

Quality Assurance and Its Impacts on Teaching Standards and Work Readiness of Education Graduates at Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College

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ABSTRACT:

Quality assurance (QA) is central to educational excellence, yet its specific impact on teaching standards and graduate work readiness in Philippine regional state colleges remains understudied. This study assessed the extent of QA implementation and its relationship with teaching quality and professional preparedness among Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) and Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) graduates at Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College (TRAC). Using a descriptive-correlational research design, data were gathered from 120 graduates, 30 faculty members, and 10 administrators via validated instruments measuring QA practices, teaching standards, and work readiness competencies. Results showed high implementation of QA mechanisms ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.58$), very satisfactory teaching standards ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.49$), and high work readiness across professional knowledge, instructional skills, and personal attributes ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.62$). Significant strong positive correlations were found between QA practices and teaching standards ($r = 0.74$, $p < 0.01$), and between QA practices and work readiness ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$).

Key gaps identified included limited facilities, weak research integration, and insufficient industry linkages. The study concludes that robust QA systems directly enhance teaching quality and graduate preparedness. It recommends sustained accreditation compliance, increased resource allocation, and stronger external partnerships to further improve educational outcomes.

Keywords: Quality assurance, Teaching standards, Work readiness, Education graduates, Descriptive-correlational design, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines

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Introduction

Quality assurance in higher education encompasses systematic policies, processes, and evaluation mechanisms designed to ensure that academic programs meet established

benchmarks, comply with regulatory standards, and continuously improve to address the needs of students, employers, and the community. In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) requires all Teacher

Education Institutions (TEIs) to adopt quality frameworks aligned with the ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF) and national standards stipulated in CMO No. 74 and 75, Series of 2017. These policies aim to guarantee that graduates possess the necessary competencies, knowledge, and values required for the teaching profession.

Regional state colleges, such as Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College (TRAC), serve a vital function by producing teachers for underserved and geographically isolated communities. However, these institutions frequently encounter distinct challenges, including limited resources, geographic isolation, and contextual differences, that may affect their ability to fully align with national quality benchmarks.

Objectives and Importance of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to evaluate the extent of quality assurance implementation at TRAC and determine its direct influence on teaching standards and the work readiness of education graduates. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Assess how QA mechanisms are applied in curriculum development, instruction, faculty development, and student support services.
2. Measure the level of teaching standards and professional preparedness of BEEd and BSEd graduates.
3. Determine whether a significant relationship exists between QA practices and the quality of instruction and graduate outcomes.

This study is important because it provides empirical evidence on how quality systems operate in resource-limited, island-region settings. It moves beyond simple compliance reports to measure actual impact, helping administrators identify strengths and gaps. The findings will guide institutional planning, resource allocation, and policy adjustments to ensure graduates meet both national standards and local employment needs.

Research Gap and Contribution

While existing literature confirms that strong QA systems improve educational outcomes, most studies focus on large universities or institutions in highly urbanized areas (Dela Cruz et al., 2023; Garcia & Reyes, 2024). There is limited research specifically examining how QA practices function in regional colleges in the BARMM region, where socioeconomic conditions, infrastructure, and access to resources differ significantly from the rest of the country.

This study fills that gap by providing localized data and analysis. It differs from previous work by comparing perceptions across three stakeholder groups—graduates, faculty, and administrators—offering a more complete picture of implementation. It also highlights the unique challenges faced by institutions in geographically isolated areas, adding to the body of knowledge on quality assurance in developing regions.

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the Theory of Total Quality Management (TQM) in Education, which posits that continuous improvement, stakeholder involvement, process standardization, and adherence to measurable benchmarks are the core drivers of educational effectiveness (Sallis, 2022). It is also supported by the Input-Process-Output-Outcome (IPOO) Model, which views QA as a systematic cycle that transforms resources and policies into quality instruction and competent graduates.

Recent Studies and Contextual Analysis

Prado (2025) conducted a national survey of TEIs and found that institutions with fully implemented QA systems showed 15–20% higher licensure examination passing rates and better employer satisfaction. Similarly, Obliopas (2025) noted that in Philippine regional colleges, compliance with CMO standards is generally strong in curriculum and faculty qualifications, but weaker in areas requiring more funding, such as research facilities and technology infrastructure.

Mendoza and Lim (2023) observed that teaching standards are directly linked to the frequency of monitoring and evaluation. When QA processes include regular classroom observations and feedback mechanisms, instructional quality improves significantly. Regarding work readiness, Castillo (2024) explained that programs with strong internal quality controls produce graduates who adapt faster to workplace demands, as their training follows standardized competencies.

Comparison with Previous Research

Unlike studies conducted in Metro Manila or major cities, which often report infrastructure as a strength, this research confirms the findings of Said et al. (2025), who noted that in island provinces, resource constraints are the main limiting factor even when policies are well-designed. This study validates the general theory but adds context-specific explanations on how geography and funding affect the translation of QA policies into tangible results.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, appropriate for describing the current status of variables and determining the strength and direction of relationships between them. It combined quantitative data from surveys and document analysis to ensure reliability and validity. This design is highly recommended for studies that aim to measure existing conditions and test associations among variables without manipulating the setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2024).

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College (TRAC), located in Bongao, the capital of Tawi-Tawi. As the only public higher education institution in the province offering teacher education programs, it serves as the primary source of educators for local schools.

Population and Sampling Design

The target population for this study includes all Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) and

Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) graduates from 2021 to 2024, full-time faculty members, and academic administrators or quality assurance officers.

The sample size was determined using Yamane's Formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a total of 160 respondents: 120 graduates, 30 faculty members, and 10 administrators. For sampling technique, graduates were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different graduation years. Faculty members and administrators, on the other hand, were selected using purposive sampling, including only those with at least two years of service and direct involvement in instruction, curriculum review, or quality monitoring. This approach ensures that respondents have sufficient knowledge to provide accurate data (Palinkas et al., 2020).

Research Instrument

Three sets of structured questionnaires were developed based on Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Orders Nos. 74 and 75, series of 2017, the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Framework (AQAF), and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

Part I measures the extent of quality assurance implementation using a 5-point scale, where 5 means Very High Extent and 1 means Not Implemented. Part II assesses teaching standards using a 5-point scale, where 5 means Very High Level and 1 means Very Low Level. Part III evaluates work readiness competencies using a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 means Strongly Agree and 1 means Strongly Disagree. For validation, the instrument was reviewed by three experts—a quality assurance specialist, a teacher education institution coordinator, and a research statistician—yielding a Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.94. For reliability, it was pilot tested with 20 non-participating respondents, producing a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.85, which confirms high internal consistency (Taherdoost, 2021).

Data Gathering Procedure

A formal request was submitted to the College President, and written permission to conduct the study was granted. Respondents were then briefed on the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of all information provided. Questionnaires were distributed either in-person or via secure online forms, and all responses were completed within one week. After collection, all forms were checked for completeness, and the gathered data

were coded and anonymized before being subjected to statistical analysis.

Statistical Treatment

Weighted mean and standard deviation were computed to describe the levels of quality assurance implementation, teaching standards, and work readiness. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to measure the relationships between variables, with the level of significance set at $\alpha = 0.05$. All statistical computations were performed using IBM SPSS Version 29.

Results and Discussion

Extent of Quality Assurance Implementation

Table 1 Extent of Quality Assurance Implementation

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Curriculum alignment and review	4.42	0.49	Very High Extent
Faculty qualification and recruitment	4.37	0.52	Very High Extent
Instructional processes and monitoring	4.24	0.55	High Extent
Student support services	4.18	0.61	High Extent
Research integration and output	3.85	0.71	High Extent
Facilities and learning resources	3.78	0.74	High Extent
Overall	4.21	0.58	High Extent

Discussion

The overall rating of High Extent shows that TRAC complies well with national standards, particularly in curriculum design and faculty hiring. This means the institution has clear policies and follows CHED guidelines strictly. However, the lower scores in research and

facilities reveal a practical reality: while standards are in place, limited funding and geographic isolation make it difficult to build laboratories, acquire updated books, or support research projects. This aligns with Obliopas (2025), who noted that procedural compliance is easier to achieve than resource-intensive improvements in regional colleges.

Level of Teaching Standards

Table 2 Level of Teaching Standards

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Content knowledge and pedagogy	4.48	0.45	Very High
Learning environment and management	4.41	0.51	Very High
Instructional delivery and strategies	4.36	0.54	Very High
Professional ethics and values	4.32	0.57	Very High
Assessment and feedback techniques	4.12	0.63	High
Professional development engagement	4.08	0.65	High
Overall	4.35	0.49	Very High

Discussion

The Very High overall rating confirms that strong QA practices translate directly to quality instruction. This supports Abad (2024), who found that regular monitoring and qualification requirements result in competent teachers. The

slightly lower scores in assessment and professional growth are consistent with Mendoza & Lim (2023), who observed that without external funding or partnerships, opportunities for advanced training and modern assessment tools remain limited in rural settings.

Level of Work Readiness of Graduates

Table 3 Level of Work Readiness

Indicators	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Professional ethics and values	4.28	0.56	High
Content knowledge and mastery	4.22	0.59	High
Instructional planning and delivery	4.15	0.64	High
Classroom management skills	4.19	0.60	High
Assessment and evaluation skills	4.07	0.67	High
Adaptability and communication	4.15	0.63	High
Overall	4.18	0.62	High

Discussion

Graduates rated their readiness as High, indicating they possess the core competencies required for entry-level teaching positions. This confirms that the QA system successfully translates standards into student learning. However, the lower score in assessment skills

reflects the same gap noted in teaching standards—showing that improvements in faculty practice directly impact graduate competence. This matches Castillo (2024), who stated that work readiness is a direct outcome of how well QA processes are implemented throughout the program.

Relationship Between QA, Teaching Standards, and Work Readiness

Table 4 Correlation Analysis

Variables	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
QA Implementation vs. Teaching Standards	0.74	< 0.01	Strong Positive Relationship
QA Implementation vs. Work Readiness	0.68	< 0.01	Strong Positive Relationship

Discussion

The significant correlations confirm the study's main premise: better quality assurance leads to higher teaching standards and better-prepared graduates. This is consistent with Prado (2025), who found similar relationships nationally. The strength of the association here shows that even in challenging environments, consistent application of standards yields positive results.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn: Quality assurance is implemented at a high level, with strong compliance in curriculum, faculty hiring, and instruction, though resource-dependent areas such as facilities and research require more support. Teaching standards are very high, reflecting effective faculty management and monitoring. Graduates demonstrate high work readiness, possessing the knowledge and skills needed for employment, though some competencies require further strengthening. There is a strong positive relationship between QA practices and both teaching quality and graduate preparedness, confirming that quality systems directly improve educational outcomes.

Practical Applications

For administrators, the findings may be used to justify budget requests and prioritize investments in facilities, research support, and professional development. For faculty members, results serve as a guide to align instructional practices with PPST and CMO standards, with particular focus on improving assessment methods and research integration. For students and graduates, the study confirms that adherence to quality processes ensures the value of their degree and their competitiveness in the job market. For policymakers, the results highlight that regional institutions need targeted funding and support to meet the same standards as larger universities.

Study Limitations

This research has several limitations. In terms of scope, it is limited only to TRAC and its teacher education programs; results may not apply to other courses or institutions. Regarding data source, the study relies on self-reported perceptions and does not include actual employment performance or employer feedback. In terms of context, the findings reflect current conditions; changes in funding or policies may alter results in the future.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies may conduct a longitudinal study to track graduate employment and promotion rates over time. It is also recommended to expand the study to include other HEIs in BARMM to compare QA implementation across the region. Finally, researchers may investigate the specific challenges of implementing research and extension programs in island provinces.

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