

The Influence of Metacognitive Awareness on Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between metacognitive awareness and teachers' sense of efficacy among public elementary school teachers in the Pili West District, Schools Division of Camarines Sur, during the 2025–2026 school year. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, the study surveyed 234 full-time teachers from 15 schools. Data were collected using the 24-item Metacognitive Awareness Inventory for Teachers and the 24-item Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale. Means, analysis of variance, Pearson correlation, and the coefficient of determination were used. Overall metacognitive awareness was high ($M = 4.19$); metacognitive knowledge was very high ($M = 4.22$), whereas metacognitive regulation was high ($M = 4.16$). Teachers' sense of efficacy was very high ($M = 7.49$), with instructional strategies obtaining the highest mean (7.52). No statistically significant differences were reported among the metacognitive aspects

($F = 1.6233$, $p = .150705$) or efficacy domains ($F = 0.11623058$, $p = .890287$). Metacognitive awareness had a strong positive association with teaching efficacy ($r = .771$, $p < .001$; $r^2 = .5944$). The findings support targeted professional development in reflection, instructional monitoring, and evaluation and informed the proposed Project School MATES sustainability plan. Because the design was correlational, the findings establish association rather than causation.

Keywords: *metacognitive awareness, teacher self-efficacy, elementary teachers, metacognitive regulation, reflective teaching, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching requires more than mastery of subject content: educators must continuously plan, assess, and refine their responses to diverse learner needs. Such demands are especially pronounced in public elementary classrooms, where teachers guide foundational learning while addressing differences in readiness, engagement, and behavior. Metacognitive awareness—the capacity to understand and regulate one's thinking—provides a basis for deliberate lesson planning, monitoring, and evaluation (Pradhan & Das, 2021; Winne & Azevedo, 2022). Teachers' confidence in their capacity to motivate learners, select appropriate strategies, and maintain productive classrooms, commonly described as teaching efficacy, is also central to their professional work (Berg, 2022; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

Knowledge of one's instructional strengths, procedures, and strategy choices may help teachers anticipate difficulties and make informed pedagogical adjustments. Metacognitive regulation complements such knowledge through planning before instruction, monitoring during learning activities, and evaluating lesson outcomes. Research involving pre-service and in-service educators has documented associations between metacognitive awareness, professional reflection, and efficacy beliefs (Alkan, 2020; Üstünbaş & Alagözlü, 2021). However, evidence from local public elementary school contexts remains valuable because teaching conditions, instructional responsibilities, and professional development opportunities differ across settings.

In the Philippine basic education setting, the Department of Education has emphasized professional learning and recovery-oriented support for instruction through initiatives such as the Basic Education Development Plan 2030 and National Learning Recovery Program (Department of Education, 2022, 2023). Understanding teachers' cognitive self-regulation alongside their perceived teaching capabilities can inform school-based mentoring, Learning Action Cell (LAC) activities, and sustained instructional improvement. The Pili West District of Camarines Sur provides a specific setting for examining these relationships among in-service elementary teachers.

Accordingly, the study examined teachers' metacognitive knowledge (declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge), metacognitive regulation (planning, monitoring, and evaluating), and sense of efficacy (student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management). It also tested reported differences among the respective dimensions and the association between metacognitive awareness and teaching efficacy, with the findings used to develop Project School MATES: Metacognitive Awareness and Teaching Efficacy Sustainability. The contribution is a district-specific empirical basis for professional development rather than evidence of a causal intervention effect.

Literature Review

Metacognitive Awareness and Reflective Instruction

Metacognition involves knowledge about cognition and regulation of cognitive activity. In professional teaching, declarative knowledge concerns awareness of strengths, limitations, subject knowledge, and instructional resources; procedural knowledge addresses how to implement strategies; and conditional knowledge concerns when and why a strategy suits a particular classroom circumstance. These distinctions clarify the demands of reflective teaching because instructional competence depends not only on knowing an approach but also on selecting and applying it appropriately (Dignath & Veenman, 2022; Pradhan & Das, 2021).

Regulation makes that knowledge actionable through planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Teachers set learning objectives and anticipate difficulties, observe learner responses during instruction, and review evidence afterward to refine subsequent lessons. Research on teacher metacognitive awareness emphasizes this iterative cycle and its importance for self-assessment and instructional adjustment (Nordin & Yunus, 2020; Hartelt & Martens, 2024). A teacher's assessment of what is working, and the capacity to change course, are therefore related but distinct professional abilities.

Studies with teacher-education populations have examined metacognitive awareness from different perspectives, including self-regulation and professional dispositions. Asy'ari and da Rosa (2022) considered differences in cognitive style and gender, whereas Ozturk (2020) explored connections with teachers' personality characteristics. Together, these studies support viewing metacognitive awareness as multidimensional and context-sensitive, although their populations do not directly represent all in-service public elementary teachers.

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy and Its Domains

Teachers' sense of efficacy concerns beliefs about their ability to contribute to learning despite instructional challenges. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) conceptualized it in three domains: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. Confidence in student engagement pertains to motivating learners and sustaining participation; instructional-strategy efficacy concerns selecting, differentiating, and adapting teaching methods; and classroom-management efficacy concerns establishing routines and responding constructively to classroom difficulties.

These beliefs are shaped by teachers' interpretations of professional experiences and the outcomes of their instructional choices. They may support persistence and adaptation when learners struggle or a teaching strategy does not work as expected. Theoretical and applied examinations of efficacy also underscore the role of reflective practice, feedback, and professional learning in strengthening teachers' judgments of competence (Berg, 2022; Wang & Pan, 2023). The three efficacy domains are consequently related while remaining useful for identifying distinct professional-development needs.

Work on professional development and teacher efficacy indicates the value of practice-focused support rather than confidence-building in isolation. Liu et al. (2025) considered the contribution of professional development to in-service STEM teachers' self-efficacy, and Wyatt and Faez (2024) addressed how teachers' efficacy beliefs may be supported in language education. Such evidence provides context for examining whether the reflection and adjustment components of metacognition may accompany stronger efficacy perceptions across instructional responsibilities.

Empirical Connections Between Metacognition and Efficacy

Alkan (2020) examined the relationship between metacognitive awareness and teachers' sense of efficacy using structural equation modelling and reported a positive association. Related investigations among pre-service teachers likewise connected metacognitive awareness with professional self-beliefs and attitudes (Aslan & Ince, 2023), while research with EFL pre-service and in-service teachers examined these variables in different career contexts (Üstünbaş & Alagözlü, 2021). These investigations provide empirical support for considering cognitive self-regulation alongside teachers perceived capability.

The literature also suggests that monitoring and reflective appraisal may help teachers interpret classroom signals and adapt instruction. Ho and Lau (2025) investigated reflective practice and metacognitive awareness within experiential learning relationships, and Sofologi et al. (2023) examined secondary teachers' metacognitive knowledge and professional development in connection with tacit strategies. While these settings differ from Philippine elementary schooling, they reinforce the relevance of studying self-reflection as part of professional practice.

The evidence does not establish that greater metacognitive awareness necessarily causes stronger efficacy. Individual characteristics, teaching experience, school climate, and institutional support may influence both constructs. Consequently, a correlational design is suitable for estimating their strength of association within a defined teacher population, provided the results are interpreted as relationships rather than intervention effects.

Theoretical, Conceptual, and Local Research Context

The study draws on metacognitive accounts of knowing and regulating thought and on the multidimensional conception of teaching efficacy. Teachers' declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge describe what they understand about effective teaching; planning, monitoring, and evaluation describe how they regulate professional practice. Teaching efficacy is represented by their self-assessed capability in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management (Balcikanli, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

Existing work provides a strong conceptual basis but leaves a need for local evidence concerning currently practicing public elementary teachers. The present research responded by measuring both constructs among teachers in the Pili West District, assessing variation across their component dimensions, and examining whether the variables move together. The framework also linked the resulting evidence to a proposed sustainability plan rather than treating statistical significance as sufficient for professional improvement (Ghosh & Sankar, 2025; Nordin & Yunus, 2020).

Figure 1 reproduces the content and relationships of the thesis's original conceptual paradigm. It places metacognitive knowledge and regulation alongside teaching efficacy, then identifies the proposed sustainability plan as the intended application of the findings. The relationships depicted are conceptual; the subsequent analysis tests association, not a causal pathway.

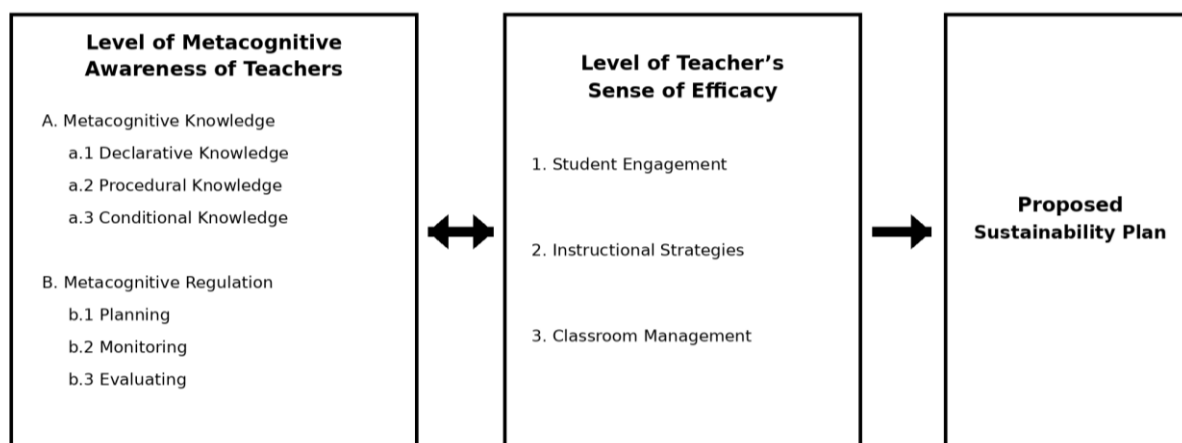


Figure 1. *Conceptual Paradigm of the Study*

METHODS

Research Design

The study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational design. The descriptive component summarized levels of teachers' metacognitive awareness and sense of efficacy, while the correlational component evaluated the direction, magnitude, and statistical significance of the relationship between the two variables. The variables were measured without experimental manipulation.

Research Locale

The investigation was conducted during the 2025–2026 academic year in 15 public elementary schools of the Pili West District, Schools Division of Camarines Sur, Philippines. Its geographic and institutional scope was limited to the district's public elementary teaching personnel.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised 253 full-time public elementary school teachers. The researcher used total enumeration by inviting all eligible teachers; 234 voluntarily participated and returned complete usable survey instruments. Inclusion required full-time appointment, assignment to one of the district's 15 public elementary schools, and active teaching duties during the study year. Substitute, contractual and private-school teachers and nonteaching personnel were excluded. Thus, the achieved sample represented 234 of the 253 eligible teachers invited.

Research Instruments

Data were gathered through two standardized instruments. Balcikanli's (2011) 24-item Metacognitive Awareness Inventory for Teachers (MAIT) assessed six aspects grouped as metacognitive knowledge (declarative, procedural, and conditional) and regulation (planning, monitoring, and evaluating). Responses used a five-point Likert scale; the instrument's reported Cronbach's alpha was .85. Mean values of 4.21–5.00 were interpreted as very high and 3.41–4.20 as high. Permission to use the instrument was reported in the thesis.

The 24-item Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) of Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) assessed student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management, with eight items per domain. Responses used a nine-point scale, and the reported Cronbach's alpha was .94. The study interpreted scores of 7.41–9.00 as very high and 5.81–7.40 as high. Both instruments were administered as part of the same survey, with the higher scores indicating greater awareness or efficacy within each respective scale.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher obtained permission through the university, Schools Division Superintendent, district supervisor, and school heads. The study purpose and voluntary nature of participation were explained before respondents provided informed consent. Questionnaires were distributed through school authorities or their representatives, with approximately two weeks allowed for completion. After retrieval, the forms were checked for completeness, encoded, screened for inconsistencies, and consolidated for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Means were computed for the MAIT aspects and components and for the TSES domains and overall score. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was reported to examine differences among the six metacognitive aspects and among the three efficacy domains. Pearson's product-moment correlation assessed associations between metacognitive awareness and efficacy, and the coefficient of determination (r^2) represented their shared variance. Tests were interpreted against the study's .05 significance threshold. Values reported below were transcribed from the thesis's summary tables; reported $p = .000$ is expressed in narrative as $p < .001$.

Ethical Consideration

Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent, with the right to withdraw without penalty. The researcher reported obtaining necessary administrative permissions, limiting access to completed questionnaires, and protecting confidentiality through de-identification, secure storage, and aggregate reporting. The questionnaires presented minimal risk because they concerned professional awareness and perceptions of teaching capability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Levels of Teachers' Metacognitive Awareness

The respondents demonstrated high overall metacognitive awareness ($M = 4.19$), with metacognitive knowledge rated very high ($M = 4.22$) and regulation rated high ($M = 4.16$). Declarative knowledge yielded the highest mean (4.29), suggesting especially strong awareness of instructional strengths, limitations, and available knowledge. Procedural and conditional knowledge were each 4.18. Among regulatory aspects, planning (4.19) was marginally higher than monitoring (4.17) and evaluation (4.13), all within the high category.

Table 1. *Summary of Metacognitive Awareness Dimensions*

Dimension / aspect	Mean	Interpretation
Declarative knowledge	4.29	Very High
Procedural knowledge	4.18	High
Conditional knowledge	4.18	High
Metacognitive knowledge (mean)	4.22	Very High
Planning	4.19	High
Monitoring	4.17	High
Evaluation	4.13	High
Metacognitive regulation (mean)	4.16	High
Overall metacognitive awareness	4.19	High

The descriptive pattern indicates that knowing what one understands about teaching was relatively more highly rated than the practice of systematically evaluating instruction. This distinction corresponds with accounts of metacognition that separate cognitive knowledge from the deliberate regulation of practice (Dignath &

Veenman, 2022; Nordin & Yunus, 2020). It also highlights evaluation as a potentially useful focus for professional support, without implying that respondents lacked regulatory competence.

Levels of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

Teachers reported very high overall efficacy ($M = 7.49$). Instructional strategies obtained the highest mean (7.52), followed by classroom management (7.49) and student engagement (7.46). Although student engagement ranked lowest, its mean remained within the very high interpretation range. The results reflect strong self-reported confidence in adapting instruction and managing learning environments, while leaving room to strengthen learner motivation and participation.

Table 2. *Summary of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy*

Efficacy domain	Mean	Interpretation
Instructional strategies	7.52	Very High
Classroom management	7.49	Very High
Student engagement	7.46	Very High
Overall sense of efficacy	7.49	Very High

The comparable domain means suggest that the respondents' efficacy beliefs extended across core instructional roles rather than concentrating in a single task. This result is consistent with the multidimensional model underlying the TSES (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). However, perceived efficacy is not the same as observed instructional effectiveness; the study relied on teachers' own ratings, not direct classroom-performance measures.

Differences Among Metacognitive Aspects and Efficacy Domains

The thesis reported a one-way ANOVA with $F(5, 1398) = 1.6233$, $p = .150705$ for the six metacognitive aspects. For the three domains of efficacy, it reported $F(2, 699) = 0.11623058$, $p = .890287$. Neither test reached the specified .05 significance level. These outcomes led to non-rejection of the null hypotheses concerning differences among the respective aspects and domains.

Table 3. *Reported ANOVA Results for Study Dimensions*

Comparison	F	df (between, within)	p-value	Decision
Metacognitive awareness aspects	1.6233	5, 1398	.150705	Not significant
Teaching efficacy domains	0.11623058	2, 699	.890287	Not significant

Descriptive variations, such as declarative knowledge ranking above evaluation, therefore should not be read as statistically established differences. The analysis compared item-group ratings reported in the thesis; because all dimensions were rated by the same teacher respondents, the ANOVA findings should be interpreted within the reported analytical approach rather than treated as evidence that the dimensions are identical.

Relationship Between Metacognitive Awareness and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

The overall association between metacognitive awareness and efficacy was strong and positive ($r = .771$, reported $p = .000$, equivalent to $p < .001$). The coefficient of determination ($r^2 = .5944$) indicates 59.44% shared variance. Teachers reporting greater awareness and regulation of instructional thinking also tended to report stronger confidence in teaching. However, the statistic does not demonstrate that awareness caused increased efficacy, nor that 59.44% of efficacy was causally produced by the predictor.

The thesis also reported positive and statistically significant correlations across each of the six metacognitive aspects and three efficacy domains. Among the strongest were monitoring with instructional strategies ($r = .752$) and classroom management ($r = .749$), while evaluation generally showed lower, albeit still positive, correlations. These patterns emphasize the potential importance of monitoring student understanding and

adapting strategies while teaching. Similar empirical links have been discussed by Alkan (2020), Üstünbaş and Alagözlü (2021), and Salari and Farahian (2023).

Table 4. *Selected Correlations from the Original Relationship Matrix*

Metacognitive aspect	Teaching efficacy domain	r	r ²	p-value
Declarative knowledge	Student engagement	.725	.5256	.000
Declarative knowledge	Instructional strategies	.739	.5461	.000
Planning	Instructional strategies	.729	.5314	.000
Monitoring	Student engagement	.732	.5358	.000
Monitoring	Instructional strategies	.752	.5655	.000
Monitoring	Classroom management	.749	.5610	.000
Evaluation	Student engagement	.676	.4570	.000
Evaluation	Classroom management	.696	.4844	.000
Overall metacognitive awareness	Overall teaching efficacy	.771	.5944	.000

Across the full source matrix, the reported correlations were positive and labeled very highly significant. The selected rows preserve important representative values, including the overall coefficient, rather than replacing the original analysis with newly calculated estimates. The high association is substantively important but should also be considered alongside possible common-method effects, as both constructs were measured through the same respondents' self-reports.

Proposed Sustainability Plan: Project School MATES

The results informed Project School MATES (Metacognitive Awareness and Teaching Efficacy Sustainability), a proposed district-level professional-development initiative. The thesis organized the plan into preparation and baseline assessment, capability building, classroom application with coaching, collaborative reflection and refinement, and monitoring for continued implementation. Activities included metacognitive lesson planning, real-time classroom monitoring, post-lesson evaluation, mentoring, peer observation, and LAC-based reflection.

The plan appropriately emphasizes the comparatively lower mean for evaluation and the strong relationship of monitoring with efficacy, while sustaining declarative knowledge and instructional-strategy strengths. Because Project School MATES was proposed on the basis of the cross-sectional findings, it should be treated as a research-informed application awaiting implementation and evaluation, rather than an intervention whose effectiveness has already been demonstrated.

CONCLUSION

Public elementary teachers in the Pili West District reported high overall metacognitive awareness and very high teaching efficacy. Their strongest metacognitive aspect was declarative knowledge, while evaluation received the lowest, though still high, mean. Instructional strategies were the highest-rated efficacy domain, followed by classroom management and student engagement. The reported ANOVA tests did not detect significant differences among the respective aspects or domains.

The strong positive relationship between metacognitive awareness and teachers' sense of efficacy indicates that reflective awareness and professional confidence were closely associated in this sample. This district-specific evidence supports integrating metacognitive knowledge and regulation with professional learning for student engagement, instructional design, and classroom management. As a descriptive-correlational survey, the study does not establish causal influence or document changes in pupil outcomes; its contribution is an empirical foundation for further professional development and research.

Recommendations

District and school administrators may implement and evaluate the proposed Project School MATES within existing Learning Action Cell, mentoring, and instructional-coaching mechanisms. Professional learning should maintain teachers' strengths in declarative knowledge and instructional strategies while devoting particular attention to systematic post-lesson evaluation, feedback-informed adjustment, monitoring of learner understanding, and student-engagement practices.

Teachers may use short reflection logs, collaborative lesson reviews, formative-assessment evidence, and peer observation to connect planning, monitoring, and evaluation with their professional goals. Program implementers should specify baseline and follow-up indicators and assess feasibility, participation, and effects before recommending expansion. Future studies should use longitudinal or intervention-based designs, diverse school settings, and, where feasible, observed instruction or student outcomes to determine whether improvements in metacognition precede improvements in teaching efficacy.

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