez et al., 2025).

2.5. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Transcripts were read repeatedly to ensure familiarity, followed by manual coding to identify significant patterns. Codes were then organized into themes representing recurring psychological responses and experiences related to QA practices. This iterative analytical process enabled the development of meaningful, data-driven interpretations (Inoferio et al., 2024).

2.6. Ethical Considerations

Ethical protocols were strictly observed throughout the study. Approval was obtained from the university's research ethics committee prior to data collection. Informed consent was secured from all participants, and confidentiality was maintained through the use of pseudonyms and coded identifiers. All data were stored in encrypted files accessible only to the researcher. Respectful and culturally sensitive engagement was ensured, particularly when discussing experiences related to stress and emotional well-being, consistent with established ethical standards in qualitative research (Murro et al., 2023).

3. Results

The findings for Objective 1 show that quality assurance (QA) practices influence teachers' mental preparation, focus, and emotional responses prior to and during instruction. Across participants, responses clustered around three key areas: (1) increased stress and pressure associated with evaluative tasks, (2) normalization of QA demands despite continued mental strain, and (3) changes in teaching behavior due to observation and compliance requirements.

Research Objective 1: *To examine how quality assurance practices influence the psychological readiness of Basic and higher education teachers in their daily teaching responsibilities.*

Research Question 1: *How do specific QA tasks affect mental preparation before teaching?*

3.1 Heightened Anxiety and Mental Strain

Twelve (12) respondents reported that QA-related tasks, particularly lesson plan reviews and classroom observations, increased their stress levels prior to teaching. These tasks shifted their focus toward meeting technical requirements and anticipating evaluation. Participants described feeling mentally drained and preoccupied with compliance rather than instructional preparation.

"Lesson plan reviews can be so stressful sometimes, especially when the head is super strict... I end up mentally drained just thinking about whether the format is correct, if the objectives are good enough, or if everything is aligned. And when there's a classroom observation, it feels like I'm taking a board exam every single day."

"Whenever I know someone's going to review my lesson plan or observe me, my entire mindset shifts... I become more concerned with ticking all the boxes... even a bit robotic sometimes."

3.2 Adaptation to QA Tasks with Continued Mental Demand

Fourteen (14) respondents described QA tasks as part of their routine. While they reported reduced nervousness over time, they noted that these requirements remained mentally demanding. Participants shared that they developed strategies such as using templates and time management techniques to handle the workload, although QA tasks continued to consume time and attention.

"At this point, I've gotten used to them... but they still take time and energy that could've gone to preparing my lessons."

"I learned how to handle it... though it's still challenging, I just manage it better now."

3.3 Conflict Between Authentic Teaching and Performance Mode

Sixteen (16) respondents indicated that QA processes influenced how they delivered instruction during observations. Participants reported becoming more cautious and focused on meeting observable

criteria, which affected spontaneity and responsiveness in teaching. This resulted in a more structured and controlled teaching approach during evaluative situations.

"It's mentally exhausting to format and reformat something I already understand... Classroom observations? I don't teach the way I want to when someone's sitting there with a checklist. I perform."

"Instead of focusing on how to make the discussion more engaging or relevant to my students, I become more concerned with ticking all the boxes... It makes me more cautious, even a bit robotic sometimes."

Research Question 2: *Have there been times when QA requirements either strengthened or disrupted your focus or mindset during teaching?*

3.4 Motivator and Disruptor

Thirteen (13) respondents reported that QA requirements had both positive and negative effects on their teaching focus. Participants noted that when QA processes were clearly structured and accompanied by constructive feedback, they helped improve teaching practices and encouraged reflection. However, when requirements were introduced with short deadlines or involved excessive paperwork, they disrupted focus and created difficulty in maintaining attention during instruction.

"Sometimes, it helps... at least you get to know where you fell short or what you need to improve. But there are also moments when the requirements are just way too much... it really leads to burnout, I swear."

"There were moments when the pressure made me push myself to do better... But there were also plenty of times when it broke my momentum... My head was half in teaching, half in documentation."

3.5 Mental Fragmentation Due to Simultaneous Compliance Tasks

Participants described instances where multiple QA-related tasks overlapped with teaching responsibilities, particularly during peak academic periods. Twelve (12) respondents reported difficulty maintaining focus when required to manage both instructional activities and compliance tasks at the same time. This resulted in divided attention during classroom instruction.

"There was a time when I was in the middle of a graded recitation, and someone came in to remind me of a QA submission I hadn't completed... I couldn't focus on how the students were responding."

"As what I experienced, when your brain is split between your unfinished accomplishment report and a class of 40 students, something must give... That disconnect can mess with your focus big time."

3.6 Adaptation Through Boundaries and Workflow Management

Seventeen (17) respondents shared how they've learned to manage QA-related stress over time. Through conscious boundary-setting, time management, and work segmentation, they have minimized disruptions. They prioritize teaching during class hours and handle compliance work separately. While challenges still arise, these strategies help preserve their teaching mindset.

"I separate my time. When I'm teaching, I focus on my students first. Then afterward, that's when I deal with the documentation."

"There are still moments when all the requirements come in at once... But I've learned when to prioritize teaching and when to sit down and handle the paperwork."

Research Question 3: *How do you mentally respond when quality standards are inconsistently applied or strictly enforced?*

3.7 Mental Exhaustion from Inconsistent Implementation

Twenty-one (21) respondents reported feelings of mental exhaustion and reduced motivation when QA standards were applied inconsistently. Participants described experiencing confusion and frustration when expectations varied across departments or evaluators. This inconsistency affected their sense of clarity and made it more difficult to approach QA requirements with confidence.

“Draining. When some departments or grade levels are given leeway and others are micromanaged, it feels unfair. I started questioning the purpose of QA. It’s hard to stay motivated when the rules change depending on who’s evaluating you.”

“It’s somehow a burden. You comply, follow every single step, and then you see someone else half-bake their work and get praised anyway. It’s draining to keep playing by the rules when those rules shift depending on who’s watching.”

3.8 Choosing Professionalism Amid an Unreliable System

Ten (10) respondents shared that, despite experiencing inconsistencies, they chose to maintain professionalism by focusing on their own standards and responsibilities. Participants reported shifting their attention away from external comparisons and toward personal accountability in their work.

“That’s honestly one of the most mentally exhausting things. When standards are applied differently to different teachers, it creates confusion and resentment. It makes you second-guess yourself even when you’re doing your best. I try to stay professional, of course, but deep down it’s demotivating.”

“When some departments or grade levels are given leeway and others are micromanaged, it feels unfair. I started questioning the purpose of QA. It’s hard to stay motivated when the rules change depending on who’s evaluating you.”

3.9 Need for Clarity and Equal Application of Standards

Sixteen (16) respondents emphasized the importance of clarity and consistency in QA implementation. Participants expressed that having uniform standards and transparent expectations would reduce confusion and allow them to focus more on teaching tasks.

“In my case, I’ve accepted that there are things that will never be fair. What’s important is I stay consistent with my own work ethic. If something isn’t fair, I don’t pay too much attention to it anymore, if I know my output is good. I just realized that maybe schools should work on making QA standards more transparent.”

“Maybe schools should make things more consistent and transparent, so expectations are fair. That way, everyone is on the same page.”

The findings for Objective 2 identify specific QA practices that influence teachers’ sense of control, emotional capacity, and instructional behavior. Responses were grouped into three areas: (1) QA practices that enhance confidence and preparedness, (2) the effects of documentation demands on emotional capacity, and (3) changes in teaching behavior resulting from continued exposure to QA processes.

Research Objective 2: *To identify which institutional QA measures contribute to teachers' sense of preparedness, confidence, and emotional stability in performing instructional duties.*

Research Question 1: *Which QA practices in your school help you feel more confident and in control of your teaching tasks?*

3.10 Clear Guidelines and Advance Communication

Sixteen (16) respondents identified clear guidelines, timelines, and advance communication as key factors that supported their confidence in performing QA-related tasks. Participants reported that access to rubrics, templates, and prior discussions allowed them to prepare more effectively and reduced uncertainty in meeting requirements.

"Clear instructions are already given and there are no last-minute changes, it really helps. When it is explained properly what is exactly needed for a QA requirement, I feel more at ease because I know what I should deliver. There are times they also provide examples or templates, and that really helps lessen the guesswork. It lightens the load because instead of feeling lost, you know you have a guide."

"Well-explained guidelines are given ahead of time, it really helps. For example, when expectations for class observations are discussed early, I have time to plan around them."

3.11 Peer Mentoring and Collaborative Feedback

Sixteen (16) respondents identified clear guidelines, timelines, and advance communication as key factors that supported their confidence in performing QA-related tasks. Participants reported that access to rubrics, templates, and prior discussions allowed them to prepare more effectively and reduced uncertainty in meeting requirements.

"Actually, the peer mentoring that's part of our QA process helps. There's sharing of strategies, and you're not just corrected you're also taught how to improve. Also, when the rubrics or indicators for observations are clear, I feel more at ease because I know what is expected. When there is a timeline and everything is not crammed, I really feel more confident to perform."

"When QA is used the right way like through coaching, constructive feedback, or clear expectations it helps. I've had coordinators who sat down with me and guided me, not bossed me around. That kind of leadership gives me direction without micromanaging me. It feels collaborative."

3.12 Structured QA Tools and Digital Tracking Systems

Fifteen (15) respondents emphasized the value of structured tools such as templates, rubrics, and tracking systems. Participants noted that these supports helped them organize tasks, monitor requirements, and reduce confusion. Some also mentioned that flexibility within structured systems contributed to a greater sense of control.

"We've developed a system where templates are clear, timelines are set early, and there's room for collaboration. That helps a lot. It gives me the confidence to plan, stay organized, and still have room to be creative with how I deliver the lesson. It's not perfect, but the structure supports my teaching instead of limiting it."

"When the QA implementation is supported properly, it's not heavy. It guides me to plan better. I hope schools create a digital tracker or dashboard where teachers can monitor their compliance progress. That way, we don't keep asking around or getting confused. It adds to the feeling of control and clarity."

Research Question 2 : *How do the demands of QA reports or documentations affect your emotional capacity to focus on actual teaching?*

3.13 Emotional Fatigue and Reduced Classroom Presence

Nineteen (19) respondents reported that the volume of QA documentation affected their emotional energy during teaching. Participants described feeling mentally and emotionally drained after completing reports and requirements, which limited their ability to engage fully with students.

“There are days when there are so many things to submit like daily logs, class profiles, matrix, etc. So, by the time of actual teaching, your mental space is already used up. My emotional connection with my students is affected because I’m too tired to engage or make extra effort.”

“After teaching several sections in a day, I still have to sit down and write detailed outputs, reports, or reflections. That emotional labor takes a toll. It makes me feel like I’m spending more time proving that I’m teaching than teaching. There are moments when I find myself emotionally detached from my class because I’m too preoccupied with chasing compliance.”

3.14 Overwhelm from Compounded Responsibilities

Eleven (11) respondents shared that overlapping teaching and documentation tasks led to physical and emotional exhaustion. Participants described staying late to complete requirements and returning to class already fatigued, which affected their classroom presence.

“Honestly, it gets overwhelming. Teaching already drains so much of your energy and adding documentation on top of that—it’s emotionally taxing. There were days I stayed late just to finish the required files, and by the next morning, I already felt burnt out. It creates a sense of guilt too because I know I’m physically present in class but not emotionally engaged the way I want to be.”

“There are days when I’m tired. After teaching all day, then having to deal with reports, sometimes I have no more energy to emotionally connect with the students. But over time, I learned how to pace myself. I don’t stack everything into one day anymore. I also stopped aiming for perfection in every document as long as it’s proper and truthful, it’s okay. That’s how I view it now, so I don’t get drained.”

3.15 Strategic Time Management as a Coping Mechanism

Twenty-four (24) respondents reported developing personal strategies to manage documentation demands. These included pacing tasks, using templates, and organizing workloads into manageable segments. Participants noted that these approaches helped them maintain emotional capacity during teaching.

“It still requires time and energy, yes, but I’ve learned how to manage them better. I pace myself. I’ve also created personal templates and checklists to make reporting less overwhelming. So emotionally, it doesn’t take as much from me as it did before. I’ve accepted that paperwork is part of the job, but it doesn’t define my teaching anymore. I save my best energy for my students, and I work on the documentation more efficiently now.”

“There are still times when it affects me, especially when the requirements are back-to-back with heavy teaching loads. But I’ve built my system doing small work every day instead of cramming. Emotionally, I’m not as drained as before. I’ve found the balance. Maybe schools can assign QA support officers per department. Even just one person

who knows formatting and consolidation. They won't be doing our job, but at least they can help with the technical side so we don't waste our energy there."

Research Question 3 : *In what ways has your teaching behavior or mindset changed due to ongoing exposure to quality assurance processes?*

3.16 Shift Toward Structured and Strategic Teaching Practices

Fourteen (14) respondents reported that QA exposure led to more structured and organized teaching practices. Participants described becoming more deliberate in planning, aligning lessons with standards, and monitoring instructional processes.

"I've become more mindful, that's for sure. I think more intentionally now about lesson alignment, student outputs, and assessment criteria... I still love teaching, but QA has made me more guarded in how I deliver lessons—not in a bad way, but more calculated than before."

"Well, I've become more structured, for sure. I always make sure I have a backup plan, aligned with the indicators, and that everything is documented. I'm more conscious of lesson flow, time management, even the language I use."

3.17 Reduced Creativity and Increased Self-Filtering

Seventeen (17) respondents indicated that QA processes influenced them to be more cautious in their teaching approaches. Participants reported thinking more carefully about whether their strategies would meet QA standards, which affected their willingness to try new methods.

"I've definitely become more cautious. I still enjoy teaching, but I filter everything now like my activities, my outputs, even my words. I always ask myself, 'Will this pass the QA standard?' And that's not always a good thing. It limits you. It puts you in a box."

"I used to experiment more with activities, but now I second-guess whether it will meet QA standards. It's like I'm always editing myself mentally."

3.18 Balanced Integration of QA with Professional Passion

Nineteen (19) respondents shared that they worked to balance QA expectations with their own teaching style. Participants described maintaining structured practices while still trying to keep their lessons engaging and meaningful.

"Now, every step of my lesson is planned with output and assessment in mind. I'm more reflective too. But I also learned not to be too rigid. I combine creativity and structure. For me, schools can encourage teachers to co-develop QA tools like rubrics or templates. Because sometimes, we can create more realistic ones since we are the ones in the field."

"It made me more intentional with how I plan and assess learning. At first, I saw QA as something external, but over time I realized it helped me become more reflective. I still have fun with my lessons, but now there's structure behind the fun."

4. Discussion

The findings reveal a consistent tension between institutional quality assurance (QA) demands and teachers' instructional focus. While QA systems aim to standardize teaching quality, their implementation often introduces additional cognitive and emotional demands that reshape teachers' roles. Teachers are required to balance instructional responsibilities with compliance tasks, resulting in fragmented attention and reduced focus on student-centered practices. From the perspective of the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) framework, QA functions as a job demand that consumes mental and emotional resources when not supported by adequate structures. This dual burden reflects earlier findings that procedural expectations can shift teachers' priorities toward compliance rather than pedagogy (Jangelynn & Genesis, 2024), with leadership playing a critical role in shaping how these demands are experienced (Eyana et al., 2024; Ytem, 2023; Ovo, 2022). This finding is consistent with recent research highlighting the emotional and professional tensions teachers experience when navigating institutional expectations and classroom realities (Biri et al., 2026).

The study further shows that documentation-heavy and time-sensitive QA requirements contribute to divided attention during instruction. This aligns with Cognitive Load Theory, where excessive extraneous demands interfere with teachers' ability to sustain focus on teaching tasks. As noted by Qureshi et al. (2021), educators often operate under competing demands that reduce instructional presence, a condition associated with emotional fatigue and diminished professional efficacy (Maas et al., 2021). In addition, inconsistent implementation of QA standards introduces uncertainty that affects teachers' motivation and confidence. Through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), such inconsistency undermines autonomy and competence, leading to more cautious and compliance-oriented behavior (Ornaghi et al., 2024; Hanggara, 2018; Shin, 2025).

Despite these challenges, the findings also identify QA practices that function as supportive resources. Clear guidelines, predictable timelines, mentoring, and collaborative feedback were associated with increased confidence and better psychological readiness. Within the JD–R framework, these act as job resources that buffer the impact of demands and support engagement. Predictable and transparent systems reduce cognitive strain and enhance teachers' sense of control (Albright et al., 2022; Kolbe et al., 2020). However, sustained exposure to QA also shapes teaching behavior, with teachers becoming more structured but also more cautious and less spontaneous. This shift reflects a move toward practices that are more easily evaluated, consistent with observations that institutional expectations can influence instructional decisions (Wali et al., 2025; Lumbini & Barbara, 2024). This finding aligns with studies showing that teachers' instructional practices and professional behaviors are shaped by deliberate modeling within institutional and pedagogical contexts (Legarde et al., 2025).

Teachers' responses also demonstrate adaptive strategies aimed at managing these demands, including time segmentation, use of templates, and task prioritization. While these strategies help maintain instructional focus, their widespread use highlights a reliance on individual coping rather than institutional support. As Amy and Anastasia (2001) suggest, self-regulation can enhance instructional organization, but without systemic support, such adaptation may not be sustainable. This concern is echoed by Wiedermann et al. (2023), who emphasize the need for institutional structures that protect teacher well-being. Overall, the findings suggest that QA systems are most effective when implemented as supportive and developmental mechanisms rather than purely compliance-driven processes. As See et al. (2020) argue, approaches grounded in trust, clarity, and collaboration are more likely to sustain teacher motivation and instructional effectiveness.

5. Final considerations

This study examined how institutional quality assurance (QA) practices influence the mental preparedness of public-school teachers, focusing on their psychological readiness, emotional capacity, and instructional behavior. The findings indicate that QA systems function as both a source of pressure and

support. On one hand, documentation requirements, classroom observations, and inconsistent implementation of standards contribute to heightened stress, cognitive fragmentation, and reduced instructional presence. On the other hand, practices such as clear guidelines, structured systems, and collaborative feedback enhance teachers' confidence, sense of control, and preparedness. These results confirm that teachers' mental readiness is not solely an individual attribute but is significantly shaped by institutional conditions and the design of QA processes.

The study further reveals that prolonged exposure to QA mechanisms influences teaching behavior. Teachers become more structured and aligned with formal expectations but also more cautious and less spontaneous in their instructional approaches. While many educators demonstrate adaptability through time management strategies and personal coping mechanisms, these responses highlight a reliance on individual effort rather than systemic support. Overall, the findings suggest that QA systems are most effective when implemented as developmental and supportive frameworks rather than purely compliance-driven mechanisms.

Despite its contributions, the study is subject to several limitations. The sample was limited to public-school teachers from a single geographic area, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be influenced by participants' perceptions and experiences. Future research may expand the scope by including multiple regions, incorporating perspectives from school administrators, and employing mixed-method approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of QA practices and their effects.

In conclusion, this study underscores the need to reframe quality assurance as a system that balances accountability with teacher well-being. Strengthening QA practices through consistency, transparency, and support mechanisms can enhance not only compliance but also teachers' psychological readiness and instructional effectiveness.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all participating teachers for their time, openness, and valuable insights, which made this study possible. Appreciation is also extended to colleagues and mentors who provided guidance and feedback throughout the research process. Lastly, the authors acknowledge the support of their respective institutions in facilitating the completion of this study.

6. Declarations

6.1. Ethical considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical standards in research and scholarly publication, ensuring integrity, transparency, and respect for participants throughout the process. All participants were fully informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights, including voluntary participation and the option to withdraw at any time without consequence. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. To protect confidentiality, pseudonyms and coded identifiers were used, and no personally identifiable information was disclosed. All data were securely stored and accessed only by the researcher. The study adhered to principles of responsible research conduct, including accurate reporting of findings, proper acknowledgment of sources, and avoidance of plagiarism, fabrication, or falsification. The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this study, and all results are presented honestly and without manipulation.

6.2. Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

The authors declare that the generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool [name of the tool] was used exclusively for language editing and/or grammatical improvement. The use of AI did not influence the scientific content, study design, data analysis, data interpretation, results, or conclusions of the manuscript. Full responsibility for the content remains with the authors.

6.3. Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

6.4. Funding

"This research did not receive any financial support".

References

- Abdurasul, R. T., Samilo, P. J. E., Cabiles, N. V. A., et al. (2025). Preservation habits towards sustainable use of the Filipino language. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, 7(5), 358–372. <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i5.8573>
- Agyapong, B., Obuobi-Donkor, G., Burbach, L., & Wei, Y. (2022). Stress, burnout, anxiety and depression among teachers: A scoping review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(17), 10706. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191710706>
- Albright, K., Navarro, E. I., Jarad, I., Boyd, M. R., Powell, B. J., & Lewis, C. C. (2022). Communication strategies to facilitate the implementation of new clinical practices. *Translational Behavioral Medicine*, 12(2), 324–334. <https://doi.org/10.1093/tbm/ibab139>
- Ancho, I. (2019). Quality assurance and the Philippine education system: Inputs from future Filipino school leaders. *Jurnal Penjaminan Mutu*, 5(2), 197–211. <https://doi.org/10.25078/jpm.v5i2.850>
- Aragasi, N. A., & Pangandaman, H. K. (2021). Coping style, anxiety level, organizational support, and work commitment of educators during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines. *Belitung Nursing Journal*, 7(4), 267–276. <https://doi.org/10.33546/bnj.1393>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands–resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- Biri, A. K., Arilin, A., Rasdi, A., Dawami, M., Usman, K., Teh, A., ... Nassal, F. J. (2026). When English Isn't Enough: Exploring the Emotional and Professional Dilemmas of English Teachers Using Translanguaging in Multilingual Classrooms. *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change*, 11(1), 2218–2232. <https://doi.org/10.64753/jcasc.v11i1.4284>
- Chow, J. C., Sayers, R., Fu, Y., Granger, K. L., McCullough, S., Kingsbery, C., & Morse, A. (2023). A systematic meta-review of measures of classroom management. *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, 49(2), 60–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15345084231208671>

Cuilan, J. T., Chavez, J. V., Soliva, K. J. G., et al. (2024). Verbal and non-verbal communication patterns of persuasive selling among live online sellers. *Environment and Social Psychology*, 9(8), 2519. <https://doi.org/10.59429/esp.v9i8.2519>

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Eyana, J. A., Muring, C. E., & Bauyot, M. M. (2024). Supervisory roles of school heads in public stand-alone senior high schools: A phenomenological case study. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 50(2), 95–120.

Fernandez, C. M. B., Chavez, J. V., Jr. B. F. C., et al. (2025). Assessing the utilitarian value of economics and business on personal beliefs and practices among working students. *Environment and Social Psychology*, 10(5), 3228. <https://doi.org/10.59429/esp.v10i5.3228>

Gunawardena, H., Leontini, R., Nair, S., Cross, S., & Hickie, I. (2024). Teachers as first responders: Classroom experiences and mental health training needs. *BMC Public Health*, 24, 268. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-17599-z>

Hanggara, B. U. (2018). Teacher motivation behavior: The importance of personal expectations, need satisfaction, and work climate. *International Journal of Pedagogy and Teacher Education*, 2(2), 333–341. <https://doi.org/10.20961/ijpte.v2i2.24036>

Inoferio, H. V., Espartero, M. M., Asiri, M. S., et al. (2024). Coping with math anxiety and lack of confidence through AI-assisted learning. *Environment and Social Psychology*, 9(5), 2228. <https://doi.org/10.54517/esp.v9i5.2228>

Jangelynne, T., & Genesis, N. (2024). Experiences of teachers in managing dual roles. *Eureka Journal of Educational Research*, 3, 17–27. <https://doi.org/10.56773/ejer.v3i1.34>

Kolbe, M., Eppich, W., Rudolph, J., Meguerdichian, M., Catena, H., Cripps, A., Grant, V., & Cheng, A. (2020). Managing psychological safety in debriefings. *BMJ Simulation and Technology Enhanced Learning*, 6(3), 164–171. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjstel-2019-000470>

Legarde, M. A. A., Nazareth, I. M., Chavez, J. V., Biri, A. K. A., Berry, E. B., Dela Calzada, K. P., & Calles, A. B. (2025). Deliberate behavior modelling of teacher education faculty in integrating gender and development concepts among higher education learners. *Environment and Social Psychology*, 10(9). <https://doi.org/10.59429/esp.v10i9.3850>

Lekule, C. (2021). The impact of quality assurance officers’ activities on teaching and learning. *International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, 9(5), 227–242. <https://doi.org/10.24940/theijhss/2021/v9/i5/HS2105-054>

Lumbini, B., & Lockee, B. (2024). Strategies to incorporate flexibility in higher education course design. *Discover Education*, 3. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-024-00213-8>

Creating a Mentally Prepared Teaching Environment through Efficient Quality Assurance Measures

- Maas, J., Schoch, S., Scholz, U., Rackow, P., Schüler, J., Wegner, M., & Keller, R. (2021). Teachers' perceived time pressure and emotional exhaustion. *Social Psychology of Education*, 24(2), 441–464. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-020-09605-8>
- Maca, M. (2020). School-based management in the Philippines. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.27193.39525>
- Muehlbacher, F., Hagenauer, G., & Keller, M. M. (2022). Teachers' emotion regulation in the classroom. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 787224. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.787224>
- Murro, R. A., Lobo, J. G., Inso, A. R. C., & Chavez, J. V. (2023). Difficulties of parents in modular distance learning. *Environment and Social Psychology*, 9(1), 1957. <https://doi.org/10.54517/esp.v9i1.1957>
- Nwoko, J. C., Anderson, E., Adegboye, O., Malau-Aduli, A. E. O., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2024). Teachers' occupational well-being. *Education Sciences*, 14(11), 1225. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14111225>
- Ornaghi, V., Conte, E., & Cavioni, V. (2024). Supporting teachers' professional growth and wellbeing.
- Qureshi, M. A., Khaskheli, A., Qureshi, J., Raza, S. A., & Qamar, S. (2021). Factors affecting learning performance. *Interactive Learning Environments*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2021.1884886>
- See, B. H., Morris, R., Gorard, S., Kokotsaki, D., & Abdi, S. (2020). Teacher recruitment and retention. *Education Sciences*, 10(10), 262. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci10100262>
- Shin, H., & Gyeong, S. (2025). Teacher attitudes and motivation. *BMC Psychology*, 13, 609. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-02959-8>
- Sweller, J. (1988). Cognitive load during problem solving. *Cognitive Science*, 12(2), 257–285. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15516709cog1202_4
- Wali Khan Monib, W., Qazi, A., & Apong, R. A. (2025). Microlearning beyond boundaries. *Heliyon*, 11(2), e41413. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e41413>
- Wiedermann, C. J., Barbieri, V., Plagg, B., Marino, P., Piccoliori, G., & Engl, A. (2023). Enhancing mental health support in educational policies. *Healthcare*, 11(10), 1423. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11101423>
- Ytem, N. C. J. (2023). Administrative functions of public school heads. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 15(10), 1040–1057.