



Removing Administrative Tasks, Restoring Instructional Focus: Implications of DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2024 for Teacher Empowerment, Instructional Quality, and School Readiness

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Abstract. This article examines the implications of DepEd Order No. 2, series of 2024, which directs the immediate removal of administrative tasks from public school teachers in the Philippines. Drawing on a convergent parallel mixed-methods study conducted in the Schools Division of Pasay City, the paper synthesizes evidence from 224 respondents, including 207 elementary teachers and 17 elementary school heads, and qualitative responses from 10 purposively selected participants. The study investigated whether relieving teachers of non-teaching administrative work enhances teacher empowerment, improves instructional quality and welfare, strengthens school readiness, and contributes to educational quality. Quantitative findings reveal consistently strong perceptions of positive effects. Teacher empowerment registered very high contribution across control (overall mean = 4.55), autonomy (4.54), and efficacy (4.60). Teachers also reported very high implication in terms of quality of classroom instruction (4.61), professional satisfaction (4.59), and workload reduction (4.65). In contrast, school heads rated school readiness dimensions only as moderately implemented: human resource needs (4.09), competency development (4.07), facilities/resources (4.08), and scheduling (4.06). Qualitative findings reinforce these results, highlighting themes of instructional focus, efficiency, uninterrupted teaching, preparation, responsiveness, support, transition management, and collaboration. The article argues that policy success depends not only on removing tasks from teachers but also on reallocating them through adequate staffing, training, communication systems, and phased implementation. A transition framework is proposed to guide schools and divisions in operationalizing the policy. The findings suggest that administrative task reduction has strong promise for improving teacher well-being and instructional effectiveness, but the reform requires sustained organizational support to produce durable gains in educational quality.

Keywords: *teacher workload, teacher empowerment, instructional quality, school readiness, DepEd Order No. 2 s. 2024, public school teachers, Philippines*

Introduction

Teachers are expected to be instructional leaders, classroom managers, facilitators of learning, curriculum implementers, assessors of student progress, mentors, and frontline representatives of educational institutions. Yet in many school systems, teachers are also required to undertake an increasing number of administrative functions that extend far beyond teaching. These include records management, report preparation, coordination of school-based programs, property-related tasks, logistical documentation, compliance paperwork, and assorted clerical duties attached to institutional operations. While some level of documentation is inevitable in professional practice, excessive administrative work can crowd out time for lesson preparation, student support, reflection, assessment design, and professional learning. It can also erode morale, intensify stress, and weaken the instructional core of schooling.

In the Philippine context, these concerns have long been raised by teachers and school leaders. Public school teachers often perform ancillary and administrative functions in addition to classroom teaching, sometimes as coordinators of programs that demand extensive documentation, meetings, and monitoring. Such duties may include reporting for school feeding, disaster risk reduction, learner records, school events, compliance activities, and other programmatic requirements. Over time, this layering of responsibilities has contributed to the persistent argument that teachers need stronger institutional protection so they can concentrate on their primary mandate: teaching and supporting student learning.

DepEd Order No. 2, series of 2024, represents a decisive policy response to this issue. The order directs the immediate removal of administrative tasks from public school teachers and assigns such functions to school heads and non-teaching personnel. In principle, the policy is straightforward: if teachers are relieved of tasks unrelated to direct instruction, they can channel their energies more effectively toward refining teaching methodologies, tailoring lessons to student needs, and fostering deeper engagement within the classroom. The reform also implies that schools and divisions must redesign their administrative workflows, staffing arrangements, and support systems. In practice, therefore, the policy is not merely about subtraction; it is about organizational transition.

The present paper examines how the removal of administrative tasks relates to teacher empowerment, instructional quality, professional satisfaction, workload, school readiness, and broader educational quality. It also distills qualitative insights that illuminate what schools need in order to implement the policy effectively.

The study is significant for at least four reasons. First, it responds to a timely and nationally relevant policy intervention. Because the order is recent, there is limited empirical literature on how schools perceive its implications and what conditions shape its implementation. Second, the article places teacher welfare and professional agency at the center of education reform, treating workload not simply as an operational issue but as a determinant of educational quality. Third, it contributes to the growing conversation on how organizational structures either enable or constrain instructional excellence. Fourth, it offers an evidence-based transition framework that may assist school leaders, division offices, and policy makers in translating reform intent into viable practice.

The argument advanced in this paper is that the immediate removal of administrative tasks is perceived as highly beneficial by teachers, particularly in relation to empowerment, instructional quality, satisfaction, and workload.



However, the benefits of the reform are contingent on organizational readiness. Without adequate human resources, competence development, facilities, scheduling systems, and implementation support, the transfer of tasks may simply shift strain from one part of the system to another. The policy, therefore, succeeds when it is understood not only as teacher protection, but as whole-system redesign.

Theoretical Framework

The policy assumption behind administrative task reduction is that teaching improves when teachers are allowed to focus on their professional core. This assumption is supported by a body of literature emphasizing the harmful effects of excessive workload and non-instructional burdens. Kim (2019) argued that teachers' administrative workload entails an opportunity cost for instructional activities, thereby undermining pedagogical effectiveness. Similarly, Chen and Zhao (2022) found that administrative duties carried by homeroom teachers had detrimental effects on student achievement in Chinese secondary schools, suggesting that when teachers' time is fragmented by non-instructional demands, student outcomes may suffer.

Studies also connect workload with well-being and satisfaction. Alfonso (2020) examined teacher workload and job satisfaction in the Philippine context, while Greenberg et al. (2021) highlighted how teacher stress affects not only educators themselves but also students and schools. DeHart (2021) similarly discussed how administrative support can reduce workload pressure and improve teacher well-being. These works collectively reinforce the logic of protecting teachers from tasks that dilute instructional attention.

Teacher empowerment provides a second relevant lens. Empowerment refers not only to formal authority but also to teachers' sense of control, autonomy, competence, and efficacy within their professional environment. Ingersoll et al. (2020) discussed the role of teacher control in educational success, while Seyedali et al. (2021) showed a meaningful relationship between teacher empowerment and job satisfaction. Empowered teachers tend to exercise more initiative, adapt more effectively to learner needs, and engage more deeply in pedagogical improvement. From this perspective, reducing administrative burdens may strengthen teacher agency by returning time and decision space to educators.

A third strand of literature concerns professional development and instructional quality. Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) emphasized that effective teacher professional development improves practice when teachers have the time and organizational support to engage meaningfully in it. When administrative tasks absorb available time, teachers may find it difficult to plan lessons thoroughly, design differentiated materials, or participate in collaborative learning. Thus, removing administrative tasks may have indirect benefits through improved preparation and greater access to professional growth.

School readiness and institutional efficiency also matter. Removing tasks from teachers does not eliminate those tasks. Instead, it requires redistribution, reorganization, and monitoring. Clark (2021) discussed the redistribution of school administrative tasks, while Flores (2019) addressed the budgetary implications of shifting such functions in the Philippines. Hitt and Tucker (2020) highlighted the role of technology in reducing teacher workload, suggesting that task reallocation is most effective when accompanied by process redesign and digital support. This means that staffing, resources, scheduling, communication, and leadership all shape how well the policy can be enacted.

Taken together, the literature suggests that reducing administrative tasks may positively affect teaching and learning, but only under conditions of coherent implementation. The present study, therefore, examines not only teacher-level outcomes but also school-level readiness factors that determine whether the policy can be sustained. This dual focus strengthens the study's contribution by avoiding treating workload reduction as a purely individual benefit and situating it in an organizational context.

Research Questions

The study was guided by six questions, which are reorganized in this article into four analytic concerns:

1. To what extent does the removal of administrative tasks contribute to teacher empowerment in terms of control, autonomy, and efficacy?
2. What is the perceived implication of administrative task removal for instructional quality, professional satisfaction, and workload?
3. How ready are schools to implement the policy in terms of human resources, competency development, facilities/resources, and scheduling?
4. What broader implications, implementation needs, and transition strategies emerge from participants' qualitative accounts?

Methodology

Research Design

The study used a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, following the approach described by Creswell and Creswell (2018). In this design, quantitative and qualitative data are collected during the same general phase of the study, analyzed separately, and then integrated during interpretation. By combining these methodologies, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation by leveraging the respective strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The mixed-methods approach was particularly appropriate because the issue under investigation had both measurable and interpretive dimensions. The quantitative phase was necessary to determine the perceived level of contribution or implication across key variables, including empowerment, instructional quality, workload, and readiness. The qualitative phase, meanwhile, captured how teachers and school heads understood the reform, what benefits they observed, and what conditions they believed were necessary for successful implementation. This design was therefore well-suited to a policy-focused study that sought both breadth and depth.

Locale and Participants

The study was conducted in the School Division of Pasay City, Metro Manila. The researcher identified Pasay as an appropriate locale because it is a highly urbanized division with a substantial public school population and operational experience relevant to the implementation of DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2024. The quantitative component included 224 respondents: 207 elementary teachers and 17 elementary school heads from 19 regular elementary schools across seven clusters. For the qualitative component, 10 participants were purposively selected: 3 elementary teachers and 7 elementary school heads.



Table 1. Participant Profile

Group	n	Role in study
Elementary teachers	207	Quantitative respondents on teacher empowerment, instructional quality, and workload implications
Elementary school heads	17	Quantitative respondents on organizational readiness and school-level implementation
Qualitative participants	10	Purposively selected interview participants (3 teachers; 7 school heads)
Total quantitative respondents	224	Schools Division of Pasay City, Metro Manila

The use of elementary schools is important because the policy's implementation is shaped by day-to-day school management practices, teacher assignment structures, and the distribution of ancillary tasks in school-level operations. By including both teachers and school heads, the study captured two complementary perspectives: teachers as direct beneficiaries of task removal, and school heads as institutional actors responsible for implementing and absorbing the resulting administrative shift.

Sampling and Instrumentation

Purposive sampling was used to select participants for both quantitative and qualitative phases. By intentionally selecting respondents with relevant expertise and experience, the researcher can ensure that the study's findings directly address the research questions and provide valuable insights into the implementation and effects of the directive. Inclusion criteria emphasized current employment in public schools affected by the order, sufficient tenure to comment meaningfully on school processes, and willingness to participate voluntarily.

The quantitative instrument consisted of structured Likert-scale items divided into multiple parts. The first part measured the contribution of removing administrative tasks to teacher empowerment in terms of control, autonomy, and efficacy. The second part assessed the implications for teachers' experiences regarding instructional quality, professional satisfaction, and workload. The third part measured school heads' perceptions of organizational readiness in terms of human resource needs, competency development, facilities/resources, and scheduling. Reliability in this study is assessed using internal consistency measures, such as Cronbach's alpha, with a reported Cronbach's alpha of .99, indicating very high internal consistency.

The qualitative component used guided interview questions administered through Google Forms. These prompts explored the broader implications of the policy for educational quality, school efficiency, and student learning outcomes, as well as strategies for optimizing implementation. Although written responses may not yield the same depth as face-to-face interviews, they still allowed participants to articulate their views in narrative form and contributed useful thematic data.

Data Analysis

For the quantitative data, the study used descriptive statistics, particularly weighted means, to determine the level of contribution, implication, or implementation associated with each dimension. Interpretation categories ranged from very high contribution or implication to lower levels, depending on the scale used. Because the policy was newly implemented, descriptive analysis was appropriate for capturing immediate perceptions and identifying the strongest

areas of consensus.

For the qualitative data, thematic analysis was used. Responses were grouped into categories and emerging themes. The tables presented representative responses, interpreted meanings, and categories and themes, including efficiency, focus, uninterrupted teaching, preparation, support, adjustment, monitoring, communication, staffing, and delegation. In this article, those themes are reorganized and synthesized into a policy-relevant discussion.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation were observed. Participants were informed of the study's purpose and assured that their responses would be used solely for academic research in accordance with data privacy requirements. These safeguards are especially important in policy-related research because respondents may feel vulnerable when discussing organizational conditions within public institutions.

Results

Teacher Empowerment

The first major finding of the study is that teachers perceived the immediate removal of administrative tasks as strongly empowering. Across all three dimensions of teacher empowerment, mean scores were in the “very high contribution” range: control (4.55), autonomy (4.54), and efficacy (4.60). These are not marginal perceptions. They reflect strong consensus among respondents that reducing administrative burdens significantly affects how teachers experience their work.

Table 2. Composite Means for Teacher Empowerment After Administrative Task Removal

Dimension	Overall mean	Interpretation
Control	4.55	Very High Contribution
Autonomy	4.54	Very High Contribution
Efficacy	4.60	Very High Contribution

Legend: 4.5-5 (Very High Implication); 3.5-4.49 (High Implication); 2.5-3.49 (Moderate Implication); 1.5-2.49 (Less Implication); 1.00-1.49 (No Implication)

For control, respondents reported greater influence over teaching decisions, educational practices, and the learning environment in their classrooms. For example, one item asking whether teachers feel a greater sense of control over decisions related to teaching practices received a mean of 4.54. Another item on control of the classroom learning environment received a score of 4.61. These findings suggest that teachers do not see administrative task reduction as merely a time-saving measure. They see it as a shift in professional space, one that allows them to exercise more judgment over instructional processes and resources.

Autonomy similarly registered a very high contribution. Respondents agreed that the policy improved their ability to make independent instructional decisions, implement creative teaching strategies, select appropriate materials, and adapt methods to diverse learners. Means in this area ranged from 4.50 to 4.57, with an overall mean of 4.54. This pattern indicates that the reform is experienced as an expansion of teachers' room to act professionally. When teachers are not preoccupied with compliance-driven tasks, they are better able to respond flexibly to classroom realities and learner needs.



The highest empowerment dimension was efficacy, with an overall mean of 4.60. Teachers expressed stronger confidence in achieving positive educational outcomes, creating inclusive environments, addressing individual student needs, managing classroom dynamics, engaging students meaningfully, and participating in professional development. The item on confidence in achieving positive educational outcomes received a mean of 4.62, while meaningful student engagement also received 4.62. These results reinforce the argument that workload reform does more than lighten labor; it can also restore teachers' professional confidence.

Instructional Quality, Professional Satisfaction, and Workload

The second major result is that teachers perceived the policy to have very high implication for their instructional work and welfare. Quality of classroom instruction registered an overall mean of 4.61. Teachers reported that the removal of administrative tasks positively affected lesson planning, effectiveness of teaching methods, student engagement, delivery of content, classroom preparedness, adaptability, and learner understanding. Particularly notable was the item indicating that teachers could allocate more time to lesson planning and enhance instructional materials, which received a mean of 4.69.

Table 3. Composite Means for Instructional Quality and Teacher Welfare

Dimension	Overall mean	Interpretation
Quality of classroom instruction	4.61	Very High Implication
Professional satisfaction	4.59	Very High Implication
Workload	4.65	Very High Implication

Legend: 4.5-5 (Very High Implication); 3.5-4.49 (High Implication); 2.5-3.49 (Moderate Implication); 1.5-2.49 (Less Implication); 1.00-1.49 (No Implication)

This is a crucial finding because lesson planning and preparation are often invisible forms of labor in teaching. They determine whether classroom instruction is coherent, responsive, and engaging. When teachers report that they now have more time to plan and prepare, the implication is that administrative task reduction may improve the quality of teaching not through a single dramatic change, but through cumulative gains in preparation, pacing, and responsiveness.

Professional satisfaction also showed very high levels of implication, with an overall mean of 4.59. Teachers reported a more positive work atmosphere, stronger motivation and enthusiasm, better work-life balance, improved morale, a greater sense of being valued, and healthier overall work conditions. Several items received a mean of 4.63, including the perception that a reduced workload contributed to a more positive work atmosphere and increased motivation. These findings align with the literature linking autonomy and support to job satisfaction and well-being.

The workload dimension recorded the highest score among the teacher-centered outcomes, with an overall mean of 4.65. Teachers agreed that the removal of administrative tasks significantly reduced overall workload, increased time for instructional activities, enabled collaboration and professional development, and improved focus on core teaching duties. Two items reached 4.67: one on the on-time availability for instructional activities and another on the improved ability to focus on core teaching duties. This indicates that teachers perceive the policy as immediately meaningful in practical terms. The benefit is not abstract; it is felt in the daily rhythm of school work.

School Readiness

The study's third major result introduces an important contrast. While teachers viewed the policy very positively, school heads assessed organizational readiness only as moderately implemented. Human resource needs recorded an overall mean of 4.09, competency development 4.07, facilities/resources 4.08, and scheduling 4.06. These scores do not indicate failure, but they do signal incomplete readiness.

Table 4. School Heads' Assessment of Organizational Readiness

Dimension	Overall mean	Interpretation
Human resource needs	4.09	Moderately Implemented
Competency development	4.07	Moderately Implemented
Facilities/resources	4.08	Moderately Implemented
Scheduling	4.06	Moderately Implemented

Legend: 4.5-5 (Highly Implemented); 3.5-4.49 (Moderately Implemented); 2.5-3.49 (Partially Implemented); 1.5-2.49 (Less Implemented); 1.00-1.49 (Not Implemented)

The human resource dimension suggests that schools are making efforts to align staffing with policy requirements, but not yet to a high degree. Recruitment strategies, support mechanisms, training, and adaptability were viewed as only moderate overall. One item on transparency and effectiveness of communication regarding human resource requirements was rated highly (4.59), but the broader dimension still reflected implementation gaps. This implies that schools may understand what needs to happen, yet still lack the personnel infrastructure to fully absorb transferred duties.

Competency development showed a similar pattern. While respondents believed the organization provided support for continuous learning (4.18) and aligned competency development with policy requirements (4.18), the overall mean remained at a moderately implemented level (4.07). This suggests that non-teaching staff and school personnel may still require training to effectively assume tasks previously performed by teachers. The policy cannot be sustained if redistributed functions are assigned without equivalent investment in new competencies.

Facilities and resources also remained moderately implemented. The immediate removal of administrative tasks for teachers has been implemented to a moderate extent (4.53), and the organization efficiently utilizes existing facilities and resources to successfully execute DO No. 2, s. 2024 (4.35). Respondents also reported that some components are moderately implemented, such as adequate provision of current facilities/resources (3.82), accessibility and availability of resources necessary for the implementation of the order, transparency in allocation of resources (4.12), and resource alignment (4.12). This matters because administrative work is not only labor-intensive but also system-dependent. Records management, communications, reporting, scheduling, and compliance often require functional spaces, equipment, and digital tools. Without them, task transfer may generate bottlenecks.

Scheduling, finally, was also moderately implemented (4.06). School heads reported that timelines, adaptability, clarity of communication, and monitoring mechanisms were observed fairly but not yet fully optimized. This indicates that the transition requires stronger coordination and routine stabilization. Task reallocation affects workflows across the school. Without clear timelines and follow-through, uncertainty can undermine implementation.



Qualitative Themes on Educational Quality

The qualitative findings deepen and clarify the quantitative results. Participants consistently described the policy as a means of restoring instructional focus. Themes such as efficiency, focus, uninterrupted teaching, concentration, and performance appeared repeatedly when respondents discussed the broader effectiveness of the education system. Teachers noted that when administrative interruptions decrease, more of their energy can be directed to actual classroom teaching, lesson delivery, and learner support.

Table 5. Major Qualitative Themes on Educational Quality

Focus area	Key themes	Illustrative interpretation
Effectiveness of the education system	Efficiency and streamlining; Uninterrupted teaching	Participants described fewer disruptions and stronger concentration on instructional work.
Institutional efficiency	Efficiency; Preparation avoidance	Emphasis; and Respondents linked workload relief to better use of time, more organized instruction, and stronger readiness for class.
Student learning outcomes	Focus and success; Impact and optimism; Challenge	Most respondents expected better learner outcomes, while also noting that gains still depend on teacher practice and implementation conditions.

One notable theme was uninterrupted teaching. Participants emphasized that removing administrative burdens reduces class disruptions caused by sudden reports, meetings, and compliance demands. This is especially important in settings where teachers may leave classes or divide their attention due to ancillary obligations. Participants described uninterrupted teaching as essential not only for teacher productivity but also for the continuity of student learning.

Another recurring theme was preparation. Respondents linked workload relief with improved readiness for class, better instructional materials, and stronger responsiveness to student needs. This theme was echoed in accounts of professional satisfaction and student learning outcomes. Participants believed that when teachers have more time for preparation, they can design more effective learning experiences and attend more carefully to individual learners.

A further theme concerned student outcomes. Participants expressed optimism that the policy could improve learner achievement because teachers would have more time to prepare, remain in class, and respond to students. At the same time, one participant noted that there was not yet a specific monitoring tool to tangibly measure the policy's effects on learners. This is an important reminder that positive expectations, while meaningful, still require systematic evaluation.

Qualitative Themes on Implementation and Optimization

When participants were asked how the policy could be optimized, themes shifted toward organizational support. Support and resources emerged strongly, particularly the need for additional non-teaching personnel, stronger staffing arrangements, and training for personnel receiving new responsibilities.

Collaboration also emerged as a recurring theme, suggesting that implementation depends on the coordinated efforts of teachers, school heads, non-teaching staff, division offices, and local government partners.

Table 6. Major Qualitative Themes on Policy Optimization and Transition

Optimization area	Key themes	Implication for transition framework
Conducive teaching-learning environment	Performance assessment; Focus on teaching; teaching effectiveness; support and resources; strategic planning	Administrative task reduction should be monitored through improvements in teaching performance and instructional attention.
Professional satisfaction of teachers	Adjustment; monitoring; satisfaction; projects; implementation; effectiveness; communication; simplification	Implementation requires coaching, feedback systems, and measures that protect teacher well-being during transition.
Overall effectiveness of the education system	Staffing; Cooperation; Taskforce; Projects; Resource; Leadership; Transition; Prioritization; Delegation	Policy success depends on added support staff, cross-role collaboration, and formal transition committees or task forces.

Transition management was another central theme. Participants pointed to the need for meetings, orientations, memoranda, feedback channels, and task force committees to ensure a smooth handover of responsibilities. Some responses emphasized monitoring, mentoring, and coaching; others highlighted the importance of communication strategies to explain the reform and address emerging issues. These findings indicate that schools do not view implementation as self-executing. They understand it as a managed change process.

Technology integration also appeared in the qualitative data. Respondents suggested that digital platforms could streamline workflows and reduce repetitive paperwork. This supports the literature arguing that workload reduction is most effective when coupled with process modernization rather than with the simple redistribution of manual tasks. In other words, the reform works best when the system is redesigned rather than merely reassigned.

Discussion

The central contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that the immediate removal of administrative tasks is perceived by teachers as highly beneficial, while also showing that the organizational conditions for implementation remain only moderately developed. This dual finding is important because it prevents simplistic conclusions. The policy is neither merely aspirational nor automatically self-fulfilling. It is a promising reform whose success depends on institutional capacity (Department of Education, 2024; Clark, 2021; Flores, 2019).

The strong teacher-level findings align with the literature on workload, autonomy, and well-being. When teachers are relieved of administrative burdens, they report gains in control, autonomy, and efficacy (Alfonso, 2020; DeHart, 2021; Ingersoll et al., 2020; Seyedali et al., 2021). These are not isolated psychological states;



they are professional conditions that shape practice. A teacher who feels more autonomous is more likely to tailor instruction to learner needs. A teacher who feels more efficacious is more likely to persist, innovate, and engage students actively. A teacher who experiences less workload pressure is better positioned to plan, assess, collaborate, and reflect. In this sense, the study supports the view that teacher welfare and instructional quality are mutually reinforcing rather than competing priorities (Carreon & David, 2020; Greenberg et al., 2021).

The instructional quality findings are especially significant. Policy discussions on teacher workload often emphasize relief, fairness, or labor rights. While these are essential, the present study shows that workload reform also has implications for the classroom itself. Teachers reported improvements in planning, delivery, engagement, and learning environment. This suggests that administrative task reduction can be framed not only as a welfare intervention but as an instructional reform. It strengthens the conditions under which good teaching becomes more likely (Carreon & David, 2020; Chen & Zhao, 2022; Kim, 2019; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

At the same time, the moderate readiness scores remind us that administrative functions do not disappear when teachers are exempted from them. Someone must still manage records, reports, logistics, and program coordination. If schools lack adequate personnel or systems, the reform can generate new strains. School heads may absorb excess tasks, non-teaching staff may become overloaded, or implementation may become inconsistent across schools (Clark, 2021; DeHart, 2021; Flores, 2019). This is why readiness matters. Human resources, competency development, facilities, and scheduling are not secondary details; they are the enabling architecture of policy execution (Clark, 2021; Flores, 2019; Hitt & Tucker, 2020).

The qualitative themes support this interpretation. Participants repeatedly emphasized support, staffing, communication, and transition mechanisms. Their responses suggest that the policy will yield sustained benefit only if administrative work is deliberately restructured. The order should therefore be understood as the beginning of organizational redesign rather than the endpoint of reform (DepEd, 2024; Clark, 2021; DeHart, 2021).

This perspective also has implications for leadership. School heads are not simply implementers; they are translators of policy into school routines. They must clarify role boundaries, organize workflows, orient staff, communicate expectations, monitor impact, and advocate for resources. Their moderate readiness ratings may partly reflect realism: they recognize the policy's value, but they also see the operational gaps that must still be addressed (Clark, 2021; DeHart, 2021; Hitt & Tucker, 2020).

The study also raises an important point about timing. Because DepEd Order No. 2, s. 2024 had been recently issued, respondents were evaluating an ongoing transition rather than a fully stabilized system. This helps explain why teacher perceptions were very positive while readiness remained moderate. Teachers may quickly feel relief when duties are removed, but institutions may need more time to recruit staff, redesign procedures, train personnel, and develop monitoring systems (DepEd, 2024; Flores, 2019; Hitt & Tucker, 2020). The reform thus has different temporal effects at different levels. Immediate relief at the classroom level may coexist with gradual adjustment at the organizational level.

Proposed Transition Framework

Based on the study results, the researcher proposed a transition framework to guide implementation. The framework can be summarized into four phases.

The first is assessment and planning. Schools and divisions should identify which tasks are to be transferred, map current workload distribution, assess resource gaps, and formulate local policies aligned with national directives. This phase should include consultation with teachers, school heads, and non-teaching personnel to ensure clarity and buy-in.

The second is capacity building. Non-teaching personnel and designated staff should be trained in records management, reporting, communications, and program support. At the same time, teachers should receive professional development that enables them to maximize regained instructional time through improved pedagogy, technology integration, assessment design, and learner engagement strategies.

The third is implementation. The transition should proceed gradually where possible, beginning with pilot arrangements or phased deployment. Roles and responsibilities should be clearly communicated, and support systems such as help desks, check-ins, and troubleshooting channels should be in place. Schools should avoid abrupt task transfer without role clarification, because ambiguity can create friction and duplication.

The fourth is monitoring and evaluation. Schools and divisions should collect feedback, track teacher satisfaction, review classroom-related indicators, assess staff workload distribution, and examine any emerging administrative bottlenecks. Transparent reporting to stakeholders can help maintain accountability and guide adjustment.

The study also identified contextual considerations specific to the Philippines: regional and cultural diversity, financial constraints, and technological integration. These are critical because implementation conditions vary significantly across localities. Urban divisions may have different personnel and infrastructure capacities from rural ones; local government support may differ; access to digital systems may be uneven. A workable framework must therefore be flexible enough to accommodate varying contexts while preserving the policy's core intent.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Several implications emerge from the study. First, policymakers should treat administrative task removal as a structural reform rather than an isolated directive. The order should be accompanied by staffing strategies, competency development plans, budget support, and monitoring instruments. Without these, schools may comply formally while struggling operationally.

Second, division offices should establish clear guidance on task inventories, role definitions, and allowable teacher assignments. Ambiguity regarding what counts as an administrative task may lead to uneven interpretation across schools. Consistency matters, particularly in systems where longstanding habits of assigning ancillary work to teachers may persist.

Third, schools should invest in communication and transition management. Orientations, written memos, feedback systems, and collaborative planning sessions are not optional add-ons. They are necessary for role clarity and institutional trust during change.

Fourth, the study underscores the need to strengthen non-teaching support. Removing tasks from teachers without increasing administrative capacity may



merely relocate pressure. Policy success therefore requires a realistic view of workload ecology across the school system.

Fifth, monitoring frameworks should include both teacher-centered and learner-centered indicators. Teacher satisfaction and workload are essential, but schools should also examine whether the reform leads to measurable improvements in instructional time, classroom continuity, preparation quality, and student outcomes.

Limitations

As with any study, this article should be interpreted within its limits. The study was conducted in one division, specifically in Pasay City, and focused on elementary schools. The findings therefore provide contextually grounded insight but may not fully represent conditions in all regions of the Philippines. Differences in school size, staffing, local government support, and organizational culture may shape implementation differently elsewhere.

The study also relied heavily on perception-based measures, especially given the early phase of policy implementation. Such measures are valuable because they capture lived experience and immediate organizational realities, but they do not by themselves establish long-term causal effects on student learning or institutional performance. Future studies could incorporate longitudinal data, observational indicators, and administrative records to assess sustained outcomes.

The qualitative component, while useful, involved a small purposive sample and written responses through online forms. Richer interviews or case studies could provide deeper understanding of school-level transition processes, particularly in divisions with more acute staffing shortages or different implementation conditions.

Conclusion

This article shows that the immediate removal of administrative tasks from public school teachers is perceived as a highly positive reform with significant implications for teacher empowerment, instructional quality, professional satisfaction, and workload reduction. Teachers strongly believe that freeing them from non-teaching administrative burdens allows them to regain control over their work, exercise greater autonomy, strengthen efficacy, and devote more time to planning, teaching, and supporting learners.

However, the reform's long-term success depends on more than teacher relief. It requires institutional readiness. School heads in this study viewed human resource capacity, competency development, facilities, and scheduling as only moderately implemented, indicating that the policy's promise can only be fully realized through sustained organizational investment. The qualitative findings reinforce this point: participants called for staffing, communication, training, collaboration, monitoring, and transition management.

The removal of administrative tasks should therefore be understood as both a teacher-centered and system-centered reform. It protects teachers' professional time, but it also compels schools to redesign how administrative work is distributed and supported. When implemented with adequate planning and resources, the policy has the potential to strengthen not only teacher well-being but also the instructional core of public education. In that sense, the reform is not simply about taking tasks away from teachers; it is about restoring the conditions under which teaching can flourish.

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