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## Research Article

### Exploring Factors Affecting Research Engagement of Instructors in Davao de Oro State College: Bases for Enhancement and Policy Recommendations

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## ABSTRACT

Research engagement in Philippine Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is a pressing challenge. Despite its recognized importance for instructional innovations and institutional development, many faculty members avoid research, even when incentives are available. This qualitative-transcendental phenomenology explores and describes the experiences and insights of instructors on the factors affecting their research engagement. Through purposive sampling, specifically the criterion sampling technique, thirty-two (32) participants were selected from the four branches of Davao de Oro State College (DdOSC). The validated interview guide questions were used as the primary instrument in obtaining data through in-depth interviews and focus-group discussion, and the responses were thoroughly analyzed using thematic analysis. The significant factors identified by faculty were graduate studies and work responsibilities. Additionally, their lack of technical research writing knowledge contributed to their research limitations. Faculty members emphasized the need for ongoing research guidance, mentorship, and a wider range of incentives, such as integrating research into teaching loads, salary increases, and travel opportunities. Communication gaps between faculty and institutional research policies were evident, as some faculty members were unaware of the college's support. This study's implications stress the need for institutions to reconsider faculty workloads, offer additional training, and establish support systems that create a more research-friendly environment. Addressing these factors and expanding incentives can inspire faculty to participate in research activities, fostering a vibrant research culture and advancing knowledge within the academic community.

**Keywords:** Instructors, Institutional research, Policy recommendations, Research engagement

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## Background

Research is an indispensable part of the school curriculum. All educational institutions are highly encouraged to conduct and participate in research activities if not required. In fact, according to Ulla (2018), taking part in research activities is an excellent opportunity for teachers to generate knowledge and seek answers to existing problems, progress in their careers, add to their professional qualifications, gain worthy experiences, and implement pedagogical improvements that will benefit the school and the community. However, Ulla et al. (2017) have reported that only a few public-school teachers have tried doing research; hence, Tarrayo (2013) found that only a small percentage of higher education institutions (HEIs) faculty members are engaged in research.

Internationally, a survey conducted in Estonia revealed that teachers who were also active researchers are more likely to engage students in research-related activities but become challenging for education practitioners (Magi & Beerkens, 2015). Despite research advantages, many teachers hesitate to engage because it entails additional workloads and timeconsuming and tedious educational endeavors (Ulla, 2018). These concerns are also evident in a study by Ulla (2018) in Ethiopia, which confirmed that only a few teachers conducted research studies. Factors like lack of research knowledge and skills, insufficient research training programs, and lack of resources constrained them from conducting research. Similarly, in the ASEAN context, a more recent study in Malaysia and Singapore reported similar challenges teachers faced in conducting research (Norasmah & Chia, 2016; Ellis & Loughland, 2016). Both studies affirmed that teachers viewed research positively but were challenged by the lack of time, reference materials, and assistance in doing research.

Meanwhile, in the Philippines, a study conducted by Tindowen et al. (2019) reveals that one of the state universities in Cagayan Valley Regions in found four (4) primary issues and challenges those teachers experienced in the conduct of their action research, namely: (1) additional burden on the part of the teacher, (2)

writing anxiety, (3) lack of time, and (4) inadequate knowledge in the conduct of action research. Moreover, Abaya (2017) reported that teachers have challenges, especially in literature search, data collection, and presentation of results.

Moreover, Ulla (2018) showed public school teachers' motivations, challenges, and perceived benefits in Mati City, Mindanao. Specifically, it found out that teachers' motivations in doing research are only for degree requirements and job promotion. It also highlighted the lack of school support and sufficient reference materials as challenges teachers faced in conducting research. Further, this is probably the reason why despite the institutionalization of research and the various initiatives and programs organized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the research productivity of teachers in HEIs is still low. In particular, based on my firsthand observation, the Research, Development, and Extension Office (RDE) of Davao de Oro State College – Montevista Branch is having difficulty encouraging its faculty members to propose institutional research. In fact, the branch only received less than five (5) research for this academic year.

After reading various literature and studies, the gist explices that similar research was conducted about research engagement of public-school teachers. A study by Alcazaren et al. (2021) showed that Senior High School (SHS) teachers have capable research skills and positive outlook but struggle to undertake research owing to large teaching workloads. In addition, the study's results by Heng et al. (2020) demonstrated that teachers' personal motivation impacts academics' participation and productivity in their research, particularly in developing nations. Besides, Tarrayo et al. (2021) revealed that English language teachers have a low level of engagement, exposure to research, and reasons for engaging in such endeavors. However, I have not found any research that examines the factors affecting the research engagement of elementary education instructors in-state colleges, particularly in the Davao region. It motivates the researcher to conduct the inquiry because of the issue's recent occurrence and few literatures in national and local contexts.

There is a sense of urgency to conduct this study because the researcher has not found any existing study that provides knowledge on the factors affecting the research engagement of elementary education instructors in the Davao region. In the practical sense, the experiences and insights of this study will directly benefit the HEIs and other stakeholders to keep abreast of designing and implementing the most appropriate intervention program as bases for research enhancement and policy recommendations not only in tertiary level as well as the schools in the Department of Education (DepEd) that will increase the productivity and involvement of the faculty members in terms of conducting, publishing, and utilizing researches.

## Methods

### Research Design

This study utilized qualitative research employing a transcendental phenomenological research design to explore the factors affecting the research engagement of instructors in DdOSC. All the data are essential in analyzing, interpreting, and describing the factors of instructors' engagement in institutional research and avoiding prejudices and preconceptions about human phenomena. Preconceptions are set aside to ensure that the findings are reflected from the point of view of the participants rather than the opinion of the researchers. The semi-structured interview guide questions pave the way to a detailed and comprehensive disclosure of one's experiences and insights on the research focus. This study deals with the entire methodology process in consonance with the qualitative-transcendental phenomenological approach.

### Research Participants

The study's participants are instructors among the campuses of Davao de Oro State College (DdOSC) with at least three (3) years and above teaching experience with and without engagement in institutional research, which are both male and female. The following inclusion criteria will be used to select the instructors who will participate in this study: (a) a regular or contract of service instructor teaching in Davao de Oro State College; (b) with at least

two (2) years and above of teaching experience in the college; and (c) with or without research engagements in all research activities and programs. The participants of this study were chosen through purposive sampling, specifically the criterion sampling technique. According to Palinkas (2015), the purposive sampling technique is widely utilized by qualitative researchers to identify and select information-rich cases concerning the phenomenon of interest. Hence, Creswell and Plano (2017) found homogeneous sampling to be a specific purposive sampling technique to describe in-depth data to a particular group, examine analysis, and reduce subsequent variation details.

In this study, thirty-two (32) instructors had undergone in-depth interviews and focus group discussions using validated interview guide questions. They are both women and men also. The original names of the participants were coded to keep their identities confidential. In each campus, four (4) instructors had undergone in-depth interviews, and another four (4) instructors were subjected to focus group discussions. In accordance with the number of participants, this research adhered to the concept of Creswell (2014) that having 8 to 20 participants is sufficient to saturate the information in making this qualitative inquiry.

Moreover, in this study, 16 underwent in-depth interviews (IDIs) and 16 participated in focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather data that is based on personal, especially discussing sensitive experiences, and shared belief and collective experiences through group discussion that individual participants might not express during in-depth interviews. Hence, maintaining the balance between achieving saturation and ensuring that data collection and analysis remain responsive based on the nature of the study (Ahmed, 2025).

Research participants are free to withdraw from the study at any moment. The participants should notify the research team of their desire to withdraw from the study. Participants are not compelled to give the research team the reason(s) for leaving the study; however, they are welcome to do so. On the other hand, the following were the exclusion criteria: instructors with less than two (2) years of teaching experience in DdOSC were excluded,

and non-teaching personnel were excluded. Moreover, other materials not mentioned in the inclusion criteria were not used as data sources, and other participants not mentioned in the inclusion criteria were separate from this study.

### **Research Locale**

The present study was conducted at Davao de Oro State College, a non-sectarian tertiary level institution in the first district of Davao de Oro Province. This institution has four campuses situated at the neighboring municipalities namely Montevista, Compostela, New Bataan and Maragusan, to where the data sources were sourced-out.

### **Data Collection**

The following processes were employed in gathering data: First, the researchers secured the approval of the Research and Ethics Committee (REC) to ensure the ethical soundness of the study. Second, the researchers asked permission from the branch directors of the identified research locales. Third, the voluntary and unforceful participation of the participants was secured through an informed consent form (ICF). Enclosed is the assurance of confidentiality of their identities and information, and the length of the actual data gathering, which would only take 5-10 minutes for IDI and 30-45 minutes for FGD, to which they agreed. Fourth, the conduct of IDI was completed before proceeding to FGD to ensure data saturation. Saturation was determined when the results of subsequent interviews no longer provided new information and insights, which caused redundancy in the data collected. These interviews were conducted personally, and recordings, as permitted by the participants, were secured for the accuracy of data transcription. The structured and unstructured questions brought rich data on instructors' experiences and insights on the factors of their research engagement.

### **Data Analysis**

Qualitative analysis involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It can be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research (Bhandari,

2022). Hence, data coding and thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, as proposed by Akinyode and Khan (2018). Meanwhile, thematic analysis entails examining and reporting on the pattern of themes present in data collection, which have identified six phases: familiarization, coding, searching for pieces, reviewing potential articles, defining and naming themes, and reporting (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Braun & Clarke, 2014).

In the study context, reading the transcripts to familiarize oneself with the data obtained from the interview is the way for thematic interpretation. Secondly, we used highlighters and colored pens to identify the recurrent and significant codes and patterns in the gathered data. Third, we assigned codes and labels to sectioned data with respective categories and turned the codes into themes. Fourth, we checked whether the data was relevant and valuable for the study and discarded the insignificant information to form potential themes from the emerged themes and patterns. Fifth, we directly named and defined each theme to determine how these themes would help us apprehend the data after the final listing of themes. Lastly, we wrote the answers to the research questions in tabular and textual form, facilitating representations of data in an attractive, intelligible, and organized manner based on qualitative attributes. Most importantly, we asked assistance from the data analyst for feedback and further verification for more apparent substantial analysis results. The major themes are elaborated by textual discussion supporting verbatim statements from the participants and actual responses in the interviews.

## **Result and Discussion**

### ***Experiences of Davao de Oro State College Instructors in Engaging in Institutional Research***

After analyzing the responses of the instructors of Davao de Oro State College about their experiences in engaging to institutional research, the following two (2) major themes emerged are: (1) Time, Priority, and Workload Conflicts, and (2) Self-Efficacy and Technical Deficiencies.

#### ***Time, Priority, and Workload Conflicts***

After a thorough analysis of the responses of the participants in the FGD and In-depth interviews, two themes emerged as barriers of research productivity. The first theme underscores that many faculty members do not prioritize research due to several factors. Graduate school requirements and pressures often divert their focus from research, leading to concerns about meeting academic qualifications. Furthermore, heavy teaching loads, scheduling conflicts with co-researchers, and a prioritization of teaching and administrative duties all contribute to limited time and attention available for research. The second theme explores technical and knowledge-related obstacles that hinder research productivity among faculty researchers. Many grapples with a lack of confidence in their research abilities, fearing comparisons with more experienced researchers and doubting their research skills. This lack of confidence extends to conducting independent research, writing research papers, and presenting findings due to perceived technical inadequacies. Additionally, some faculty members face challenges arising from a lack of background in research, including insufficient research knowledge, difficulties in pursuing innovative research, and a lack of research experience during their undergraduate studies, resulting in an inadequate foundation in research practices. These two themes collectively illuminate the complex barriers that faculty researchers encounter in their quest for productive research endeavors.

Moreover, according to the participants, the most common barrier of research productivity that the participants identified is that they do not consider research as a priority due to their graduate school studies and work responsibilities. The participants revealed that their graduate studies, teaching, and administrative tasks put research on the back row of their priorities.

*I did not attempt [to conduct research] on my own. It's like not my priority because I want to finish my doctorate first because others finished already theirs. I had to prioritize my doctorate because it's not just about plain essay, the requirements have to be research-based. (IDI-02,*

*Transcript 7, page 1, Lines 19; 22-24; 40-41)*

As narrated by IDI-02 he did not attempt to conduct any institutional research because he was too focused in accomplishing the requirements given by his professors. He noted that the graduate school tasks needed to be given much attention since they have to be done in a scholarly manner. Similarly, other participants cited that over the years institutional research was not their priority because they were busy in updating their qualifications like having a license, taking masters or doctorate degrees.

Moreover, the faculty cited the lack of time due to teaching responsibilities as a reason for not conducting research. In fact, one participant mentioned that the overwhelming number of teaching loads hinder her to conduct institutional study. She could not think of any study to dwell since her energy is consumed in teaching. Similarly, another participant revealed they were not able to successfully finish the collaborative study with her colleagues because they could not find common time in conducting it due to their teaching load. Even during weekends, it was difficult for them to meet because of their teaching responsibilities.

*Indeed, the incentives offered are quite appealing; however, my heavy teaching workload has made it challenging for me to formulate a research concept. Balancing numerous responsibilities has left me with little time to dedicate to a research endeavor. The demanding nature of our work, coupled with a hectic schedule, has posed significant obstacles to conducting research. It's not just about conceiving a research paper; we are also required to execute practical tasks in our field, such as carbon installation, and generate comprehensive conclusions. (IDI- 02, T6, lines 67-69;82-85)*

Another reason that the faculty considered research to be least priority is their teaching responsibility. They find it hard to integrate the task of carrying out teaching responsibilities like preparing for the lesson, doing the discussion, attending the students' needs and at the

same time conceptualizing and conducting research. They find themselves inefficient in their teaching tasks if conducting research be required from them. Further, other faculty holds administrative responsibilities and they cite this as another reason of being not able to conduct a study. They mentioned that to be a program head entails many paper-works and deadlines to beat. As a result, it is difficult for them to conduct a study because they prioritize their program more than anything.

Hence, the lack of time as a consequence of performing job related responsibilities is a major reason why faculty researchers have difficulty in engaging into research activities (Lagrio, et.al., 2022 and AlSardi et al., 2021). In addition, Lagrio et.al., (2022) claimed that heavy teaching loads affect the practice of research. Similarly, in the study of AlSardi (2021), the time to prepare for the work and the time to conduct research has been overlapping. Thus, the tendency to sacrifice the latter. Similarly, the findings of Algar et.al., (2025) also found out that teachers are burdened with teaching load, managing student activities and even administrative work. In addition, Cocal et al., (2017) revealed in their study that one of the reasons of not caring about conducting research is teaching overload and other duties. Of which, Zhou et al., (2020) affirmed by revealing that vocational teachers prefer to have their teaching responsibilities rather than conducting a research. Likewise, Fawzi and Hattami (2017) also exposed that teachers claimed that their heavy teaching loads hinder them to conduct research. From this, it can be implied that lesser teaching loads among all others will help improve research productivity of faculty members.

#### *Self-Efficacy and Technical Deficiencies*

Another glaring barrier which the faculty researchers recognized is their lack of technical skills in research writing as well as their know-how about the nature of doing research. The participants expressed their willingness to conduct research but they lacked the confidence in doing so. For instance, Participant 8 said that he doubts his ability in conducting research when he witnessed the presentation of the experi-

enced researchers. Similarly, another participant expressed her frustration in doing so despite the enticing incentives for having no background in writing research, thus, established her lack of confidence.

*And the confidence... the moment I can see the presenter, I feel belittled and I would say how good they are. They are good in memorization. (FGD-08, Transcript 4, Lines 399-400)*

Although the faculty had undergone graduate studies, still they think they lack the necessary skills in doing research. Their research exposure is not enough; as a result, they had the tendency to find it difficult make a research especially when new trends, methodology of format emerge. In fact, the participants stated that they have difficulty in looking for credible sources and doing the paraphrasing. The participants narrated that their lack of competence in searching for reliable sources, fear and limited writing skills, lack of ability to articulate in English and paraphrase texts hinder them from conducting research.

*I am not good in computer like the copying and pasting...and the paraphrasing... (FGD-06, Transcript 3, lines 120-121)*

*I have fear.. like in presenting, the use of technology, the how in PowerPoint and the other things needed which I know I am not really good at. (FGD-08, Transcript 4, Lines 153-155)*

More so, another technical and know-how difficulty is the lack of background in doing research. Participant 1 revealed that her reason of being discouraged in doing institutional research is her lack of research background. Although she has the drive in conducting one, she has difficulty in determining and presenting the appropriate details for methodology for research was not part of her college curriculum. Furthermore, other participants shared the same problem of having no background knowledge about research. Also, another participant considered doing research in her field very difficult in terms of novelty. She said that

in her field, novelty of the study is very important that demands much of her time over her teaching work. Because of this, she is not much motivated to do research despite the incentives. This revelation is similar to the findings of Mantikayan and Abdulgani (2018). They revealed that one of the reasons of teachers' apprehension in conducting research is their lack of research skills. It is difficult for them to conceptualize a study because it difficult to paraphrase. This is similar to that of Toquero (2020); Aguilar-de Borja (2018); and Bay and Clerigo's (2013) findings when they articulated that teachers have novice skills in doing research especially in terms of literature review, research conceptualization and methodology. More so, the language used in writing research has been the barrier for teachers in having one. It was shared that it is difficult for him to make a research because he is not that competent in the language. This is similar to the result of the study of Tariq and Ahmad (2016). They exposed that in Pakistan, the reason of its low research productivity among its teachers is their lack of communication skills in English. Teachers have the hard time presenting their ideas accurately. With that, teachers just end up doing no research at all.

*I am not really confident when it comes to writing research...and interpreting journal articles... (IDI-06, Transcript 7, lines 98-99)*

*It is challenging to write a clear and comprehensive manuscript, given that research should have high language accuracy. (FGD-07, Transcript 3, Lines 133-134)*

As narrated by IDI-06 and FGD-07, lack of language competence and proficiency makes them less interested in conducting research, which causes them to find the process difficult. Further, lack of background in doing research is another emergent theme. It was revealed by the participants in this study that their exposure to research is not enough. They may have done it in their graduate school, but they still need guidance so that when uncertainties would take place, they will have someone to

consult from. This thought corresponds to the result of the study of Okoduwa (2018). They revealed that lack of professional mentorship and research facilities are some of the major reasons of low research productivity among teachers in Nigeria.

### ***Insights of Instructors in Strengthening Engagement in Conducting Institutional Research***

After analyzing the responses of the instructors of Davao de Oro State College about their insights in strengthening engagement in conducting institutional research, the following two (2) major themes emerged are: (1) provisions of research guidance, and (2) provision of more options for incentives.

In terms of the other forms of support that the school could provide to enhance faculty research engagement, two main themes are emphasized. The first theme underscores the importance of offering research guidance, including conducting regular orientations and research training, assigning research experts as guides, and promoting collaboration among faculty researchers. The second theme suggests providing more incentives, such as considering research in faculty workload adjustments, incorporating research into ranking and promotion criteria, offering non-salary related incentives like travel support for conferences, and increasing monetary rewards. These strategies collectively aim to facilitate and encourage faculty engagement in research activities.

#### ***Provision of Research Guidance***

Research productivity has been the call for the higher education institutions for it is integral to the teaching function of the faculty. Nevertheless, many faculty members are not into research and lack the interest and willingness to participate in research writing. Like what Participant 6 insisted that he is not motivated to do research and not even enticed on the incentives designed.

However, some of the participants expressed their willingness to do research if there is provision of guidance to help them out in conducting and in following the institution's standards. One of the clustered themes transpired as a form of research guidance is the

need to conduct regular orientation and research training. A parcel of it, IDI-01 said that there is a need for the research office to continuously reach out to faculty to ignite the motivation and to keep them on track in research. One way of reaching out to the faculty is the provision of regular orientation and assistance. It may boost confidence and enthusiasm in research writing. Participant 8 retorted that the school should conduct research orientation on the research agenda of the institution and other research-related concerns among the faculty members particularly the newly hired teachers. Doing so will aid teachers in conceptualizing and conducting a study. Moreover, IDI-01 and IDI-02 shared that aside from the orientation, assistance is also be of great help for teachers to conduct research.

*It would be better if there will be regular orientation regarding faculty research so that we can have the guidelines on how to write and on the standards of presenting it. (IDI-01, Transcript 5, Lines 123-125)*

IDI-04 personally observed that research is a must thing to do, yet, no clear assistance and training were provided in doing it. For her, having research training is a way of providing guidance. It is considered significant since integral to research is its technicalities; hence, learning its basics is a must. However, some of the participants received several trainings already but still had lacked the passion on research. Participant 6 bluntly argued that he is still experiencing difficulty in research despite the seminars given. What seems lacking was the support in terms of training in doing research specifically in the field of specialization. IDI-02 and IDI-04 paired out their sentiments that panel members should have technical skills in the specific field, like in the engineering and in other program so that the field of specialization will be recognized and considered that it has its own style of writing research. The same thoughts were shared by Participants 3 and 8. They insisted that a technical panel who belong to the same field of expertise should sit as panel members during research defense.

*In our area, there must have experts in the field to look into our paper. (FGD-03, Transcript 2, Lines 69-70)*

*During the panel defense, presence of an expert in the field to sit down is a must. (FGD-08, Transcript 4, Lines 287-288)*

Another form of support that the participants shared was having a research expert to guide will definitely encourage them in the writing journey. They claim that the provision of a research coordinator per program will help facilitate faculty to conceptualize and conduct research. Additionally, Participant 8 also insisted on the presence of an adviser that may increase the research productivity among the faculty. KII 4 added that if she does not really know the technology of research, no matter how enticing the incentives are, they can never motivate her. So, there is a need for a research expert to guide.

*It would be nicer if there is a presence of a coordinator to look into the research works. It can really help finish the research. It can also help if one will pursue his graduate studies because he can gain knowledge on how to do it especially observing the format set by the school. (FGD-01, Transcript 5, Lines 112-115)*

Finally, collaboration in doing research work may also help increase research productivity. Participant 1 expressed that she waited for colleagues to tap her to write. Since nobody asked her to do it, she also ignored doing research. Participant 6 also expressed her lacking confidence in doing research if none will work with her. She confirmed that there is a need to have someone knowledgeable to guide her undergo the research journey. She firmly expressed that she loves collaborative effort and that in collaboration someone can push her to do research. Participant 6 mentioned that support of colleagues is crucial in finishing the research task. However, she noticed that despite having a collaboration, if other members are not serious in doing it, collaborative effort will still be to no avail. In collaboration also, it can

provide assistance and encouragement to conduct research as asserted by IDI-04, Participants 8 and 7.

As mentioned by Linderholm et al. (2022) mentoring and monitoring promote scholarly productivity, team- based mentoring promote retention and socializes with faculty in the institution's culture. Research guidance is an effective form of support for junior faculty to increase research productivity. In fact, the study of Rush and Wheeler (2011) revealed that the junior faculty who were subjected to research monitoring and guidance has increased their attitude of doing research; thus, increasing their research productivity.

As indicated by Gruber et al. (2020) in their study that having research expert to guide boosts positive outcomes. The novice ones in writing research will have the tendency to have an increase in research productivity, reduced attrition and higher satisfaction, especially that they can easily approach the expert. According to Shollen et al. (2014), through informal guidance, their satisfaction will increase while through formal monitoring their research engagement. Thus, provision of research coordinator will boost teachers to conduct research since they may just go to him/her when confusion takes place and there is no need for them to have a formal meeting or conference in doing so.

#### *Provision of More Options for Incentives*

The initiative that the institution came up to promote research productivity among faculty is by offering monetary incentives to them. The monetary incentive is enjoyed by the faculty researchers who have regularly produced research but to those who are not active researchers, the incentive might be enticing but they suggest other options that schools can offer to cater to the interests of others when it comes to available incentives.

One of the other forms of support that the faculty researchers suggested is the improvement of monetary incentive by giving research output a bearing in the salary through adjustments in teaching loads and implementing institutional ranking that gives weight in research productivity of the faculty. For instance,

IDI-01 and IDI-02 shared that it would be helpful if the teaching load itself would be adjusted by incorporating it in the regular teaching loads such as making research part of the number of regular teaching loads. The suggestions of Participants 4 and 6, IDI-03 and IDI-04 also concurred with the suggestions of the informants which focus on making research part of the teaching load but could also serve as teaching overload.

*In the regular seven loads, two or three loads could equivalent to research. It should be incorporated to your loading so that you have enough time to conduct research. You can have two hours devoted to it. (IDI-01, Transcript 5, Lines 90-92)*

Moreover, the suggestions of IDI-01, IDI-02, IDI-03, IDI-04, P4 and P6, both P7 and P8 are all parallel which is about the production of research to have a bearing on salary increase. P7 said that it could be a top-up in the salary for a specific number of research outputs completed. P8 suggested that it could be included in the ranking and promotion because at the moment, the institutional ranking is not yet in place.

*Cash incentives through increase in salary should be given to researchers. And those who conducted researches should be given points which will be part of the ranking system. (FGD-08, Lines 354-357; 366-367)*

Furthermore, also other forms of support that the faculty researchers have suggested is the provision of other incentives that are non-salary related. This has something to do with travel, and research presentation opportunities and increase in the monetary incentive. For one, FGD-07 suggested that if the research output is very good, the school can reward the faculty with a travel incentive. This was delightedly affirmed by all the other seven participants of the focus group discussion. Participant 8 verbalized that a travel with the preferred Philippine destination of the researchers would be very enticing. It could even be an international travel destination as well. This cor-

robitates to the answer of KII2 who also suggested that travel incentive could also be a good option that teachers can avail if they publish a research output.

*Faculty researchers may be offered an international travel or have additional vacation leave if they publish their research. (IDI-02, T6, Lines 113-114)*

Similarly, majority of the faculty researchers posited that for the research to be more enticing and motivating, they will be given opportunities to present in international research conferences and if in-person, it will expense-free on the part of the researcher. With that, the faculty will be enticed to conduct a study because they will not just present a study in another place but all expenses will be shouldered by the school.

The school offers a very modest monetary incentive that is better compared to other higher educational institutions who do not have research incentives at all. However, to one of the informants who also does professional practice, the amount of the monetary incentive the school offers should be increased because between research and her additional income from professional practice, she would opt to accept professional practice if on the basis of monetary incentive alone. Since the imposition of the monetary incentive with the established of the institution's Research and Publication's Office, the research productivity of the faculty has improved. While there are still those who have not been active in engaging in research endeavors, the school continues to seek for improvement in terms of providing support to the faculty to enhance their research capacity and capability.

As implied in the result of the study of Nguyen et al. (2021) institutional research policy must be established to direct and guide teachers especially in undertaking research. As supported by the study of Sarcino-Almase (2021) by establishing a certain program, teaching staff may develop positive outlook on research. As their participants indicated, teachers perceive research positively because of the establish program and support given to them. In fact, the study of Beerkens (2013) affirmed this

when the participants indicated that universities with supportive management improves research productivity among teachers.

Further, reducing the teaching load among teachers may help them in improving their research productivity. As suggested by Ramirez-Montoya et al. (2023) school administrators may devise a mechanism to reduce or distribute the teaching responsibility so that the number of teachers' research output may improve. This is in connection to the result of the study conducted by Dangan (2014) that only a scanty of teachers in Palawan State University conducted a research because of motivation, gender and teaching load. It was revealed that teachers were not that motivated to conduct research because of their overflowing teaching responsibility. Thus, it was recommended there will be reduced of workload among the faculty to increase their research productivity.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has shed light on the factors affecting to research engagement among faculty members at the tertiary level and identified key areas where they require support from school administrators. While it is clear that faculty researchers acknowledge the importance of incentives, the current monetary rewards alone do not serve as a strong enough motivation for them to enhance their research output. However, it is worth noting that if these incentives were to be restructured to alleviate the burden of their workloads and incorporate more substantial benefits, such as improved salary arrangements, faculty members might be more inclined to overcome the challenges they face in their research endeavors. Simply put, the faculty want more.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that when dissatisfying factors dominate their professional experiences, faculty members tend to withdraw from research activities. Hence, they propose the introduction of satisfying variables that can effectively entice and encourage them to actively engage in research. In light of these findings, it is imperative for educational institutions to recognize that enhancing the conditions and support systems for faculty researchers goes beyond mere financial incentives. Information dissemination regarding research

policies and the roles and responsibilities of faculty members in research activities is crucial. Moreover, faculty members express the need for a broader spectrum of support that encompasses not only financial incentives but also a more conducive work environment and other forms of professional development.

Although certain institutional policies and practices can be reviewed and revisited to address the challenges hindering teachers' receptivity to and interest in research, such as lack of time, resources, and professional knowledge and skills in doing (and publishing) research, further research may also investigate teachers' personal circumstances that interfere with their research engagement. The teaching-research nexus can also be investigated, especially for those who claimed that their research undertakings inform their teaching practice. Ultimately, as educational institutions aspire to enhance their services and create a better working environment for their employees, they must prioritize addressing the multifaceted needs of their faculty members. This ongoing commitment to employee well-being and academic growth serves as a driving force for institutional progress and success.

## Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, some recommendations were made:

- Instructors should be given sufficient seminars, trainings, and workshops on research, and they must religiously attend to these to acquire research skills and processes so that they can come up with quality research;
- School Administrators and Research Heads should extend their support to instructors by sending them to research seminars, training, workshops, and other activities designed for them to be more prepared in conducting research and develop a growth mindset of time-management, prioritization, and professional development;
- The institution should revisit faculty workload policies to provide active researchers with research credits (equivalent to 2-3 teaching loads), as suggested by the participants, to ensure

adequate time is allocated to conduct research;

- The institution should increase non-salary incentives and provide support for international and national travel for research presentation in research conferences, and include the completed and published research outputs in the institutional ranking or promotion of the researchers.
- The action plan on instructors' enhancement program developed in this study as bases for enhancement and policy recommendations should be implemented to help teachers avoid problems in the future conduct of their research; and
- Research and Development Division should implement an annual mandatory orientation about the research policies based on the research manual, covering the organizational and operational management, research guidelines and procedures, and publication and presentation incentives to address research-related communication gaps.

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