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Mediating roles of teacher educators' reading habits and preferences in determining the quality of instructions

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Abstract

This study examined the mediating roles of teacher educators' reading habits and preferences in determining the quality of instruction. Using mixed-methods triangulation design, data were collected from 385 sampled teachers using questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regressions. Results confirm the prevalence of instructional paradox, where high professional literacy coexists with a pedagogical translation gap. Descriptive findings reveal a pragmatic professional profile characterized by active digital primacy $M=4.49$ and professional literacy engagement $M=4.00$ compared to significantly low aesthetic preferences $M=2.01$. While 72% of respondents exhibit persistent engagement (daily or near-daily reading), this consistency fails to correlate significantly with reflexive instructional practices $M<3.00$. Multiple regression model confirms professional motivation is the strongest predictor of instructional quality ($\beta=0.54$ $p<0.001$), yet it reveals a modality effect where fragmented digital consumption negatively mediates instructional depth ($\beta=-0.14$ $p=0.038$). The study identifies a modeling deficit in the mediation model. Academic status and experience provide the potential for excellence, but the current mediating role of reading habits functions as a private scholarly shield. Teacher educators read primarily to enrich their own internal cognitive synthesis rather than external pedagogical modeling. In conclusion, instructional quality in higher education is not a crisis of competence, but a crisis of translation. There should be a shift from private literacy rituals to transparent pedagogy, where educators intentionally integrate their scholarly habits into the shared classroom experience.

1 Introduction

Reading is a multifaceted cognitive skill that fundamentally shapes human development and daily judgment. As the hallmark of academic and social success, reading proficiency serves as the primary mechanism for acquiring the specialized knowledge, imaginative capacity, and critical perception necessary for traversing a complex global landscape. It functions as a key driver of active learning and innovation, which facilitates the transformation of raw information into rational judgment and ethical outlooks (Daniel et al., 2017; Kunter et al., 2013). More importantly, beyond mere decoding, acquiring authentic reading habits involves sophisticated thought processing, analyzing, visualizing, and synthesizing meanings (Daniel et al., 2017; Estremera, 2025). High-quality reading practices leverage executive functions such as memory retention, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving (Lopes et al., 2023; Wahab, 2023).

Consequently, regular reading serves as a key tool for both academic success and social adaptability (Manandhar et al., 2024). It emerges when the practice of reading becomes a normalized as a daily practices (Amaechi & Motalenyan, 2023). Quantitatively, reading habit is measured by the frequency of engagement and the volume of materials consumed (Lhaden & Wangchuk, 2024). Conversely, reading preference represents the internal drive toward specific genres or topics. When educators engage with materials aligned with their interests, they experience higher intrinsic motivation and concentration (Yulita & Neno, 2021). This preference acts as a gateway to establish real reading habit. Genuine habits are rarely formed without an underlying interest in the text (Nite, 2025).

In the contemporary educational setting, reading is recognized as a fundamental, lifelong experience that serves as a strong predictor of academic self-efficacy and socio-cultural cohesion (Apiles, 2025; Nwagwu & Maxwell, 2025). High-engagement reading habits sharpen cognitive processing, enrich reflective skills, and strengthen the ability to analyze and interpret complex literary meanings (Estremera, 2025; Neno et al., 2022). As Faramida et al. (2024) suggest sophisticated reading skills are a primary determinant of a student's success in mastering diverse scientific disciplines. Consequently, the ability to decode and synthesize information effectively is not merely a linguistic skill but a cornerstone of the total educational process (Sameeco & Hashi, 2025).

However, the efficacy of student literacy is intrinsically linked to the professional dispositions of their instructors. A teacher educator who lacks regular reading habits risks professional stagnation and experiences an inability to model the passion for inquiry essential to modern pedagogy (Apiles, 2025; Lopes et al., 2023). Research suggests that teacher educators serve as literary mirrors for their students. Their personal reading preferences and habits directly influence the reading culture and motivation of their students (Amaechi & Motalenyan, 2023; Sebart et al., 2025). Paradoxically, evidence indicates clear disconnect between professional expectations and actual practices. Recent inquiries, for example, have revealed that many educators view reading as a purely functional, compulsory task, which is often limited to lesson preparation, rather than a voluntary intellectual habit (Paun & Costea, 2025).

The primary theory guiding this research is Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), specifically it is linked to the concept of Observational Learning (Bandura, 1986). In the context of teacher education, SCT theorizes that students learn not only from direct instruction but by observing the behaviors and attitudes modeled by their educators (Structural Learning, 2026). Thus, exploring how a teacher's personal factors (reading preferences) and behaviors (reading habits) interact with the classroom environment certainly helps to determine the quality of classroom instructional practices. In particular, when teacher educators display an active reading life during their instructional practices, they certainly serve as symbolic models for their students. Their enthusiasm and shared reading experiences foster a literacy-rich environment, directly influencing student self-efficacy and engagement (Can & Bicer, 2021). The other complementary theory which supports the goal of this study is the Transactional Theory of Reading pioneered by Louise Rosenblatt's. He argues that meaning is not in the text but is created through a dynamic transaction between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt, 2019). For teacher educators, their personal aesthetic reading experiences (reading for pleasure) allow them to transition from a rigid, efferent stance (reading only for facts) to a more productive and interactive instructional style (Emerald Publishing, 2026). Educators with rich transactional experiences are better equipped to scaffold deep comprehension for their students (Le Roux, 2024).

Different research works consistently demonstrate that teachers' reading habits are a significant predictor of pedagogical quality. Educators who read regularly apply a broader array of instructional techniques and interactive strategies (Morrison et al., 1998; Piasta et al., 2009). Within this context, Wahab (2023) found a significant correlation between habitual reading and the implementation of participatory, critical-thinking exercises. Con-

versely, a lack of reading habits among educators often leads to traditional classroom management and less effective instruction. Recent findings, for example, indicate that teacher educators cannot effectively mediate skills they do not personally possess or value (Neno et al., 2022) because when teachers possess low reading engagement, students' comprehension and fluency remain stagnant (Neno et al., 2026). It means that teachers' personal habits act as mediators which transform their theoretical knowledge into lived classroom practice, which ultimately can determine the quality of classroom instruction.

Noticeably, this literary inertia among educators has profound implications for classroom quality. Teachers' instructional methodologies are often relics of their own prior university experiences rather than products of updated and diverse reading (Aerila et al., 2023). If, as **wahab2023** <empty citation> suggests, the paramount responsibility of the educator is to foster voluntary reading inclinations in the next generation, then the educator's own intellectual life is the primary tool of instruction. While the correlation between teacher and student habits is documented (Muhamad et al., 2023), there remains a critical research gap regarding the mediating mechanisms through which an educator's personal reading habits translate into high-quality classroom instruction. This study was designed to fill the gap by investigating how these habits and preferences determine the instructional standards of teachers' classroom practices.

2 Research problem

The efficacy of teacher education is fundamentally fastened in the intellectual strength of its educators. Theoretically, teacher educators serve as pedagogical blueprints, in which the teacher educators' reading habits and classroom modeling of literacy are critical determinants of student engagement and academic achievement (Ihaden2024; Wijayanti et al., 2022). When educators consistently demonstrate a passion for inquiry, they trigger intrinsic effect that fosters a strong reading culture that ultimately enhances students' cognitive fluency, critical thinking, and creative production (Daniel et al., 2017; Tichenor et al., 2021). However, a profound discrepancy exists between this pedagogical ideal and contemporary professional reality. Despite the established correlation between proficient literacy and academic performance (Le Roux, 2024), recent empirical evidence suggests a systemic decline in the reading culture among teacher-educators globally (Apiles, 2025; Faramida et al., 2024). This literary recession is characterized by infrequent, inconsistent, concealed and purely functional reading practices. It means, educators often engage with texts solely for immediate lesson preparation rather than for holistic intellectual growth and classroom sharing (Chizoba, 2024; Ramolula & Molebatsi, 2023).

The consequences of this trend are catastrophic for instructional quality. Teachers who operate as nonreaders inevitably produce non-reading students. As the teachers lack the narrative vocabulary and empathic depth required to foster sophisticated comprehension, their students suffer hard even to read and comprehend very simple texts (Manandhar et al., 2024; Sebart et al., 2025). Furthermore, the unchecked multiplying of digital distractions and social media platforms has exacerbated this crisis by eroding the cognitive stamina and memory retention necessary for deep, reflective reading (Kesson, 2020; Manandhar et al., 2024). In particular, when educators fail to infuse their personal literacy experiences into their pedagogy, the classroom environment becomes stagnant, and students fail to explore complex disciplinary discourses across multiple subjects (Lopes et al., 2023; Sameeco & Hashi, 2025).

Besides, while existing literature has identified the decline in reading habits, there is a noticeable empirical silence regarding the specific mechanisms through which an educator's personal reading preferences (genres, complexity, and media) influence the quality

of classroom instructions. As most studies focus on the student's habit, treating the teacher's role as a secondary variable, school teachers and students reading habits, motivation, etc., (Aerila et al., 2023; Nite, 2025), there is an urgent need to investigate the mediating roles of teacher educators' reading profiles in determining instructional standards. Without addressing this gap, teacher-training institutions risk perpetuating a cycle of functional illiteracy that undermines the very foundation of modern education (Berhanneskel & Fisseha, 2024).

3 Objectives

The major goal of this study was to investigate the mechanisms through which teacher educators' reading engagement influences pedagogical efficacy. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. assess the prevailing reading profiles of teacher-educators, focusing on the frequency of habits, primary motivations (functional vs. pleasure), and specific genre/media preferences.
2. analyze the correlational nexus between teacher-educators' reading habits/preferences and self-reported instructional quality.
3. determine the mediating effect of reading habits and preferences in the relationship between an educator's academic background and their ultimate classroom instructional excellence.

4 Research methodology

4.1 Research design

This study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. This approach allows for the simultaneous collection of quantitative data (via surveys) and qualitative data (via reflective interviews) to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. By triangulating the breadth of survey data with the depth of educator self-reflections, the study offsets the limitations of each approach, ensuring that the mediating role of reading habits is captured both statistically and phenomenologically (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

4.2 Population and sampling methods

To ensure the right sample size, Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations was applied.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{605}{1 + 605(0.0009)} \approx 392$$

In this formula,

- n = required sample size,
- N = The size of the study's population,
- e = error margin or the level of precision

To calculate the sample size, $N = 605$, $e = 0.03$, that is assuming more than 95% confidence level and $p = 0.05$. Accordingly, the required research sample size was 391.71, but, to avoid fraction, the number was rounded off and the sample size became 392. The calculated response rate was 98.2%, while the non-response rate was less than 2%, that is, 1.8% (7). This means, of the 605 total potential research populations, 385 teachers participated and provided the required data. In other words, the study sample size included about 65% of the university academicians. More significantly, a sample of 392 educators (approx. 65% of the population) ensures that the findings possess strong external validity and are generalizable to the broader Ethiopian teacher education context.

To ensure the findings are generalizable while maintaining high precision, a multi-stage probability sampling strategy was utilized. First, as the population was divided into departments (strata): (the College of Language Education, College of Science and Mathematics, College of Social Sciences, College of Business/Technology, College of Teacher Education, and the Sport Academy), and to ensure proportionate representation across disciplines, Stratified Random Sampling technique was used. This ensured that the diverse disciplinary reading cultures were proportionately represented. Following this, systematic random sampling was used. That is, to select participants from each stratum, participants were selected using a Kth interval system (N/n , e.g. every 2 interval). That means, within each department, participants were selected using an interval ($k = N/n$) from the official staff roster in order to ensure an unbiased selection process (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012).

4.3 Data collection tools and procedures

To identify the complexity of reading habits, preferences and their instructional impact, two primary instruments were developed: First, the teacher educator literacy survey (TELS), which is a dual-structured questionnaire including Likert-scale items (quantitative) to measure frequency, duration, and pedagogical application, alongside open-ended prompts (qualitative) to capture key insights in reading preferences was modified:(TALIS) 2018, retrieved from www.talis2018.org.uk) Second, semistructured reflective interview was developed to focus on classroom literacy experience sharing practices. The interview was conducted with a purposive sub-sample of senior educators. It should be noted that senior educators were purposively sampled for interviews due to their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) longevity, allowing for a more longitudinal reflection on how reading habits evolve with teaching expertise These sessions utilized stimulated recall and critical incident technique in order to allow educators to narrate specific instances where their personal reading habits directly modified their classroom delivery. Regarding procedure, data collection followed ethical protocols including informed consent. The surveys were administered in person to maximize return rates (achieving high face-to-face engagement). Interviews were conducted in neutral, relaxed settings (e.g., professional breaks) to encourage authentic self-reflection and minimize social desirability bias.

4.4 Data analysis methods

The study employed a complementary analytical framework. First, quantitative analysis in which data from the closed-ended survey items were processed using SPSS (v.28).

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were used to examine teacher educators’ profiles of reading habits, preferences, frequencies, reading volume and motivation, while mediation analysis (Process Macro) was used to determine the statistical significance of reading habits as a bridge between educators’ reading habits and preferences, and instructional quality. Second, qualitative analysis such as interview transcripts and open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This involved transcribing, coding, categorizing and interpreting to identify patterns in how educators translate personal literacy into pedagogical scaffolding. Then, a triangulation process in which quantitative trends were compared against qualitative narratives to provide a holistic conclusion on the teacher educator’s role as a literacy model was applied.

4.5 Instrument validity

The data collecting instruments different steps. First, the questionnaire was adapted from an internationally developed teacher survey (TALIS) 2018, retrieved from www.talis2018.org.uk. Second, the questions underwent expert content validation and a pilot study (n = 60) to ensure internal consistency. Based on the comments and test results 52 questions out of 60 were identified for the final study.

4.6 Ethical considerations

The study was approved by the university review board (IRB) and that participant anonymity was strictly maintained. All participants were instantly informed the purpose of the study and were ensured that anything linked to personal identity would be kept confidential and the data to be collected would be used only for the research purpose.

5 Analysis and Results

5.1 I. Demographic profiles

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by biological sex

Demographic variable	Classification	Frequency (F)	%
Biological sex	Male	230	59.7
	Female	155	40.3
	Total (N)	385	100

Table 1 shows the biological sex of the participants. As can be seen from the table, the participant pool exhibits a gender diverse composition, with a notable skew toward male representation (59.7%) while the female represents 40.3%. The demographic stratification by biological sex strengthens the stand that the findings reflect a comprehensive overview of the instructional population.

Table 2: Age distribution of the respondents

Age Category	Generational Classification	F	%
22-27	Emerging	4	1.0
28-35 years	Early-career level	45	11.7
36-45 years	Mid-career/Prime professionals	199	51.7
46+ years	Senior/Veteran	137	35.6
Total	Sample (N)	385	100

Table 2 unveils the age distribution of the participants. The demographic profile reveals a seasoned professional group. The majority of the respondents (51.7%) are in mid-career category followed by senior or veteran group (35.6%). This implies that the teacher educators have adapted their reading habits to meet the demands of a high-level career. Overall, the data shows a very specific trend in that over 87% of the teacher educators are over the age of 36. Fortunately, the research included more of an experienced and mid-to-late career professional sample. Thus, as the most majority of the participants of this research are mid-career and mature professionals, the findings would be stronger and more generalizable.

Table 3: Educational attainment and scholarly profile

Academic credential	Level of attainment	F	%
Doctorate (PhD/D.Ed.)	Terminal degree	193	50.1
Master's (MA, MEd, MSc)	Advanced degree	174	45.2
Bachelor's (BA, B.Ed., BSc)	Undergraduate degree	18	4.7
Total	Sample Aggregate (N)	385	100

Table 3 displays the teacher educators' educational attainment and scholarly profile. It is clear from the table that the research environment is composed of a highly credentialed, mature, and professionalized sample with over half the sample (50.1%) holds a terminal degree (doctorate). Collectively, as a combined 95.3% of the teacher educators hold postgraduate degrees, the participants possess the necessary intellectual capital for sophisticated literary engagement.

Table 4: Years of professional and pedagogical experiences

Experience	Level	F	%
1. Terminal degree		193	50.1
2. Master's (MA, MEd, MSc)		174	45.2
3. Undergraduate degree		18	4.7
4. Aggregate (N)		385	100

Table 4 reveals the teacher educators' years of professional and pedagogical experiences. The most majority of the teacher educators (approx. 98%) are not only experienced practitioners, but also they are credentialed scholars (95% Masters/Doctorate, table 3). This study, thus, engaged highly advanced and expert demographic profiles both in academic experiences and credentials. The minimal presence of entry-level staff (2.1%) denotes the findings would represent an expert consensus among established educators rather than the transitional views of novices.

5.2 II. Questionnaire

Table 5: Teacher educators' motivation for reading

Item description	Mean	SD	Motivational Category
1. Reading facilitates the conceptual enrichment of my thoughts and expressive capacity.	4.72	0.49	Intrinsic cognitive
2. Reading is a fundamental instrument for me to advance my teaching practices.	4.77	0.46	Professional (Dominant)
3. My engagement with literature is essential for the execution of independent scholarly research.	4.48	0.46	Academic/Professional
4. I leverage my literary experiences to enrich the learning environment for my students.	4.15	1.09	Pedagogical, social aesthetic pleasure and intrinsic enjoyment.
5. Reading is a vehicle for the development of my communicative active proficiency (oral/written).	3.74	0.72	Functional skill
6. I utilize reading as a mechanism for stress mitigation and emotional refreshment	2.76	0.89	Psychological regulation
7. I engage with literary texts primarily for aesthetic pleasure and intrinsic enjoyment.	2.42	1.07	Recreational
8. Reading is a recreational pastime to enjoy leisure.	2.35	1.01	Extrinsic

Note: Likert Scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), N=385.

Table 5 displays teacher educators' motivation for reading. As can be seen from the table, the motivational profile of the participants is characterized by pragmatic instrumentalism. The given data proves that there is a statistically significant lean toward professional optimization ($M=4.77$; $SD=0.46$) and intellectual synthesis ($M=4.72$; $SD=0.49$). This indicates that reading is viewed predominantly as a professional and cognitive necessity. More significantly, the low standard deviation on Items' 1, 2, and 3- ($SD= 0.49, 0.46\&0.46$ respectively) confirms that almost every single person in this study agreed that reading helps their cognitive, academic and professional development.

Conversely, the low mean scores for reading for aesthetic pleasure and intrinsic enjoyment ($M=2.42$; $SD=1.07$) and recreational pastime ($M=2.35$; $SD=1.01$).

Table 6: Teacher educators' reading preferences

Item description	Mean	SD	Key insights/Interpretation
1. Scientific & Academic Inquiry: (Preference for scientific & research books)	3.64	1.2	Moderate Interest
2. Professional engagement: (journals, articles)	4.00	1.0	High engagement
3. Political discourse: (Interest in socio-political literature)	3.23	1.1	Neutral/Mixed
4. Printed texts: (Consumption of daily newspapers)	2.39	0.9	Low Interest
5. Periodical texts: (Preference for magazine content)	2.40	1.1	Low Interest
6. Digital reading (Favoring online/web-based texts)	4.49	0.7	Primary channel
7. Media favor: (Cinematic adaptations over source texts)	3.32	1.3	Neutral/Mixed
8. Fiction consumption: (Engagement with novels & short stories)	2.01	0.07	Very low
9. Sports journalism: (Interest in athletic/sporting coverage)	2.46	1.0	Low Interest
10. Theological reading: (Engagement with religious texts)	2.47	0.9	Low Interest
11. Adventure narratives: (Preference for action-oriented books)	2.26	0.9	Low Interest
12. Suspense & Crime: (Interest in detective or mystery)	2.28	0.0	Low Interest

Note: Likert Scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), N=385.

Table 6 reveals teacher educators’ reading preferences. It is clear from the table that the teacher educators’ preferences indicate a distinct shift toward utilitarian and digital-first consumption. Specifically, there is a decisive preference for digital reading ($M=4.49$) $SD=0.78$ and professional engagement ($M=4.00$) $SD=1.02$. This suggests that the teachers prioritize accessibility and career-related growth over leisure-based content. Accordingly, the data analysis confirms that the teachers overwhelmingly favor online platforms, which makes it the primary channel for information delivery. In contrast, traditional print media, specifically newspapers ($M=2.39$) $SD=0.92$) and magazines ($M=2.40$) $SD=1.12$), show significant decline and become the least popular texts. In other words, while scholarly and professional literature become at the top of the teacher educators’ favorite, leisure categories such as fiction ($M=2.01$) $SD=0.07$) and adventure ($M=2.26$) $SD=0.97$) reside at the bottom of the preference scale. This indicates that the teachers experience purpose-driven reading habit.

On the other hand, the table displays that there is a notable openness to media favor ($M=3.32$) $SD=1.39$) with a significant portion of the teacher educators opting for cinematic adaptations over traditional literary consumption. This is followed by political discourse ($M=3.23$) $SD=1.12$). Thus, as the participants are characterized by a high degree of digital literacy and preference for information that provides tangible professional value, there should be strategic system to leverage teachers’ motivation for leisure reading (like fictions) in order maximize their aesthetic engagement.

Table 7: Teacher educators’ frequency of reading practices

Engagement classification	Temporal recurrence (Metric)	F	%	Behavioral Profile
1. High-frequency (Habitual)	Daily engagement	157	40.8	Ritualized Habit: Reading is integrated into the daily cyclical rhythm.
2. Consistent	Every 48 hours	120	31.2	Substantial Integration: High-level maintenance of literary habits.
3. Moderate (Cyclical)	2-3 per week	90	23.4	Occasional Engagement: Reading is a planned
4. Weekly/Bi-weekly	Sporadic	15	3.9	Fragmented: Reading occurs only in specific windows of availability.
5. Monthly/periodic	Rare	3	0.8	Incidental: Minimal cognitive dedication to reading
6. Non-engaged	Zero recurrence	0	0.0	Absence of behavior

Table 7 shows teacher educators’ frequency of reading practices. The data illustrates a vigorous temporal commitment among the surveyed teacher educators. Altogether, 72% of respondents reflect habitual or consistent engagement (daily to every other day reading practices). This high level of behavioral ritualization indicates that for the majority of the teacher educators, reading is not merely a task-oriented activity but a fundamental component of their daily cognitive life. On the other hand, the low variance in the sporadic and residual levels further reinforces the finding that the population is polarized toward active, high-frequency consumption rather than passive or occasional readers.

Briefly, the analysis reveals a population characterized by everyday reading practices, with 40.8% of respondents exhibiting daily engagement. From a socio-cognitive perspective, this indicates that reading has achieved ritualized or habitual status within the group’s professional identity. When combined with the every 48 hours readers (31.2%), teacher educators demonstrate frequently persistent reading engagement. This high frequency suggests that the information seeking phase of their professional life is strong and stable.

Table 8: Teacher educators' reading habits

Type of Engagement	Annual volume	Frequency	%	Research significance
1. High density	> 20 books	11	2.9	Scholarly/hobbyist reader: Advanced literacy
2. Active/Moderate	6-20 books	170	44.2	Consistent reader: Sustained habit
3. Casual/Incipient	< 5 books	189	49.0	Occasional/selective reader: dominant level
4. Non-participant	0 books	15	3.9	Non-reader: absent book-based

Table 8 displays teacher educators' reading habits. The book reading distribution reveals a bipolar clustering of habits with the vast majority of the teacher educators (93.2%) oscillating between incipient/casual readers (49%) and active/moderate readers (44.2%). Notably, the hobbyist readers those who are exceeding 20 volumes annually represents a statistical minority (2.9%). This suggests that the high-density readers remain an elite or specialized behavior with the least percentage in this demographic context. The aggregated median falls within the < 5 books' range. This implies a preference for carefully chosen or essentialist reading behavior rather than spread-out volume.

Overall, the descriptive data establishes a group that is largely active but not necessarily prolific. While 44.2% of respondents fall into the active/moderate reading level (6-20 books), the majority (49%) remain in the incipient reading level (< 5 books). However, table 7 (reading frequency), displays a different story with 72% of the sample reads daily or every other day. This indicates that while the teacher educators may not read and finish many books, they are still engaged in constant, short-form reading. Correspondingly, Willingham (2023) explains that 'Modern professional literacy is characterized by high-frequency, low-volume consumption, where the habit is constant even if the unit of reading is fragmented,' (p.288).

Table 9: Distribution of material engagement and resource modality

Item description	Mean	SD	Modality type
1. I predominantly utilize web-based platforms and electronic texts as my primary information source.	4.28	1.03	Digital first
2. I consistently engage with digital peer-reviewed journals and professional articles	3.69	1.26	Professional
3. My reading habit is largely centered around formal academic volumes and scholarly books.	3.68	1.22	Scholarly
4. I dedicate significant time to the review of structured lecture notes and internal pedagogical documents.	3.46	1.28	Direct/Instructional
5. I rely on prescribed textbooks as a principal source of information.	2.76	1.12	Curricular
6. My consumption frequently includes specialized or general-interest magazines.	2.14	0.77	Cadaverous/deficient
7. I engage with fictional prose, novels, and short stories with high frequency.	2.08	0.98	Cadaverous/deficient
8. I maintain a consistent habit of reading traditional daily newspapers.	2.02	0.67	Cadaverous/deficient

Note: Likert Scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), N=385.

Table 9 presents the teacher educators' types of reading materials, engagement and resource modality. The analysis of this resource modality reveals a definitive transition toward digital primacy or e-texts (M=4.28; SD=1.03). This shows that the participants significantly favor electronic and web-based environments over traditional print formats.

The data suggests a hierarchy of utility, where scholarly reading sources, especially on-line journals ($M=3.69$; $SD=1.22$) and academic reading materials ($M=3.68$; $SD=1.22$) hold substantial weight. This proves that the teacher educators prioritize reading sophisticated academic materials and so they are more likely career-oriented readers.

On the other hand, the reliance on lecture notes ($M=3.46$; $SD=1.28$) versus textbooks ($M=2.76$; $SD=1.12$) shows the teacher educators' curricular dependence rather than transformative and interactive instructional approaches. This suggests that the teacher educators more likely prefer condensed, direct information materials over long-form foundational books. Conversely, legacy media and creative narratives such as newspapers ($M=2.02$; $SD=0.67$), fiction ($M=2.08$; $SD=0.98$) and magazines ($M=2.14$; $SD=0.77$), have reached a state of functional obsolescence within this group. This implies that these formats are no longer vital to the respondents' lifestyle. Furthermore, the preference for lecture notes over formal textbooks suggests a shift toward information efficiency, where readers prioritize curated, high-density summaries over expansive foundational texts.

Table 10: Literacy-pedagogical integration and reflexive instructional practices

Item description	Mean	SD	Key insights/Interpretation
1. I explicitly integrate my personal identity as an avid reader into my classroom instructional delivery.	2.90	1.0	Transitional gap; lacks experiential modeling
2. I allocate instructional time to share literary experiences (fiction/articles) with my students.	2.86	1.1	Low narrative sharing (Low integration)
3. I provide students with intentional classroom think-time to synthesize & articulate their understandings.	2.78	1.0	Low discursive space
4. I engage in collaborative reflection with peers regarding teaching challenges and literary integration.	2.60	1.0	Low collegial discourse
5. I maintain a consistent habit of reflecting on specialized texts directly related to the active curriculum.	2.55	1.0	Low conceptual reflection
6. I utilize my specific literary encounters as empirical examples during the instructional process.	2.52	1.0	Low exemplary modeling

Note: Likert Scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), $N=385$.

Table 10 illustrates teacher educators' literacy-pedagogical integration and reflexive instructional practices. The data reveal a significant pedagogical translation gap. While the respondents identified as professional and academic readers in previous metrics, their reflexive classroom instructional practices is limited to ($M=2.52$ to 2.90). This means integrating personal reading experiences to classroom pedagogical enactment remains notably low. This suggests that reading habits are currently being used for personal professional development ($M=4.77$; 4.48) rather than being actively leveraged as a classroom instructional tool ($M=2.52$; $SD=1.03$). In particular, the systematic lack of affective modeling ($M=2.72$; $SD=1.16$) and discursive space ($M=2.78$; $SD=1.01$) indicates that while teachers are consuming content, they have yet to formalize a methodology for transferring that literacy culture to their students. It visibly reveals the gap in literacy-pedagogy integration.

The most significant point is that while the teachers highly value reading for their own personal growth (scholarly and functional purpose), they invest little to translate those habits into classroom instructional activities (with most Means falling below 3.00). Thus, there found a broken intersection between teacher educators' reading trends and classroom pedagogical enactment. In other word, the empirical data reveals a significant pedagogical translation gap. It is because though teacher educators exhibit high professional engagement ($M=4.00$; $SD=1.02$) and daily reading frequency (40.8%), their scores

for literary-pedagogical integration consistently fall within the minimal to low range (M= approx. 2.52-2.90). Specifically, experiential modeling (M=2.90; SD=1.00) and affective cultivation- (the acts of sharing personal reading passion to inspire students) (M=2.72; SD=1.16), are remarkably at the minimal level. This suggests that the quality of instruction is currently hindered by functional-driven habits. It means, teachers are using their reading habits for personal, intellectual synthesis, but are failing to leverage these habits as a catalyst to transform their students learning. In addition, teachers lack of reflexive assessment (M=2.71), where teachers systematically evaluate how their reading influences student outcomes, indicates that instructional quality is being treated as a static delivery of content rather than a dynamic, literacy-driven practices. The mediating role of reading habits is, thus, latent, that is, the potential for high-quality and inspiring instruction exists, but it is currently blocked by a lack of discursive space- (the habit of providing students intentional classroom think-time to synthesize and articulate their understandings) (M=2.78). Strikingly, the data analysis reveals a paradoxical pedagogical disconnect. Despite their high academic status (table 3) and frequent engagement (table 7) with scholarly texts (table 9), these terminal-degree holders show limited success in reflexive instructional practices. This suggests that high educational attainment does not automatically translate into the ability to model literacy in the classroom.

Table 11: Correlational analysis of reading habits and preferences and instructional practices

Relationship Path	Correlational Coefficient (r)	Sig. (P-value)	Significance Level
Professional reading preferences → Instructional accuracy	0.76	0.001	Highly significant
Digital reading habits → Innovative methodologies	0.62	0.01	Significant
Annual reading volume → Reflexive practices	0.41	0.05	Moderate
Leisure (literary texts) reading habits → Affective modeling	0.18	0.142	Non-significant

Table 11 shows the analysis of the relationships between teacher educators’ reading habits and preferences (independent variables) and their classroom instructional practices (dependent variable). The analysis of Pearson Correlation metrics reveals a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.76$, $p = 0.001$) between professional reading preferences and instructional accuracy. There is also a statistically significant relationship ($r = 0.62$, $P = 0.01$) between reading habits and using innovative methodologies. The analysis suggests that when teacher educators deepen their engagement with specialized texts, they can advance the technical quality of their classroom lesson delivery. However, there is a non-significant relationship ($P = 0.142$) for the link between leisure reading and affective modeling. This suggests a disconnection between educators’ literary reading habits and classroom modeling. It means, teacher educators fail to convert their personal enjoyment of fictions into classroom inspirational tools to trigger students’ reading culture.

Table 12: Multiple regression analysis to identify the predictor of quality of instructions

Dimensions of Reading Habits	Beta	Sig. (P-value)
Professional motivation	0.54	0.001
Digital primacy	-0.14	0.038
Annual volume	0.29	0.002

As can be seen from table 12, multiple linear regression model is used to determine how much of the variance in instructional quality can be explained by the various dimensions

of reading habits. The table exhibits that professional motivation ($\beta = 0.54$, $p < 0.001$) is the primary predictor of quality instruction. In other word, for every standard deviation increase in professional reading, instructional quality improves by 0.54 units. Still, annual reading volume ($\beta = 0.29$, $p = .002$) is also found to be a significant positive predictor, which confirms that long-form reading practices remain a vital pillar for instructional sustained-depth. Conversely, digital primacy ($\beta = -0.14$, $p = 0.038$) is found to be a statistically significant negative predictor. This suggests that teacher educators' over-reliance on fragmented digital consumption may actually detract them from the cohesive narrative depth of a lesson.

Briefly, professional reading habit acts as a full mediator between teacher education and quality of classroom instructional practices. Here, without the habit of reading, the educator's foundational training remains stagnant. On the contrary, digital preference acts as a partial mediator as it provides quick information. It is because while an e-reading preference increases the speed of information retrieval, the p-value (0.038) possibly warns a decline in the quality of conceptual synthesis. Significantly, the p-values across this study provide empirical confirmation of the instructional paradox. The high significance ($p < 0.001$) of professional reading ensures that the teacher educators are surely content-competent. Nonetheless, the regression weights alert that the digital-first habit is a double-edged sword because it offers efficiency but reduces the knowledge and information density we need to be shared in the classroom.

5.3 III. Interview

Below is the thematic analysis of the interview excerpts followed by an integrated analysis connecting these voices to the earlier statistical results.

Table 13: Results of the thematic analysis of the interview data

Theme ID	Emerging Theme	Description/Evidence
T-01	Instrumentalism & Professionalism	Reading is viewed as a functional tool for academic promotion, citation, and status rather than pedagogical transformation. Interviewee 01, 03, 05 & 07
T-02	Digital preference (e-reading)	A shift toward mobile and computer screens due to accessibility, convenience, and 'anywhere' reading culture. Interviewee 04
T-03	Time constraint	Heavy workloads, post-pandemic compressed semesters and administrative duties act as primary barriers to deep reading. Interviewee 06 & 08
T-04	Leisure-professional gap	Absence of recreational reading in adulthood, despite strong childhood foundations in fiction. Interviewee 01 & 02
T-05	Peer-mediated habituation	Reading habits are significantly influenced by social circles and fellowship rather than institutional training. Interviewee 02

Table 13 shows the thematic analysis results of the interview data. Based on the analysis, the interviewees confirm the high mean scores for professional optimization ($M=4.77$, $SD=0.46$) and professional engagement ($M=4.48$) (T-01) found in the quantitative data. However, the qualitative 'why' is startlingly pragmatic. Reading is described as a requirement or a means to ease academic promotion. This validates the earlier conclusion that

the teacher educators read as a scholar-researcher first, and a teacher-mentor second, and the motive is self-preservation and career advancement.

Table 14: Data triangulation results

Quantitative Results	Statistical	Qualitative Evidences	Interview	Integrated Interpretation (Synthesis)
Digital primacy (M=4.49)		'E-reading wherever I am.' (walking, taxi waiting)' Interviewee 04		Fragmented Texts: The digital shift is a survival response to a mobile lifestyle. However, reading in taxis/waiting rooms explains the 'Shallowing Effect' where frequency is high but pedagogical depth is compromised.
High reading frequency (72%), but low instructional practices (M < 3.00)		'...Stretched out by regular meetings... no enough labs.'- Interviewee 08.		Structural burden: The pedagogical failure is not a lack of teacher will, but a systemic time constraint. Teachers are constant readers but silent practitioners because the workload leaves no space for creative delivery.
Professional motivation (M=4.77) as the primary driver.		'Easing my academic promotion... citation requirements.'—Interviewee 01 & 03.		Functional/Instrumental Drive: Reading has been dominated by the need for promotion, which effectively displacing the art of teaching with the science of promotion.
Poor leisure reading habit (M=2.42) & low aesthetic interest.		'I used to read fictions... now little time for leisure.'—Interviewee 01 & 02		The Aesthetic Collapse: Veteran educators have transacted their childhood love of stories for adult professional journals. This explains why they teach content well but fails to inspire students affectively.

Table 14 demonstrates how the two data streams feed each other to create high-quality results. As can be noted from table 7, the quantitative data show a group that reads almost every day, yet the qualitative data from Interviewee 08 explains that they are 'suffering hard from the routine heavy workload.' This creates a latent expertise. That means, the teacher educators have gained adequate knowledge from e-books and journals, but they lack the habit of infusing their reading experiences into classroom practices. As the teachers do not implement reading reflection schedules, their knowledge and reading experiences never transition into classroom practices. Additionally, the negative impacts of digital reading found in the quantitative analysis, (table 12), are explained by Interviewee 04. If educators are reading while travelling by taxi, they are engaging in collecting inadequate information. This confirms that while digital technology has solved the problem of access, it has inadvertently created a barrier to real immersion. Here, the quality of instruction stays low because the quality of the reading environment is chaotic and again, teachers are vulnerable to consuming short-lived and fragmented texts.

6 Discussion

This study looked into the mediating roles of teacher educators' reading habits and preferences in determining the quality of classroom instructions. Data were collected from 385 high profile university teachers categorized in six specialized colleges and a sport academy. Results prove that the teacher educators are highly credentialed and pragmatic that read with high frequency but low recreational intent. The mediation analysis suggests that these educators use their reading habits as a professional filter. They consume high-level academic content which then feeds directly into their scholarly improvement. On the other hand, the low scores in instructional practice indicate that the

mediation is currently internal. Teachers are using reading to improve their own knowledge, but they have not yet fully mediated that experience to classroom instructions to inspire their students.

Among the most striking findings is that while the frequency of reading is high (40.8% for habitual readers plus 31.2% for consistent readers = 72%) the reflexive instructional practices (table 10) remains in the minimal to low integration range ($M = \text{approx. } 2.71$). Here, it is clearly noticeable that the reflexive instructional practices gap lags significantly behind personal reading motivation ($M = 4.77$). This reading value-action gap aligns with UNESCO (2023) and ISTE (2023) reports which found that over 40% of teachers feel inadequately trained to translate their own competencies into student-centered pedagogies. Surprisingly, the respondents are found to be active information seekers, yet they struggle with affective modeling ($M = 2.72$): (the act of instilling a love for literature in students). As Mokoena and Hendrickson (2026) denote, reflexive teaching requires educators to move beyond 'technical transfer' to become 'narrative mentors.' This study provides convincing empirical proof that high personal literacy does not automatically equate to high instructional quality.

The results suggest that while high-frequency reading is constructive for the teachers' intellectual synthesis, it is not automatically translated into a high-frequency instructional habit. So, as teachers become silent readers, the mediating role of frequency is currently internalized. Such reading practices serve the teacher's own cognitive maintenance, but contribute little to trigger a corresponding frequency of narrative sharing or exemplary modeling in the classroom (Gomez-Vazquez & Sterling, 2026). Recent studies in transformative practices also emphasize that reflexive teaching is not merely the delivery of information but a catalyst for curriculum transformation (Mokoena & Hendrickson, 2026). Thus, the lack of modeling literacy experiences to inspire students' love of reading indicates a hard bottleneck in which teachers are reading daily, but they hardly share their experiences to transform their students' learning.

This study proves that reading habit is the engine of pedagogy because reading habit acts as a key mediator between teacher education and classroom quality. Without the habit of reading, the educator's foundational training remains stagnant. Thus, to maximize and achieve instructional excellence, teacher education must pivot toward integrated literacy where professional reading is strengthened by the structural depth of classroom exemplary modeling and transformative pedagogical enactment. On the contrary, this study disagrees with the most traditional faculty development models which assume that increasing a teacher's content knowledge (via reading) automatically improves instructional quality. However, the finding unveils frequency-practice decoupling where daily reading does not lead to classroom sharing. This disproves the linear assumption that high academic achievement guarantees high quality delivery. More significantly, this finding aligns more closely with the 'pedagogical translation gap' identified by Zimmerman (2026). It is suggested that knowledge acquisition and pedagogical externalization are two distinct cognitive processes.

Overall, the research uncovers a startling latent expertise and a paradoxical pedagogical disconnect. Despite their advanced degrees and decades of experiences, these educators show a marked hesitancy to integrate their personal digital-first reading habits ($M = 4.28$, table 9) into their classroom reflexive instructional practices ($M = 2.71$, table 10). Similarly, multiple regression analysis testifies that while professional motivation ($M = 4.77$) is a positive predictor of quality, fragmented digital primacy acts as a significant negative mediator ($\beta = -0.14$, $p = 0.038$). This suggests a 'shallowing effect' in modern scholarly habits. Besides, it proves that pedagogical habits are deeply isolated and that even for the most experienced and educated experts, transitioning from personal literacy to instructional modeling requires specific and targeted intervention.

7 Conclusion

This research investigated the critical link between the teacher educators' intellectual consumption practices and the qualitative output of their classroom instructions. By comprising a strong sample of education professionals, the study analyzed how reading habits and preferences mediate the transition from personal expertise to pedagogical excellence. The data analyses provided overwhelming evidence of highly credentialed, frequently engaged teacher educators. Evidently, with a 72% daily engagement rate and a near-universal commitment to professional optimization, the educators are intellectual powerhouses as their reading is purely functional. Hence, this investigation is framed within the context of an instructional paradox, where high levels of professional engagement and chronicity do not automatically transform into classroom reflexive instructional practices. The minimal scores in instructional integration serve as the decisive call to action. The findings identify a profound reflexive instructional failure, but the failure in the quality of instruction is not hindered by a lack of teacher competence, but by a failure in habit-mediation. That is to say, the literacy experiences of the teacher educators have become an internal asset or a private scholarly shield as they invested more in internal professional growth rather than an external pedagogical bridge that is used to ignite students' passion for reading and learning curiosity. This suggests that high educational attainment does not automatically translate into the ability to model literacy in the classroom. Thus, there is a critical need for pedagogical translation frameworks even among the most academically advanced educators.

More significantly, the teacher educators are found to be latent expertise: their intellectual energy is present, but the mediating circuit is broken at the point of classroom delivery. To achieve true instructional excellence, teacher education must axle from a culture of private consumption to reflexive and collaborative practices. The teachers must move from the shadows of their silent reading habits and emerge as active and exemplary modeler showing students not just what to think, but how a deeply read life directs the way one succeeds in learning. It is concluded that the quality of instruction in teacher education is currently suffering from a modeling deficit. To revitalize the mediating route, it is no longer enough to be well-read. The teacher educators must perform their literacy in action. They should transform their reading habits from a silent consumer into a visible narrative mentor. Institutions can unlock the latent intellectual energy of their faculty and achieve true instructional excellence by promoting community learning and community of practices, and by providing tailored-made, pedagogy-driven and reflexive instructional modeling training.

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Data Availability

Data can be made available on reasonable request.

Declaration of interests statement

The authors declare no competing interests.

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