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QUALITY ASSESSMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF SCHOOLS IN BANGKOK METROPOLITAN AREA

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates how external quality assurance contributes to the enhancement of educational standards in schools across the Bangkok Metropolitan Area, emphasizing its alignment with global sustainability frameworks. External evaluations implemented by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) serve not only as mechanisms for improving educational administration, instruction, and learning environments but also as critical drivers for advancing Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education. Drawing on concepts from Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and the integration pathways highlighted by sustainability literature, this study situates Thailand's quality assurance system within the broader agenda of promoting equity, accountability, and sustainable school development. Using mixed methods across six purposively selected schools, the research synthesizes external quality assurance outcomes and proposes guidelines for continuous improvement based on the PDCA cycle. Findings reveal that schools consistently meet required standards, demonstrating effective leadership, stakeholder engagement, and innovative learning practices—factors that reflect principles of ESD such as learner-centered pedagogy, community participation, and holistic capacity building. The study recommends strategic enhancements that align quality assurance practices with ESD-oriented competencies and SDG targets, ensuring that Thai schools contribute to sustainable, inclusive, and future-oriented educational development.

KEYWORDS: SDG 4, Quality Assessment, Educational Standards Development, Case Study, Schools, ONESQA.

1. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of educational quality assurance in Thailand was significantly driven by the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), which introduced comprehensive reforms across all educational levels to elevate quality in line with national benchmarks (Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment [ONESQA], 2003). The Act led to the establishment of ONESQA as an external evaluation body responsible for assessing educational institutions across basic and higher education levels under Sections 47–51 of the Act (ONESQA, 2003).

In 2018, the Ministry of Education enacted the Ministerial Regulation on Educational Quality Assurance B.E. 2561 (2018), which defines quality assurance as a systematic process of monitoring and evaluating institutional performance according to established standards (Ministry of Education, 2018). The regulation emphasizes the development of internal quality management systems to promote public trust and accountability. In the same year, updated national educational standards were issued to serve as benchmarks for institutional supervision and development (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Educational quality assurance functions as a strategic management mechanism designed to align learner outcomes with national standards and foster institutional credibility (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009). The National Education Act highlights the necessity of sustainable internal quality assurance systems, institutional accountability, and continuous reporting mechanisms to enhance transparency and long-term development (ONESQA, 2003).

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) involves systematic self-evaluation processes conducted by institutions and supervisory authorities, with findings disseminated to stakeholders to promote transparency and continuous improvement (ONESQA, 2003). External Quality Assurance (EQA), conducted by accredited agencies such as ONESQA, aims to evaluate institutional standards and provide recommendations for enhancement.

In Thailand, quality assurance plays a strategic role in strengthening educational equity and national competitiveness. Continuous improvement mechanisms—particularly through the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle—support systematic planning, monitoring, and refinement of educational management processes (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009).

Recent reforms have emphasized stakeholder confidence, institutional transparency, and international competitiveness. Integrating Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into institutional governance frameworks strengthens alignment with long-term development goals and enhances collaborative accountability mechanisms (Santaveesuk et al., 2025).

Recent research further highlights the importance of psychological capital—such as efficacy, resilience, and optimism—in supporting leadership capacity and sustainable school improvement within quality assurance frameworks (Sivagurunathan et al., 2024). Such internal capacities complement structural reforms by strengthening institutional adaptability and instructional development.

Moreover, research on social innovation and governance underscores the role of human capital, social capital, and competency development in strengthening institutional transparency and accountability systems (Pansuwong et al., 2022). These findings reinforce the importance of integrating governance quality with institutional development.

Global scholarship on empowerment and institutional development similarly emphasizes that organizational transformation requires both structural governance mechanisms and psychological empowerment to achieve sustainable improvement (Bhandari et al., 2024).

This empirical study examines the effectiveness of external quality assurance implementation in schools within the Bangkok Metropolitan Area. Through systematic data collection and analysis across multiple institutions, the research seeks to synthesize evaluation outcomes and develop strategic recommendations for strengthening external quality assurance mechanisms.

By critically analyzing current quality assurance practices, this study contributes to ongoing educational reform and supports evidence-based policy development aimed at advancing Thailand's national educational standards.

1.1. Objectives

1. To synthesize the outcomes of external quality assurance in educational institutions, focusing on a case study of schools in Bangkok.
2. To develop guidelines for external quality assurance in educational institutions

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) refers to a systematic process of monitoring, inspecting, and evaluating educational quality within institutions. It

involves institutional self-assessment conducted by schools with support from affiliated agencies and educational personnel. IQA emphasizes continuous development, stakeholder participation, and collaborative engagement among teachers, administrators, school committees, and communities in educational management (Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment [ONESQA], 2003; Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009).

External Quality Assurance (EQA) refers to the evaluation process conducted by authorized external agencies—such as the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA)—to assess and validate institutional performance and standards. The primary objective of EQA is to ensure compliance with national benchmarks and promote sustainable improvement in educational quality (ONESQA, 2003; Ministry of Education, 2018).

Standards and Indicators represent measurable benchmarks used to determine whether institutional operations align with the established quality cycle and achieve predefined objectives. Indicators may be categorized into:

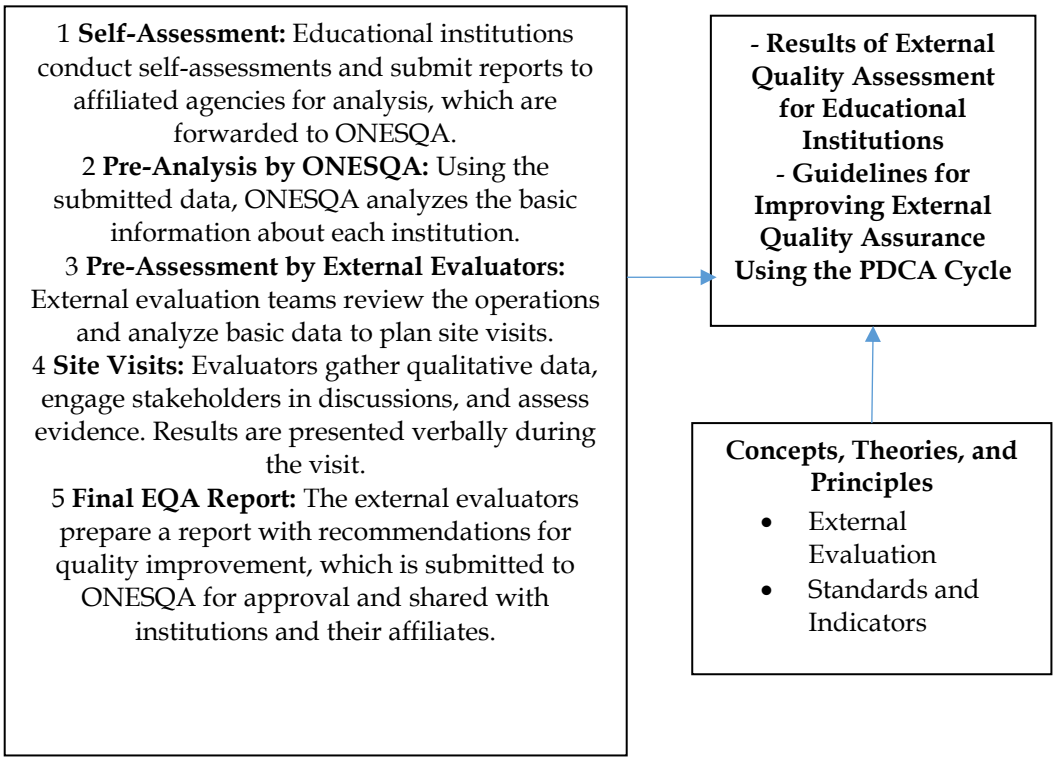

Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework

1. **Quantitative indicators**, such as student achievement scores, graduation rates, and teacher qualifications; and
2. **Qualitative indicators**, including instructional quality, leadership effectiveness, stakeholder satisfaction, and institutional culture (Ministry of Education, 2018; Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009).

Research on social innovation in Thailand demonstrates that human capital (skills, professional development, and training) and social capital (trust, collaboration, and shared knowledge) significantly influence organizational capacity for sustainable development (Pansuwong et al., 2022). These findings suggest that schools with strong professional learning systems and community networks are more likely to achieve effective and sustainable quality assurance outcomes.

Educational institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area include both primary and secondary schools administered by multiple agencies. These comprise 437 schools under the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and 158 schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), totaling 595 public schools. Additionally, 825 institutions operate under the Office of the Private Education Commission, including 729 general private schools and 96 international schools. In total, Bangkok hosts approximately 1,420 educational institutions (Ministry of Education, 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Scope of Study

Population. The study encompasses all 1,420 educational institutions located in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Target Group. Six schools were purposively selected as the research sample. The researcher was officially assigned by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) to conduct evaluations related to educational quality assurance (Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment [ONESQA], 2003).

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques to ensure comprehensive and in-depth analysis of quality assessment practices within Bangkok schools (Prenger et al., 2020).

3.2. Research Design

This research employs a mixed-methods design to enhance analytical rigor and validity. The integration of statistical analysis and contextual interpretation enables a holistic understanding of institutional quality development (Prenger et al., 2020).

3.2.1. Quantitative Component

The quantitative dimension analyzes numerical data derived from key performance indicators established by ONESQA to evaluate institutional quality in measurable terms (ONESQA, 2003).

3.2.2. Qualitative Component

The qualitative component involves observations, interviews, and document analysis to explore contextual factors influencing educational quality and institutional improvement (Kokotsaki et al., 2016).

3.3. Data Collection Methods

To ensure methodological triangulation, multiple data collection techniques were employed:

1. **Observation:** Structured classroom and institutional observations were conducted to assess the implementation of quality assurance standards in practice (Ministry of Education, 2018).
2. **Surveys and Questionnaires:** Standardized questionnaires were distributed to administrators, teachers, and students to collect quantitative perceptions of the external quality assessment process (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009).
3. **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with principals, teachers, and ONESQA assessors provided qualitative insights into stakeholder engagement with quality assurance mechanisms (ONESQA, 2003).
4. **Document Review:** Institutional self-assessment reports (SAR), ONESQA evaluation criteria, and relevant policy documents were analyzed to contextualize implementation structures (Ministry of Education, 2018; ONESQA, 2003).

3.4. Quality Indicators

The study utilizes official quality indicators established by ONESQA as the primary framework for evaluating institutional performance. These indicators encompass instructional effectiveness, administrative leadership, learning environments, and student achievement outcomes (ONESQA, 2003; Ministry of Education, 2018).

3.5. Assessment Process

The evaluation process applies the **Galyanamitr assessment model**, a peer-review approach involving three independent evaluators with expertise in educational quality assurance. This collaborative assessment ensures fairness, multiple perspectives, and professional validation (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009).

3.6. Data Analysis

3.6.1. Quantitative Analysis

Survey and questionnaire data were analyzed using statistical software to identify patterns, correlations, and key determinants influencing institutional quality (Prenger et al., 2020).

3.6.2. Qualitative Analysis

Interview transcripts, observational data, and document reviews were analyzed through thematic coding and categorization to identify recurring themes related to institutional development and quality improvement (Kokotsaki et al., 2016).

3.7. Ethical Considerations

All participants were informed of the research objectives and procedures. Informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality was strictly maintained in accordance with ethical research standards (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009).

3.8. Limitations

The study acknowledges limitations, including limited generalizability beyond the Bangkok context and the interpretive nature of qualitative findings. However, methodological triangulation strengthens

the credibility and balance of the results (Prenger et al., 2020).

3.9. Results of External Quality Assurance (Quantitative)

For early childhood and basic education levels, all evaluated schools met the required national standards, reflecting consistent institutional compliance and sustained quality development (ONESQA, 2003; Ministry of Education, 2018).

Across all levels, schools systematically achieved established indicators, demonstrating continuous improvement in evaluation outcomes over time (N = 6). These results align with Thailand's PDCA-based quality management framework and sustainable institutional development principles (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009; Santaveesuk et al., 2025).

Table 1: Evaluation Results

Indicator	Indicator Description	Mean	S.D.	Level
	Early Childhood Education Level Standard 1: Quality Outcomes for Early Childhood (5 Indicators)	3.83	0.75	High
1.1	Children grow age-appropriately, are healthy, and have developed motor skills			
1.2	Children develop cognitive abilities, learning skills, and creativity.	4.17	0.75	High
1.3	Children develop language and communication skills.	4.00	0.63	High
1.4	Children exhibit emotional and mental development.	3.67	0.52	High
1.5	Children show social and moral development.	3.67	0.52	High
	Standard 2: Management of Early Childhood Development Centers (10 Indicators)			
2.1	Vision, mission, and values of the institution.	4.83	0.41	Very High
2.2	Strategies and goals of the institution.	4.17	0.41	High
2.3	School administrators demonstrate academic leadership and manage operations based on good governance principles.	4.17	0.41	High
2.4	Professional development programs for administrators, teachers, and educational personnel are effectively implemented.	5.00	0.00	Very High
2.5	Supervision of teachers and systematic evaluation of performance.	4.17	0.41	High
2.6	Adequate and safe use of media to support learning experiences.	5.00	0.00	Very High
2.7	Safe and secure learning environments and resources are provided.	4.67	0.52	Very High
2.8	Welfare and safety measures, including disease, accident, and disaster prevention strategies, are in place.	4.67	0.52	Very High
2.9	Processes for monitoring and initial screening for children requiring special assistance.	4.17	0.41	High
2.10	Building networks and fostering participation from parents, communities, and external agencies.	4.17	0.41	High
	Standard 3: Improving the Quality of Early Childhood Learning Experiences (3 Indicators)			
3.1	Curriculum and planning for learning experiences that align with early childhood needs.	4.17	0.41	High
3.2	Activities designed to develop desirable characteristics appropriate for young children.	4.67	0.52	Very High
3.3	Teachers systematically and continuously evaluate the developmental progress of children.	4.33	0.52	High
	Basic Education Level Standard 1: Learning Outcomes (3 Indicators)			
1.1	Learners demonstrate competencies aligned with the school curriculum.	4.17	0.41	High
1.2	Learners exhibit desirable attributes as defined in the school curriculum.	4.33	0.52	High
1.3	Learners are capable of self-directed learning.	4.33	0.52	High
	Standard 2: Improving the Quality of School Management (10 Indicators)			
2.1	The school's vision, mission, and values are clearly defined and effectively communicated.	4.83	0.41	Very High
2.2	Policies, strategies, and plans are aligned with the school's vision and mission.	4.17	0.41	High
2.3	School administrators demonstrate academic leadership and manage operations based on good governance principles.	4.00	0.00	High
2.4	Plans and operations for the professional development of teachers and educational personnel are effectively implemented.	5.00	0.00	Very High
2.5	Systematic processes for supervising and evaluating the performance of teachers and educational personnel.	4.17	0.41	High

2.6	Effective use of media, equipment, and technology systems to support educational management.	5.00	0.00	Very High
2.7	The school provides a safe and hygienic environment and infrastructure.	4.67	0.52	Very High
2.8	Adequate welfare, safety measures, and prevention strategies for diseases, accidents, and disasters are in place.	4.67	0.52	Very High
2.9	Systems and processes are established to support and assist students effectively.	4.33	0.52	High
2.10	The school fosters networks with parents, organizations, and communities to collaboratively support learning and student development.	4.17	0.41	High
	Standard 3: Enhancing the Quality of Learning Management (3 Indicators)			
3.1	Designing curricula and lesson plans that enhance competencies and desirable attributes in learners.	4.00	0.00	High
3.2	Conducting learning activities that promote competencies and desirable characteristics in learners.	4.67	0.52	Very High
3.3	Teachers systematically and continuously assess and evaluate student learning outcomes.	4.00	0.00	High

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that all six schools consistently achieved high performance across the evaluated indicators at both early childhood and basic education levels. Most indicators yielded average scores ranging from 4.00 to 5.00, placing them within the "High" to "Very High" achievement range.

Specifically, indicators related to safe and supportive learning environments, effective use of media and resources, and professional development of teachers received the highest average scores, reflecting schools' strong emphasis on holistic student development and instructional quality. Similarly, indicators on school leadership and collaboration with communities also ranked prominently.

3.10. Context of Educational Institutions

3.10.1. School A

A private school located in Bangkok where the majority of students are Muslim. The school emphasizes close supervision of students, particularly special needs children. It is situated in an urban community where most parents are employed in corporate jobs or are business owners. The school receives strong support from the local mosque.

3.10.2. School B

A large public school located near a temple and supported by the temple. It focuses on cultivating desirable traits aligned with Buddhist school principles. Most parents work in industrial factories or engage in agriculture.

3.10.3. School C

A small public school near a temple and supported by the temple. It emphasizes developing students' vocational skills, particularly in rice farming. Most parents work in agriculture or industrial factories.

3.10.4. School D

A medium-sized public school near a temple in the heart of the city, located in an economic district. It focuses on club activities, vocational skills, and receives support from the temple. Most parents are corporate employees.

3.10.5. School E

A small public school located on the outskirts of the city, surrounded by rice fields. It incorporates agriculture into its curriculum, following the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, such as growing vegetables, raising fish, and chickens. The school is supported by community leaders. Most parents are involved in agriculture or work in factories.

3.10.6. School F

A small public school in an urban Muslim community. It emphasizes scouting activities and discipline. The school is supported by community leaders, with most parents employed in industrial factories or as corporate staff.

3.11. Summary of Evaluation Results

All schools follow the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) quality cycle and meet all educational standards and indicators. Each school has unique best practices, as highlighted below:

3.11.1. School A

Best Practice: Teaching design using graphic organizers. Objective: To enable kindergarten teachers to integrate graphic organizers into learning experiences, promoting holistic child development. Process: Training teachers on graphic organizer use, integrating it into lesson plans and daily routines, and documenting learning experiences. Results: Enhanced comprehension and retention among children, improved critical thinking skills, and better connections between prior and new knowledge.

Evaluation: Parent satisfaction surveys and reflective practices by teachers. Support Factors: Knowledge and motivation from management, professional development opportunities for teachers. Recognition and Dissemination: Recognized by universities and educational institutions for its innovative teaching approach.

3.11.2. School B

Best Practice: Project-based learning experiences. Objective: To enhance comprehensive child development and foster critical thinking and creativity. Process: Divided into three phases—initiating, developing, and summarizing projects. Results: Improvement in all developmental areas. Support Factors: Continuous support from administrators, teachers, and parents. Recognition and Dissemination: Shared practices with nearby schools and educational networks.

4. RESULTS

The evaluation results reflect the commitment of all participating schools to implementing the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle and adhering to national educational standards (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009). Each institution demonstrated exemplary practices characterized by creative and context-specific innovations in teaching and learning that align with the unique characteristics and needs of their school communities.

These findings are consistent with Duang-Asong (2015), who identified four essential stages of participation in internal quality assurance (IQA): (1) participation in planning, (2) implementation according to plan, (3) monitoring and evaluation, and (4) utilization of evaluation results for operational improvement. IQA is conceptualized as a continuous and collaborative process embedded in institutional routines, guided by Deming's PDCA quality cycle.

Similarly, Vetchayanalak (2018) emphasized the importance of structured planning meetings, systematic monitoring through quality assurance documentation, and the establishment of operational calendars to support sustainable implementation. The integration of the PDCA cycle into school-level quality assurance activities, along with clearly defined planning and monitoring schedules, was strongly recommended (Vetchayanalak, 2018).

4.1. Early Childhood Education Level

Standard 1 focuses on holistic child development across five domains:

1. Age-appropriate physical and motor development
2. Cognitive abilities and creativity
3. Language and communication skills
4. Emotional and psychological maturity
5. Social and moral growth

The evaluated schools demonstrated strong performance across all five domains, with average scores falling within the "High" range (3.67–4.17), as defined by the external quality assessment criteria (Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment [ONESQA], 2003). Cognitive development and language skills showed particularly strong outcomes, indicating effective early learning strategies and age-appropriate curriculum design consistent with national standards (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Standard 2 comprises ten indicators assessing institutional leadership, strategic planning, personnel development, and the establishment of safe and supportive learning environments. The participating schools achieved average scores ranging from 4.17 to 5.00, reflecting "High" to "Very High" performance levels across all indicators (ONESQA, 2003).

Key strengths include:

- Professional development for administrators and teachers (5.00)
- Effective and safe utilization of learning media (5.00)
- Health, safety, and welfare systems (4.67)

These results align with the quality management principles outlined in national educational policies (Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009).

Standard 3 evaluates the alignment of learning environments and instructional design with developmental needs. Indicators include:

- Curriculum and learning plans aligned with child development
- Learning activities promoting desirable characteristics
- Systematic and ongoing developmental assessment

Average scores ranged from 4.17 to 4.67 ("High" to "Very High"), with the strongest performance observed in developmentally appropriate learning activities (4.67), reflecting active integration of experiential and child-centered pedagogies (Ministry of Education, 2018).

4.2. Basic Education Level

Standard 1 assesses student performance in three dimensions:

- Curriculum-aligned competencies
- Development of desirable learner attributes
- Readiness for self-directed learning

Average scores ranged between 4.17 and 4.33 ("High"), with the highest score observed in learner attributes (4.33), indicating successful cultivation of positive values and behaviors consistent with national curriculum expectations (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Standard 2 includes ten indicators assessing vision, leadership, professional development, infrastructure, and community engagement. Schools achieved scores between 4.00 and 5.00, demonstrating "High" to "Very High" performance levels (ONESQA, 2003).

Notable highlights include:

- Professional development for teachers (5.00)
- Integration of media and educational technology (5.00)
- Safe and hygienic school environments (4.67)
- Collaboration with external networks (4.17)

Standard 3 focuses on instructional design and evaluation processes aimed at enhancing student competencies. Indicators include:

- Curriculum and lesson planning aligned with desired competencies
- Learning activities promoting student potential
- Continuous assessment of learning outcomes

Average scores ranged from 4.00 to 4.67 ("High" to "Very High"), with the highest score (4.67) in competency-enhancing learning activities. These results indicate strong alignment with student-centered and competency-based educational approaches (Ministry of Education, 2018; Office of the Education Council Secretariat, 2009).

5. DISCUSSION

The evaluation results illustrate that all participating schools demonstrated strong adherence to the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Act) quality cycle, meeting established educational standards. Each school showcased distinct best practices tailored to its local context, emphasizing innovative approaches to teaching and learning. These findings are consistent with Duang-Asong (2015), who outlined a four-stage framework for internal quality assurance: planning, implementation, monitoring, and improvement—reinforcing the collaborative nature of institutional quality efforts.

Similarly, Vetchayanalak (2018) highlighted the importance of structured operational planning and ongoing evaluation through scheduled quality assurance processes. Both studies underscore the relevance of integrating the PDCA cycle into routine school operations.

To further enhance learning quality, schools are encouraged to modernize instructional strategies. Project-Based Learning (PBL), for example, has been shown to foster creativity, critical thinking, and student autonomy (Kokotsaki et al., 2016). However, while its effectiveness is widely supported, methodological variations across studies warrant cautious interpretation of causal impact.

Another recommendation is the use of structured knowledge-sharing systems. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and cross-school Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) offer promising avenues for sustained teacher development and school-wide improvement (Prenger et al., 2020).

In addition, schools may benefit from integrating developmental programs such as the "Little Scientist House," literacy promotion initiatives, and activities targeting executive function (EF) and self-regulation (SR). Recent research suggests that supportive classroom environments and high-quality teacher–student interactions play a crucial role in cultivating EF and SR, which in turn enhance students' academic achievement and behavioral outcomes (Sankalaite et al., 2021).

Finally, localized innovation—such as integrating community-based cultural content, including traditional songs and local practices—can reinforce meaningful learning and reflect the philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy, thereby strengthening contextualized and sustainable educational development (Chaiwat & Suwattana, 2024).

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study reinforces the critical role of external quality assurance as a catalyst for improving educational standards. The PDCA cycle proves to be a valuable framework for sustaining institutional growth in teaching quality, student engagement, and school leadership.

To drive further development, schools should continue to innovate instructional practices, expand stakeholder collaboration, and strengthen teacher professional networks. Policymakers are encouraged to scale and adapt quality assurance models nationwide to maintain educational equity and excellence.

Future research should explore context-specific adaptations of the PDCA model, including hybrid approaches that accommodate diverse learning environments and cultural settings.

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