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Management And Support On Knowledge-Generation Practices Among Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract:

Establishments of support systems have been instituted to ensure unceasing generation of knowledge and develop the science among faculty members of higher education societies. Research being one of the core mandates are the expected outputs of an advanced learning facilities, thereby major contributory factors in ranking a teaching-learning university in terms of global relevance and visibility. Focus-group discussions are employed to document the research climate among nine faculty researchers from state-owned higher institutions; purposively named based on the pre-identified eligibility criteria. Recorded interviews transcribed, significant statements surfaced and identification of themes generated. Moreover, pseudonyms assigned among participants to ensure confidentiality at the entire course of the study. Interestingly, participants are motivated in research-related engagement for promotion, eureka-euphoric moments, for collaboration and expanding linkages and partnerships among others. Contrastingly, extent of engagement has been limited due to work overload, multiple administrative and committee designations, constraints in research budget caused by paradoxical national and institutional policies. Nevertheless, majority of the participants displayed positive attitude to further hone research skills through teamwork and time management. It is therefore recommended that higher education institution will strengthen its support to research and publication endeavors through capacity trainings, write shop and mentoring sessions, thus increasing University research outputs.

Keywords: faculty support, knowledge production, motivation, research climate, research practice

1. Introduction

Research has been a cornerstone of the university's ranking and faculty's hierarchy all over the academic world. It is critical in the academic landscape of higher education considerably because knowledge-generation and production are major components for global reputation. It is in this premise that research is being highlighted in education industry as mainstream deliverables in support to instruction and service-oriented efforts.

The acceptance of research work in various fields of knowledge has stirred the academic institutions to transform research findings into extension-expressions; an act to translate scientific results to viable, doable activities. European and Western universities implemented research-based instruction. In the Philippines, research is yet to embed which further strengthen the conveyance of teaching. Gradual shift of the said pedagogy ensures continuity of quality standards and internationalization.

The vast acquisition of research findings scientifically crafted entails enormous challenges for universities. This radiates and puts pressure to its faculty to not only emerge in the process, more so disseminating findings through inclusion as instruction resources, fora presentation and

the like (Magi & Beerkens, 2016). Research-oriented universities assist its human resource by providing research experiences through trainings, capacity works and research-related teachings. Amidst these encumbrances, the capacity that of output production by faculty researchers are challenged thereby have fallen short on these targets which yields to negative impact to the overall performance of the institution (Alhija & Majdob, 2017). It is in this premise that academic rank determines the degree of research involvement, time allocation in scientific studies. Tenured professors in turn serve as mentors to achieve feasibly the university's target on publication as major function areas (Nguyen, 2016).

With the continuing search for excellence on all areas including research, institutions envision to be at par with advanced academic communities in consonance with 2030 United Nation Sustainable Development Goals ((Alcazaren, 2021). Essentially, teaching experience has a statistical impact on faculty research engagement (Batool, et al, 2018; Zhang, 2014; Peng & Gao, 2019).

Scarce literatures have focused on the research practices of the faculty members in a research university, especially in Southeast Asia. Available literatures have argued on the fragmented and merging roles of teaching and research in a research university (Alam & Lin, 2022; Gomba & Pacolor, 2014; Nicolov & Ilieva, 2007; Colbeck, 1998). Moreover, little empirical evidences are conducted on the research practices of the faculty members in a research university during the time of pandemic, hence the study.

2. Methods

2.1. Respondents, data collection and design

The study explored the stance of nine purposively identified participants with at least permanent teaching appointment for the last five years across the program offering. Participants were either male or female regardless of religious affiliations, and academic ranks. To grasp the breath of study, researchers acquired participants to have accomplished two research studies, able to publish results in a peer-reviewed, reputable journals. Descriptions produced from qualitative study design were further analyzed thematically to establish concepts for discussion. Document reviews were also applied to corroborate the responses of the participants. Peer debriefing helped the researchers establish the validity of the data gathered. The data were transcribed, translated, coded and themed.

2.2. Procedures and sample size

The study participants were identified purposively following the established selection criteria, after the approval was secured by West Visayas State University-Unified Research Ethics Review Committee (WVSU-URERC). Participants were contacted through social media platform and scheduled dates for focused group discussions. Protocols were foreshadowed prior to the study conducted including the individual written consent. Conceptual analyses were done using NVivo 12 while the researchers did the thematic analyses (Olapane, 2021). The final report of the study was based on the ideas of Sharan Merriam (1998).

3. Findings



Generated concepts from the thematic analysis

Synthesis: The above presentation depicts the themes from the study. Research climate of the university only exist when motivation and management support are extended to the faculty to author researches. Challenges which threaten the dynamism to generate and produce knowledge are but present. Weak research productivity is factored out due to overloaded faculty members. On one end, researchers able to cope with the pressure through collaboration, wise time appropriation and establishing rightful attitude towards research involvement. These lead to increased motivation as one engages in the process and opportunities emerged even during pandemic period.

Moreover, the motivation is as well fueled through management functions through support thus augmenting the production of knowledge. This paved way to defining the research climate of the university. Deloading of courses taught is one of the many expressions of support. Hiring additional human resources who have the heart of the same are tapped to augment the research outputs. Benchmarking to other performing research institutions is considered, thereby refining the publication strategies being one of the best areas of practice.

Motivations in Conducting Researches

Leverage of Engaging Oneself into Research

Research is one of the mandates for faculty in the Philippine higher education. However, not all faculty do research. For many, they engage in research because of personal and professional gains such as NBC 461 promotions, eureka and euphoric moments, friends and future collaborators and social values for the society.

I'm very thankful that research made me a professor. I feel euphoric if I have contributions to the body of knowledge. I had more than 13 international publications and I feel happy when I see my name in e-journals with my literary works, have these copyrighted; hence, I feel contented and happy (Richard, 58).

It's the eureka moments that keep me motivated to do research. The Aha! moments when I get to see the results especially when my results are incongruent with to that of the literature, it excites me actually. It's the excitement that I get apart from the idea that it will serve as basis for promotion (Adrian, 35).

Doing research makes me immortal. Meaning, once I solve a very difficult math problem which nobody has done yet, it's something that makes me immortal (Jef, 40).

I'm gaining more followers in the College. I get to see the answers to my questions. So maybe we need to leave a legacy for the next generations and put the College in the publication part in terms of introducing innovations (Jessica, 52).

I do research to respond to the needs of the time. There's always a social value for what we do (Korina, 43).

Research Opportunities in Time of Pandemic

This pandemic has brought both opportunities and challenges to the WVSU researchers. Most of them believe that the pandemic provides them a silver lining to pursue research endeavors while others view the pandemic as detrimental in doing research and teaching assignments. Almost all of the participants agreed that work from home setup helped them become more productive during the time of the pandemic compared to physical reporting in school.

With the grace of the pandemic, I, as a researcher, have finished one project with DOH and UP Manila for a project and we are glad that we are done. We are also engaged in a second project with the European Union. Most of my endeavors are towards medical education and innovative teaching. I can see silver linings in this time of the pandemic. All the articles are almost free everywhere. I can connect with other researchers all over the world online and they are very helpful. The struggles of online learning in medical education have also opened a lot of avenues for research proposals. Actually, there are a lot of fresh or relevant proposals that we can make from our experiences during the pandemic (Jessica, 52).

The pandemic is an opportunity to conduct research in the comforts of our home. I really tried to ask my dean and department chair to give me some time to really work on research because I believe that if I would not prioritize research as part of my work in the university, then eventually it will take a backseat (Adrian, 35).

The best answer is busy as always (short laugh). I think my plate is full. However, creativity comes out under limitations or constraints. We just have to be more creative on the situation. Some researchers are constrained due to the pandemic but there are still researchers who are very productive and they have made proposals (Vicky, 58).

Challenges Faced by Faculty Researchers **Weak Research Productivity among Faculty**

Research is one of the major mandates in Philippine Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs). It is also a factor that determines the university rankings and academic performance (Jung, 2012; Alghanim & Alhamali, 2011). For many, research productivity determines academic success in the forms of tenureship, faculty promotion, and increased salary which generally translates to mobility in the academic hierarchy (Bloedel, 2001; Kotrlik et al., 2002; White, et al., 2012; Ju, 2010). In the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the research productivity of the faculty in SUCs has significantly changed due to several factors such as border restrictions, difficulty of reaching out to research respondents/participants, preoccupation with accreditation matters, among others.

I have a hard time convincing the faculty to conduct research and submit new research proposals since the faculty have alibis, like ECQ now and then, limited access to papers in schools, especially when we have another accreditation and, of course, we have limited number of faculty under our College. I convince them to collaborate with each other but some of them refuse to do so (Mel, 38).

During this pandemic, my problem is the submission of quarterly reports because all teachers are engaged in instruction plus our campus is very unique. We have several designations because we are very few (Vicky, 58).

I think one of the difficulties I have with research work is with students because I do highly technical mathematics. So, thinking of whom to work with within the premises of the university is a challenge for me. It would take talented students who can understand what I am doing (Jef, 40).

Overloaded Faculty Members

Faculty workload is one of the perennial concerns of all HEIs in the Philippines. All HEI faculty are required to do trifocal functions irrespective of their workloads. On average, most HEIs in the Philippines have implemented 24 units as regular workload of a faculty in a week. In the University System, the regular faculty workload is 18 units; however, this seems insufficient for faculty who seek synergy and balance between and among instruction, research, and extension functions. Like in other HEIs, the faculty-researchers are also struggling due to overload teaching assigned to them. Most of the participants revealed that this set-up makes it hard for them to do research and extension especially during this time of the pandemic.

I think much of my difficulty is on instruction. I have five teaching preparations although we are assigned 18 units in the university but each of the preparations is different because of its nature and my background in the department since I'm the only faculty handling major subjects. So, most of the time I handle both graduate and undergraduate levels (Jef, 40).

I have new subjects that have to be studied and syllabi carefully prepared for them. It seems I have so things on my plate which are not really my own personal endeavors for research but most of them are for the university. I really have to give up something. I lag behind as required in some researches. I lie low in my research undertakings and I do one at a time since I cannot multitask. I remember that when I was really doing research as a faculty I had to sacrifice my class time. For now, I just prioritize what is important (Korina, 43).

Our teaching is already overloaded. We have to do multiple functions. So much to our desire to write, our time is limited. No matter how I would say to myself the word time management, but I have multiple duties and functions (Vicky, 58)

My division chair just recently emailed me that my overload is 17. I said, I am not taking that because I will not have time to conduct research. It's too much to handle an overload of 17. We took a look on the overload policy in the university, and it's six units overload is enough. So, I said I cannot take more than that anymore. So that's one really big hindrance for me because it will affect my research productivity (Adrian, 35).

Paradox between National and Institutional Policies

Research is an expensive enterprise. This is so because research demands more time and resources to carry out the activities as planned (Foos, 1999). Because of vital role in societal development, research has received large chunk in the budget of most PHEIs. In effect, HEIs are required to boost their research productivity which is one of the metrics in SUC leveling and university ranking. There is more money in research and all the participants in this study agreed to it. However, majority of them revealed that it was hard to get money from research because of so many requirements. In effect, few researchers preferred to shoulder their research expenses; however, not all of them have the capacity to do so. This predicament has exacerbated when reimbursement of research expenses was prohibited.

I think when I was doing applied mathematics research, I used my personal money first and had reimbursed later. However, this year there are some changes in the audit procedures. Now, I cannot ask for reimbursement. So, it's more of my own personal money (Jef, 40).

Sometimes, I have to spend my personal money for presentation, and publication. Equipment is one thing that we need. Another is the processing of many papers. There are so many papers to fill in and sometimes they cause delay (Richard, 58).

I also echo the budgetary constraints. But it's not that we don't have a budget; it's on how we are going to get the budget. We are provided with a budget, but it's the bureaucracy that we have to face when we ask for it. We are ones spending for our research and then sometimes are not reimbursed. We are glad that our director is very generous in giving us the budget although it takes time to liquidate everything. There is a budget when you ask for a research assistant; they will give you that. But you really have to pass through the process of going to the finance office and then more requirements are needed for reimbursement (Adrian, 35).

COPING STRATEGIES OF FACULTY RESEARCHERS

Forging Partnership Within and Outside the University

Research draws its strength from the adage that more heads are better than one. This is very true in research since nobody has a monopoly of knowledge. Besides, research is becoming in inter- and multi-disciplinary approach. Partnership or collaboration is thus needed to enrich the content and methodology of any research work.

What we only do is to manage our time. And of course, try to navigate our duties and obligations for collaborations. I sometimes stay over in the office after five in the afternoon to do a little bit of this review since I want to support my other colleagues in other university because we also have collaborations. I still find time to review their papers (Vicky, 58).

We have our advocacy to help young researchers, inventors, and extentionists. It's lonely to do research alone. So, we have to find partners (Richard, 58).

Developing Right Attitude Towards Research

Research is a test of endurance and attitude. Like any other work, research requires positive disposition and right attitude for the researchers to succeed in their chosen topic. This is a time-tested formula because of the intricacies inherent in the process of conducting and publishing research. That is why all researchers must develop strategies to overcome and fulfill their research aspirations.

I hope everyone will have the same motivation (laughing) in doing (research) and answering questions that would be helpful to expand the body of knowledge and understanding of the faculty and the experiences of the students during these trying times (Adrian, 35).

Once a researcher, always a researcher. It's like it runs in your blood. My mentors have influenced me a lot in doing research. It's not hard but it's not easy either. It's a matter of balancing. We can always find some reasons to do research and we can find a potty gold. Of course, it must be done based on our capacity. Jessica said that Friday is a research day. I will try this because as of now my problem is writing time (Vicky, 58).

Basically, research is part of our life. Before, accreditation was our way of life at West Visayas State University, but research is now life at the university (Mel, 38).

Time Management

Time is precious and being so, it applies to research. Having good time management is always an edge for the researchers irrespective of the bulk of work and responsibilities that they perform both in school and in private life. Time management is the key to achieve balance between life and school work.

I think it's more on time management. We need to budget our time. We need to plan and plan (Willard, 34).

I set Friday as a research day. Maybe one of the advantages that we have in our College is that we are implementing modular and blocks. So, I prioritize research during my non-class days. So, I really run after the deadline. I always say there are always 24 hours in a day. So, there will be sleepless nights. Of course, it's an understatement. You run after a deadline, but maybe you also need to take a break during weekends. That is why I have still time to do photography and plantitas. So, it's really a balancing act for all aspects of our individual endeavors (Jessica, 52).

It's good that I have a very prolific partner. I am quite older than he so I have the wisdom and he has the energy. During night time, we do research because we cannot do it at daytime because of our classes, designation and instruction. Teaching is a very demanding profession; thus, research time would be done at night during holidays, Saturdays and Sundays (Richard, 58).

I am overloaded but I still function as a researcher. I have to manage my time. While others are on vacation, I do the five o'clock habit, but I am okay having my write-ups or having my field study or my survey or whatever (Mike, 37).

RESEARCH SUPPORT FROM THE UNIVERSITY

Deloading of workloads

Since research is an integral function of HEI faculty, its inclusion in the faculty workload is also vital to ensure that faculty have enough time to do research. All of the participants agreed that they need protective time for them to do research.

I do not have problems in writing but I have no time since from 8 am to 5pm, I am occupied with too many works, then I am tired at night. That's why my concern is deloading for research (Vicky, 58).

I share the same sentiments with the rest of the faculty on deloading for approved research protocols. It's really hard for us in the College because we also have deck at the hospital. Visit the guidelines for the deloading. I agree with Jeff. We are moving towards a research university and we really need to strengthen the research structure. Some of the higher institutions where I work are entire structuring, let's say they have a separate college for publications and the approval of the protocols have a lot of staffers to do the writing and to do the related literature so we really need to strengthen that structure (Jessica, 52).

Recruiting research-inclined and passionate individuals

HEI faculty are oftentimes pre-occupied with their teaching work. That is why having research assistants or associates help the faculty to ensure that their research endeavors continue even if they are busy in their instruction, designation and/or committee tasks.

We have research assistant, so we have the privilege of doing research even if we have other responsibilities. The RD assistant sends to our email the things that we need to do. She prepares the manuscripts especially for deadlines and write-ups. So even in our college, we ask for a dedicated non-teaching staffer to do the search for literature. We assigned a non-teaching staffer who does the legwork for us (Jessica, 52).

We have to strengthen our support staff to support us, faculty members. So, in the progress of research, there should be some staffers or specialized staffers to help the faculty in statistics, in editing and following up papers so that more or less the faculty will have less paperwork to do as it lessens the burden the teachers. I would like to emphasize that the burden of the faculty members be lessened; the support staff should be there together with the specialists who were trained in the process of research (Richard, 58).

To ensure that the additional workforce will have significant contribution to the university's vision, one participant said that research should be component of the metrics for recruitment and hiring.

I think this is a long-term process for us to create a research environment. So, it always starts with recruitment, and how we sustain people to become researchers at the same time; meaning, during the recruitment process, every time when we have new faculty members, either part time or full time, must be evaluated on the basis of their research competence in addition to teaching performance. I don't know if we also have metrics in evaluating their research performance and commitment to their performance in the future; meaning, it's part of the recruitment process. I hope we will be strict in doing that as well to breed a new generation of researchers for the future of the university. I hope that the alignment of the hired faculty is given much premium in both hiring and study leave grants (Jef, 40).

Benchmarking to areas of best practice

Benchmarking is an essential part in enhancing one's practices. This is more important as the university transitions into a research university.

I suggest that the best universities in the country and abroad be benchmarked, especially those who are really working towards being a research university; benchmarking in the sense that the university forms groups in terms of administration, instruction, research, extension, and so on; visit those universities and formulate respective policies from these best practices. Benchmarking would answer all of these (Jeff, 40).

We are now crafting or enhancing the research policies as well as the incentives scheme. We also need to benchmark from other state universities as to the incentives scheme (Mike, 37).

I agree with Jeff. If we want to be a research university, we must benchmark with premier universities and anchor on them. They have only 12 units of teaching and with grants. The appropriate deloading for every research is 3 units in order to help the faculty finish the research. We have to recontextualize our entire practice of doing research and the entire structure. I think it's not going to be just because we want to be a research university, but it should be part of our growth as a university and should be done constantly. The research policy has to be periodically reviewed (Korina, 43).

We must review the faculty load. We should compare and benchmark with other universities, especially big universities like UP, UST, Dela Salle, and others as to what they do with their faculty loading. Of course, the teachers are trained to teach and research is only an add-on or other skill as mandated by the CHED. We should continue to benchmark with national and international universities and compare and contrast with our practices here (Richard, 58).

Strategizing to achieve publication targets

Publication is considered as the terminal, if not the do-all, of any research work. This is also the bottleneck of most researchers. In effect, most of the participants suggested some strategies to boost the publication productivity of the faculty in the WVSU System.

About publication, I thought it's a new idea and found out that my paper was rejected because somebody had already worked on the subject. I was not able to review the literature (Jeff, 40).

If you're up for citations, it's timely since the citations in this pandemic are fast, especially for COVID-related papers. If you get a chance to be one of the first to write about a particular paper and many researchers are doing that now, I think that's one way to raise your H index. That is why this pandemic is really a fertile opportunity for one to do research and to raise one's H index. Another is the hindrance of publishing research without ethics approval especially in nursing and health disciplines. This is also the reason why I cannot publish in high impact journals, because my papers do not have ethics approval (Adrian, 35).

We know how to do research but we are not sharing our results. It's on the publication side that we have a problem. There should really be a paradigm shift in the way of thinking and doing research in the university that would really springboard for us to be a research university. Although we have PhD programs, why is it that we are not producing a lot of publications? (Mel, 38).

To become a research university, we are now crafting competitive grants and propose the creation of research laboratory in our campuses and in the colleges. We're trying to propose a policy on research fellows as we have some adjustments in the publication awards (Mike, 37).

Incentivizing publications

Corollary to the aforementioned strategies for publication is the need to support the faculty-researchers to defray the publication fees so that they would be motivated to publish in reputable and Scopus journals.

I am doing the write-up now and I would like to publish my study in some paper -Scopus paper. I have two research papers in an international publication and luckily, they were accepted but since it was in dollar form, it was too costly on my part. I hope that the university can also allocate a dollar budget for international publications (Mel, 38).

The question is: How are we going to incentivize the faculty? For every citation that the faculty may have, there should be incentives. I think we have to be more careful and rethink if what we are really aiming for is quantity or quality. Because sometimes we just do research because there is a need for research for accreditation and not about the quality of papers that we are producing. Also, I think there should be a need for the researchers to have a thrust in their research interests. And I believe that as researchers, when they specialize, they know the limitations of their previous work, then they should be the first to address those limitations in their succeeding researches to make themselves experts in that field (Adrian, 35).

The university has no budget for publication in Scopus or ISI or whatever. So, our target is to bring the university to the international level; but then, how can we bring this up if the university will not finance the publication? I hope this problem will be solved soon (Mike, 37).

Simplifying process for research budget utilization

Complexities are innate to any research work. Much is experienced by researchers in utilizing their budget. Most of the participants revealed that they were sometimes demotivated to claim their research funds because of several documents to be processed. Thus, these participants unanimously appeal that the budget office simplifies the process of research claims.

I think we have to simplify the process so we will not go through a very rigorous process before we can get our budget for research. I would agree with sir Adrian, that although we have much budget, it's how we can get the budget. I hope the administration could find ways to really simplify the process for the benefit of the researchers (Willard, 34).

4. Discussion and conclusion

The findings of this research study bring new understandings to the growing literature of what is meant to be a faculty-researcher in a start-up research university in the developing country, the Philippines. These provide cutting-edge discussions on the statuses, challenges, and opportunities that the faculty-researchers are having as of the writing time.

Most of the motivations shared by faculty-researchers supports the idea of Bak and Kim (2015) and Clark (1995) that faculty members become good teachers once they are able to share what they learned through research and publication. It is aligned with the expectancy theory which posits that the faculty are highly motivated to do research if they see it as a ticket for promotion. This explains why many faculty have more publications than the others. The internal motivation of the faculty in doing research includes self-efficacy, satisfaction of curiosity, sense of mastery over subject matter, responding to challenges, research identity, and the joy of involvement. On the other hand, their external motivation includes recognition from peers, love and esteem from students, stimulating colleagues, increases in income/salary, awards, administrative mobility, widening social networks, travel grants for paper presentation, reputation through going to conferences and collaboration with other researchers (Tien, 2008; Brew, et al., 2016; Muborakshoeva, 2015; Nguyen, 2016; Alcazaren, 2021).

Moreover, this paper inspires the claim of Alcazaren (2021) that faculty members tend to be more active in research as it determines their longevity and hierarchy in the academe. Such finding is also congruent to the main objective of the United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030 which emphasizes the role of higher education institutions (HEIs), as change agents, in achieving the said target through their major activities including teaching, research, operations, and community outreach. Besides, Magi & Beerkens (2016) contend that in a research university, the teachers teach research results, make research known, show what it means to be a researcher, help to conduct research, and/or provide research experience through a so-called research-related teaching. Grant & Wakelin (2009; in Magi & Beerkens, 2016) further argue that the main link between teaching and research is when the knowledge is transmitted in practice and eventually makes students co-creators of their learning outcomes.

In one side, some faculty members in the University had low or weak research productivity before and even exacerbated by the pandemic. This result supports the claim of Alhija and Majdob (2017) that higher-ranking teachers have more research productivity compared to their lower-ranking counterparts. The parallel study of Lertputtarak (2008) revealed that the age of faculty members could be a significant determinant of research outcomes. Batool et al. (2018), Zhang (2014), and Peng and Gao (2019) further showed that teaching experience has a statistical impact on faculty research engagement. Conversely, the findings contradict the contention of Taliun (2019; Alam & Lin, 2022) that teaching at the university level could not lessen the research productivity of the faculty; rather, it could be enhanced if the former allow it to.

Overloaded faculty members is one of the factors identified by the participants that causes this low research productivity. This finding does not support the claim of Taliun (2019) that teaching is an opportunity for enrichment rather than a hindrance irrespective of the workload of the faculty members. In contrast, the results of the study back up the claim of Bak & Kim (2015), that both research and teaching are highly demanding activities; thus, devoting time to one activity necessitates a reduction in professors' time and energy for the other. Nonetheless, defenders of faculty research contended that good research is a prerequisite for good teaching and the quality of teaching relies heavily on faculty members' ability to create as well as communicate knowledge.

Apart from this, some participants were apprehensive on the paradoxical national and insitutional policies in research claims. This result conforms with the study of Qitoras & Abuso (2021) and Altbach (2011) that the success of a research university heavily relies on adequate and stable funding and the paradox between policies and practices in research worsen the struggles of the faculty members who wish to avail of symbolic capital to defray research expenses. Similarly, this finding affirms the claim of Jowkar, et al (2011), that research funds have a potential impact

among faculty members in producing high quality research outputs. Moreover, Aziz, et al. (2011) and Amran, et al. (2014) contend that acquiring adequate fund could help produce high impact research outputs because it can support the day-to-day research operations such as cost of up-to-date materials, cost for hiring professionals and skilled research, cost of purchasing and managing appropriate equipment in the conduct of research activities.

Notwithstanding with the foregoing problems associated with research among the faculty-researchers in a university, the participants are determined to pursue their research endeavors by forging partnerships with other researchers within and even outside the University System. This result conforms to the idea of Nguyen (2016), that the university must organize research development workshops to provide support to the faculty members in preparing for research proposals, writing papers for publication, managing a research project, supervision of postgraduate research, etc. Senior researchers may be trained in research management skills while early career researchers may be provided with mentoring support. These participants likewise acknowledge the role of having right or positive attitude in order to sustain their research productivity even during pandemic. This finding supports the claim of State University of New York (1998) that research and teaching must be integrated and components of criteria in evaluating the teaching effectiveness of the faculty in a research university. This is to ensure that the faculty members will foster commitment and right attitude in engaging themselves in research and publication.

Apart from this, time management is empirically tested as effective strategy to withstand with the research-associated problems. This result supports the study of Li, et al. (2013; in Nguyen, 2016) that research policies must be coupled with adequate support to help the faculty members overcome the challenges that this transition may create to them such as but not limited to career fatigue for early and mid-career academics, work-life balance, job burn-out, and turnover for those without doctoral degrees. Similarly, the findings above are aligned with the claim of Denson, Szelenyi & Bresonis (2018) and Ryan, Healy, and Sullivan (2012) that faculty who had no children and single were likely to report work-life balance than their married counterparts with children. Hence, the lack of strong work-life balance among faculty members may add significant pressures and inequalities in the academic workplace.

On the other hand, the participants are still grateful on the support that they received as faculty-members in the University. Primary to this is the research load credits in faculty workload. The result supports the study of Nguyen (2016), that allocating research credits as part of total faculty workload can encourage them to do research. In reference to the study of Rungfamai (2016), the Chulalongkorn University as a research university in Thailand has weekly academic workload of 35 hours per week. The 35 hours workload consists of at least 18 hours of teaching workload, at least 3.5 hours research workload, at least 3.5 hours student development workload, and at least 3.5 hours administrative or academic service workload. It was noted that this faculty workload may differ according to the nature of individual disciplines. To combat this, the university is enjoined to hire additional faculty and staff to augment the research productivity of the university. This result supports the ideas of Gomba and Pacolor (2014) and Nicolov and Ilieva (2007) that the transformation towards a research university would require the university to hire researcher-ready personnel to promote and foster culture of research in a university. In addition, the conversion of the university into a research university conforms with the claims of Nicolov & Ilieva (2007), Altbach (2011), Deem, Mok and Lucas (2007), and Rungfamai (2016), that the research university should consider research capability as a primary qualification for appointment, promotion, and tenure of faculty members. This result further affirms the contentions of Brew, et al. (2016), that many faculty members do not engage in research because they do not have a clear idea as to what it entails. That is why research competence must be emphasized at the onset of hiring.

In addition, the participants admit that the university has to implement strategic plan for publication in order to boost its publication outputs. This result conforms with the studies of Fisho, et al. (2019; in Alam & Lin, 2022) that urged HEIs to channel their research towards sustainability by considering the SDGs framework to gain attention from the discourse community that will eventually lead to a publication. Monetary support to publication was also

lamented by the participants. This result supports the claims of Iqbal and Mahmood (2011, Alcazaren, 2021), and Nicolov and Ilieva (2007), that one of the main goals of a research university is to change the faculty reward system with premium on research prowess and productivity. For universities in developing countries, Nguyen (2015) further contended that university must craft a reward system that maximizes inward mobility so that foreign national and foreign-trained local academics will work with them. This reward system can be in the form of financial or non-financial. Non-financial rewards can be in the form of praise and recognition by managers, mention in bulletins, and lionization at scientific conferences. Financial rewards may be salary bonuses, accelerated promotion, funding for travel, conference attendance, and future research. For publication reward, ten percentage of this amount may be given to the researcher as financial incentives and the remaining 90% is awarded to fund the research publication.

5. Limitations, implications and future research avenues

As the university moves to a research university, all participants support the idea of doing benchmarking with other research universities abroad to strengthen the universities research initiatives. The finding supports the idea that a research university puts premium on graduate education as a major component of its mission with the following research environment: block scheduling, extensive libraries, well-equipped laboratories, sophisticated computer capabilities, and university presses. Under this set-up, graduate students also become teaching assistants. In addition, this research affirms the contention that a research university must have the capability to do research; engage in the informal economy; and be entrepreneurial, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and anticipative of a post-disciplinary world.

It remains a caveat of this research that the findings are limited to the university being studied and probably be more generalizable to universities of the same contexts and characteristics. Similar studies using other variables may be conducted to establish the generalizability of the results of this paper.

Institutional review board statement

The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the scientific research ethical committee, West Visayas State University in July 2022.

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Informed consent statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data availability statement

Data are available upon request from researchers who meet the eligibility criteria. Kindly contact the first author privately through e-mail

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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