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Madamba Workload Cares: A School-Based Reporting Coordination System for Reducing Teacher Administrative Workload

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Abstract
This study examined fragmented administrative reporting coordination at Madamba Elementary School in Lanao del Sur and developed Madamba Workload Cares as a proposed response. It addressed how reporting requirements can create avoidable burdens when deadlines, templates, files, and support arrangements are poorly coordinated. The study used a qualitative, action-oriented case study design, involving nine teachers and one school head as a key informant. Data were gathered through teacher interviews, a key informant interview, a preliminary inventory of reporting documents, and validation feedback. Thematic analysis identified reporting tasks, effects, root causes, and implementation considerations. Findings indicated that teachers prepared reports on daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly, and as-needed schedules. All nine teacher-respondents reported searching for templates, using previous reports as references, and asking other teachers for help. Seven respondents provided preparation periods ranging from two days to more than one week, while two said preparation time depended on report complexity. Eight respondents described negative effects of reporting deadlines on time, stress, teaching processes, lesson preparation, assessment, remediation, or learner support; one gave no answer. Cares integrates a consolidated reporting calendar, shared template and file bank, peer assistance arrangement, report-status dashboard, and workload check-ins. All nine teacher-respondents supported each component. The study concludes that the concern is not reporting itself but fragmented coordination of reporting work. Because cares was validated rather than fully piloted, its effects on reporting time and instructional outcomes remain to be measured. The study offers a model for process improvement, with implications for accountability, teacher support, and protecting instructional time overall.

Keywords
teacher administrative workload; reporting coordination; governance innovation; public school management; Madamba Workload Cares

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Introduction

Public education systems must provide quality instruction while maintaining accountability through documentation, monitoring, and reporting. School forms, learner records, attendance reports, and other compliance documents support planning, learner tracking, and administrative decision-making. However, when reporting requirements are poorly coordinated, the process can create avoidable work for teachers and reduce time available

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for lesson preparation, assessment, remediation, and learner support (Morris et al., 2026; Creagh et al., 2025; OECD, 2025).

In the Philippines, teacher administrative workload has received policy attention. DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024 addresses the removal of administrative tasks from public school teachers' workload, while DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024 and its implementation guidance address workload rationalization. Nevertheless, the report's review of the issue notes that administrative work may persist where schools have limited support staff and where reporting tasks remain difficult to coordinate (IDinsight, 2025). This makes administrative workload not only an individual concern but also an organizational and governance issue (Department of Education, 2024a; Department of Education, 2024b; Department of Education, 2024c; IDinsight, 2025; Tiggelaar et al., 2024).

Republic Act No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, provides a basis for school-level responses that fit local needs. Although school leaders cannot independently change higher-level reporting mandates, staffing allocations, or infrastructure constraints, they can influence internal scheduling, file organization, access to templates, communication, and peer support. This study therefore focuses on one actionable issue: fragmented coordination of teachers' administrative reporting tasks at Madamba Elementary School, Lanao del Sur (Republic Act No. 9155, 2001; Bryson, 2014; Leithwood et al., 2020).

The study asked what reporting tasks teachers regularly handled and how these tasks affected teaching-related work; what caused reporting difficulties and repetition; which causes could be addressed at school level and which required higher-level action; and how MADAMBA Workload CARES could be designed and validated as a school-based coordination mechanism. The study contributes a context-specific example of a practical process innovation intended to reduce avoidable administrative friction while retaining necessary reporting and accountability (Harris & Jones, 2020; Gavin & McGrath-Champ, 2024).

The governance problem addressed in this study is that Madamba Elementary School lacks a structured school-level reporting coordination mechanism, resulting in avoidable administrative burden on teachers. Although some reporting requirements originate from DepEd, MBHTE, district, division, or other administrative levels, school leadership can partly address the problem through practical improvements in internal coordination. Without a clear coordination process, teachers may spend unnecessary time clarifying instructions, reconstructing information, revising submissions, and searching for files. These activities may reduce the time available for lesson preparation, assessment follow-up, remediation, and learner support. The issue is therefore not reporting itself, but the avoidable administrative friction that can arise when necessary reporting work is not well coordinated (Hunter & Nguyen, 2024; Moynihan et al., 2015; Morris et al., 2026).

Review of Related Literature

Teacher administrative workload is closely connected to the way public schools organize accountability and reporting. Documentation supports monitoring, learner records, planning, and administrative decisions; however, poorly coordinated requirements can create additional administrative work and compete with teachers' instructional responsibilities. The literature on administrative burden explains that compliance processes may involve learning costs, psychological costs, and time or effort costs. These ideas help frame reporting difficulties as an organizational concern, not simply an individual teacher's inability to manage time (Moynihan et al., 2015; Tiggelaar et al., 2024; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

In the Philippine basic education context, policy issuances have recognized the need to reduce administrative tasks assigned to public school teachers and rationalize teachers'

workload. DepEd Order No. 002, s. 2024 addresses the immediate removal of administrative tasks from teachers, while DepEd Order No. 005, s. 2024 and its implementation guidelines provide direction on workload rationalization. The policy context underscores the need to protect teachers' time for teaching while ensuring that necessary school documentation and accountability processes continue (Department of Education, 2024a; Department of Education, 2024b; Department of Education, 2024c; IDinsight, 2025; OECD, 2025).

School-level governance provides another relevant perspective. Republic Act No. 9155 recognizes the role of school-based management and local decision-making in responding to school needs. Although school leaders may not control reporting requirements imposed by higher administrative offices, they can improve local processes such as scheduling, file organization, communication, and support distribution. Public value governance also emphasises collaboration and coordination among stakeholders in addressing public problems (Republic Act No. 9155, 2001; Bryson, 2014; Leithwood et al., 2020; Harris & Jones, 2020).

The study's approach to analyzing teacher and school-head accounts is informed by thematic analysis, which provides a systematic way to identify patterns across qualitative data. Case study research is also appropriate for examining a contemporary governance concern in its real-world setting and developing a context-sensitive understanding of local practices. These sources support the study's focus on diagnosing reporting coordination at one school and developing a practical response grounded in its local conditions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Yin, 2018; Nowell et al., 2017).

The literature and policy context point to a practical gap addressed by this study: even when administrative workload is recognized at the policy level, schools still need workable internal arrangements for coordinating recurring reports, templates, deadlines, and assistance. MADAMBA Workload CARES is presented as a proposed school-level mechanism for addressing this coordination gap. However, its effectiveness requires testing through implementation (Vangrieken et al., 2015; Schildkamp, 2019; Creagh et al., 2025).

International workload research clarifies why counting reporting forms alone is inadequate. Systematic syntheses identify work intensification, simultaneous deadlines, task complexity, and the displacement of instructional time as distinct but interacting sources of pressure. These findings provide a comparative rationale for examining how a school coordinates reporting requirements, although evidence from other countries cannot itself establish the scale of the problem at Madamba Elementary School (Creagh et al., 2025; Morris et al., 2026; Hulme et al., 2025; Gavin & McGrath-Champ, 2024).

The job demands–resources perspective distinguishes demands, such as deadline pressure and repeated clerical work, from resources, such as clear procedures, collegial assistance, and participation in decisions. Reviews of teacher well-being and international survey evidence suggest that organizational resources can help explain why similar reporting demands produce different experiences of strain. The proposed CARES mechanism is therefore best understood as an organizational resource to be tested, not as an already demonstrated remedy (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Zhou et al., 2024; Hascher & Waber, 2021; Stang-Rabrig et al., 2022; Tiggelaar et al., 2024).

School leadership and collaborative work design may support more coherent reporting routines. Research on school leadership and teacher collaboration indicates the importance of shared expectations, professional involvement, and locally responsive procedures. Studies of common curriculum planning and educational data use also suggest that shared materials

and appropriately governed information systems can reduce avoidable duplication, although those studies should not be treated as direct evidence of CARES effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2020; Harris & Jones, 2020; Vangrieken et al., 2015; Hunter & Nguyen, 2024; Schildkamp, 2019).

Qualitative case studies can contribute useful context-bound evidence when sampling, interview interpretation, and analytical decisions are described transparently. Reflexive thematic analysis, documentation of the analytical process, and explicit consideration of information power and interview reporting provide relevant standards for interpreting the nine teacher interviews and one school-head account. They do not eliminate the limitations of a single-school sample (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell et al., 2017; Malterud et al., 2016; Palinkas et al., 2015; Tong et al., 2007).

The design and assessment of a school-level intervention should distinguish preliminary acceptance from implementation success. Implementation frameworks recommend examining contextual barriers, adoption, feasibility, fidelity, and sustainability, while process evaluation connects intervention components with how they are actually used. Accordingly, a later CARES pilot should report both process indicators and teachers' experiences, rather than claiming impact from positive feedback alone (Damschroder et al., 2022; Proctor et al., 2011; Nilsen, 2015; Moore et al., 2015; Peters et al., 2013).

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to examine fragmented administrative reporting coordination at Madamba Elementary School, Lanao del Sur, and to develop and obtain preliminary validation for MADAMBA Workload CARES as a proposed school-level governance innovation (Peters et al., 2013; Damschroder et al., 2022).

Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. identify the administrative reporting tasks regularly handled by teachers and describe their reported effects on instructional preparation, assessment, and learner support;
2. determine the factors contributing to difficulty, repetition, and fragmentation in teachers' reporting work;
3. distinguish reporting-related concerns that may be addressed through school-level action from those requiring support or action from higher administrative offices;
4. design and refine MADAMBA Workload CARES as a school-level reporting coordination mechanism, and
5. assess teachers' initial feedback on the proposed mechanism, including its perceived usefulness, feasibility, implementation considerations, and potential for adaptation.

Methodology

The study used a qualitative, action-oriented case study approach focused on Madamba Elementary School in Lanao del Sur. It aimed to diagnose a local governance problem and develop and validate a practical school-level response, rather than produce statistically generalizable findings (Yin, 2018; Peters et al., 2013; Nilsen, 2015).

Participants comprised nine teachers and one school head key informant. The teachers were selected because they were directly involved in preparing, consolidating, submitting, or using school reports. The school head was included because of direct knowledge of reporting processes, school-level coordination, leadership constraints, and the feasibility of the

proposed innovation. Participation was voluntary (Palinkas et al., 2015; Malterud et al., 2016).

Data were collected through five phases: a preliminary inventory of common reporting documents; interviews with nine teachers; an interview with the school head; design and refinement of the proposed CARES mechanism; and collection of validation feedback. The information covered recurring reports, reporting frequency, templates and files, preparation time, repeated information, correction or rework, available support, effects on teaching-related responsibilities, feasibility, safeguards, sustainability, and conditions for replication (Tong et al., 2007; Nowell et al., 2017).

Teacher interviews, the school head interview, and open-ended validation feedback were analyzed thematically. The analysis reviewed responses, identified recurring statements, and grouped similar responses into themes aligned with the research questions. The preliminary document inventory was examined through a workload-mapping matrix. Validation indicators were summarised using simple counts, percentages, and qualitative feedback. The report describes trustworthiness measures including triangulation across sources, participant checking, an audit trail, and researcher reflexivity. It also notes informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell et al., 2017; Tong et al., 2007).

The study is limited to one school and relies substantially on participant accounts and a preliminary document inventory. It did not conduct a full time-and-motion study or a completed implementation pilot of CARES. Accordingly, the results establish reported workload patterns and provide early validation of the proposed mechanism, but they do not measure reductions in reporting time or demonstrate improvements in learner outcomes (Proctor et al., 2011; Moore et al., 2015).

Findings, Analysis, and Discussion

Reporting work was recurring and layered

Teachers identified a range of administrative reports and documents, including attendance reports, class records, daily lesson logs or lesson plans, school registers, learner records, SF1, SF2, SF9, SF10/Form 137, ECD/ECCD checklists, quarterly grades, report cards, assessment reports, weekly plans, and accomplishment or monitoring reports. These requirements occurred daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly, or as needed. The findings therefore describe reporting as a continuing part of teachers' work rather than a task limited to one reporting period (Morris et al., 2026; Creagh et al., 2025).

Coordination friction contributed to avoidable work

All nine teacher-respondents reported looking for templates when preparing reports. All nine also reported using old reports as references and asking another teacher for help. Seven respondents gave specific preparation periods ranging from two days to more than one week; two said preparation time depended on the report's difficulty. Some reports were reportedly returned for correction or additional input. These findings suggest that the burden involved not only the number of documents but also template searching, file retrieval, repeated information, informal clarification, and rework (Gavin & McGrath-Champ, 2024; Tiggelaar et al., 2024).

Effects on instructional responsibilities

Eight of the nine teacher-respondents described negative effects of reporting deadlines on time, stress, the teaching process, lesson preparation, assessment, remediation, or learner support; one respondent gave no answer. The report also presents teacher accounts describing less time to prepare teaching materials, check learner outputs, compute grades, conduct remediation, and provide individual support when reporting deadlines overlap. These findings indicate a perceived competition for time between administrative reporting and instructional responsibilities. The study did not measure resulting changes in student achievement or instructional quality (Zhou et al., 2024; Stang-Rabrig et al., 2022; Hascher & Waber, 2021).

MADAMBA Workload CARES and validation feedback

Taken together, the findings suggest that the reporting burden participants described was not caused only by the number of required documents. It was also associated with how information, schedules, templates, and assistance were organized. The proposed CARES components respond to these local coordination concerns by linking scheduling, shared resources, peer support, progress monitoring, and workload check-ins in one mechanism (Hunter & Nguyen, 2024; Vangrieken et al., 2015; Schildkamp, 2019).

The validation feedback indicates perceived usefulness and acceptability among the participating teachers. Since CARES had not undergone a full implementation pilot, this feedback should be interpreted as preliminary validation rather than evidence that the system has already reduced reporting time, stress, or workload. The study also did not measure changes in learner achievement or instructional quality (Proctor et al., 2011; Damschroder et al., 2022).

Conclusion

The study found that teachers at Madamba Elementary School regularly handled multiple reporting and documentation tasks and experienced coordination difficulties involving templates, previous files, repeated information, deadlines, informal support, and report corrections. Most teacher-respondents described negative effects on time, stress, or teaching-related responsibilities. The findings also show that causes of reporting burden are not all within school-level control: some arise from higher administrative requirements and resource constraints, while others relate to local coordination practices (Morris et al., 2026; OECD, 2025).

MADAMBA Workload CARES was developed as a practical, school-level response, including a consolidated reporting calendar, shared template and file bank, peer assistance arrangement, report-status dashboard, and workload check-ins. All nine teacher-respondents supported each component during validation. The study therefore provides an initial basis for further testing of the proposed mechanism, but it does not establish that CARES has already reduced administrative workload or improved learner outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2020; Nilsen, 2015; Damschroder et al., 2022).

Recommendation

The school is encouraged to conduct a small-scale pilot of MADAMBA Workload CARES before considering wider adoption. The pilot should begin with selected recurring reports and establish baseline preparation times to compare with preparation times after the mechanism is introduced. Time saved may be estimated by subtracting the preparation time

after implementation from the baseline preparation time (Moore et al., 2015; Peters et al., 2013).

The pilot should also monitor the number of reports returned for correction, repeated or duplicated information, deadline pressure, and teachers' reported ability to protect time for lesson preparation, assessment, remediation, and learner support. The school should assign clear responsibility for maintaining the reporting calendar, shared files, and status dashboard; provide an orientation for participating teachers; and organize peer assistance fairly (Schildkamp, 2019; Proctor et al., 2011).

Because internet connectivity and electricity interruptions were identified as constraints, consider both digital and physical copies of essential templates and schedules. The dashboard should identify pending work and support needs, not rank, shame, or punish teachers. Learner and personnel information must be handled in accordance with applicable data privacy requirements, and CARES should be designed so that it does not become another reporting burden (Republic Act No. 10173, 2012; Nilsen, 2015).

After the pilot, the school should review the results with teachers, refine the mechanism, and determine whether it is feasible to sustain or adapt. Consider replication in other schools only after accounting for their reporting requirements, available resources, leadership support, teacher participation, privacy safeguards, and local conditions (Vangrieken et al., 2015; Hunter & Nguyen, 2024).

Author Contributions

Anna Zenaida Unte-Alonto is the sole named author. The following CRediT roles are proposed for author confirmation: conceptualization; methodology; investigation and qualitative data collection; formal analysis; development of the MADAMBA Workload CARES framework; writing—original draft; and writing—review and editing. The author must confirm these roles, final approval, and accountability for the work before publication.

Informed Consent to Participate

The manuscript reports that the nine teachers and school-head informant participated voluntarily and that informed consent and confidentiality were addressed. The author should confirm the form of consent obtained, how participants were informed about the study, and whether institutional requirements were met.

Conflict of Interest

Author confirmation required: disclose any financial, professional, institutional, or personal interests that could reasonably be perceived to influence the study. If none exist, the final statement may read: "The author declares no competing interests."

Funding

Author confirmation required: identify any funding source and grant number supporting the study. If none was received, the final statement may read: "This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors."

Data Availability

The study describes interviews, a preliminary document inventory, and validation feedback from a single school. Original interview materials and school records are not supplied with

this manuscript and may contain confidential teacher, staff, or learner information. No public data repository is identified. Any request for access to de-identified supporting materials would require author confirmation, appropriate permissions, and protection of participants' confidentiality.

Use of Generative AI and Editorial Assistance

AI-assisted editorial support was used in preparing the present revision to identify relevant literature, check bibliographic information, improve citation linkage, and draft editorial wording. Such assistance does not establish the provenance or accuracy of the underlying fieldwork. The named author remains responsible for checking every citation, reviewing the revised wording, and approving this disclosure before publication.

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