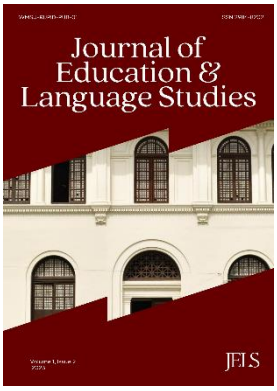

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Understanding the Research and Publication Engagement among WMSU Faculty: A Basis for Research Policy

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Abstract

This study assessed faculty research engagement at Western Mindanao State University (WMSU), its factors, and challenges among faculty stratified by rank across colleges and campuses. Results showed low overall engagement, high in mentorship, proposals, and teaching integration, but low in dissemination and publications. Organizational support was moderate. Strong in incentives and integrity tools, however, weak in travel, presentations, and resources. Statistical analysis identified significant positive correlations between research engagement and educational attainment, male sex, academic rank, and program status (Center of Excellence/Development). Teaching load had a significant inverse relationship. Organizational support trended positively but was not significant. Key challenges included lack of time, administrative burden, research skill gaps, and limited resources/mentorship.

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Introduction

Engagement in research by faculty members serves as an important element of knowledge advancement and institutional reputation in higher education, directly aligning with the field of Educational Administration. As future administrators, scholars in this discipline must understand how to promote research cultures through strategic leadership, policy formulation, and resource allocation. This paper's significance lies in its potential to equip administrators with evidence-based insights for designing targeted interventions that elevate research productivity, enhance institutional performance in national benchmarks like the SUC Levelling program, and fulfill CHED's (2009) mandate for the tripartite functions of instruction, research, and extension.

WMSU, located in Zamboanga City, demonstrates its commitment to research excellence among faculty, as outlined in its Strategic Plan 2023-2027, which positions research as a key driver of innovation and regional development. The university supports this through initiatives like funding access, research facilities, professional development, and administrative aid for grants and projects (RDEC Report, 2023). Faculty research engagement includes scholarly publications, grant acquisition, industry collaborations, and conference participation. Such involvement enriches teaching, strengthen student outcomes, and positions faculty to tackle contemporary challenges.

Despite these mechanisms, WMSU faces low faculty research engagement. The 2023 Statistics and Data Bank Unit (SDBU) report shows only 21% (128 out of 611) of regular faculty engaged in research, with just 14.22% of full-time plantilla faculty holding at least one patent or internationally indexed publication. This reveals a weak research culture, where productivity concentrates among a minority, limiting the university's visibility and

contributions to global knowledge systems. Structural barriers such as heavy teaching loads and limited incentives persist, emphasizing the need for targeted administrative strategies to build capacity and embed research as a core academic expectation.

These gaps threaten WMSU's goals under the SUC Levelling program's Key Result Area (KRA) 3.2.1, which awards maximum points for at least 40% faculty research engagement. Without tailored interventions, productivity may stagnate or decline, hindering the university's aspiration as a SMART Research University.

This study assesses faculty research involvement and organizational support at WMSU to deliver data-driven insights for policy recommendations, developing a vibrant research culture through informed administrative action.

Level of Research Engagement based on Demographic Profile

Highest Educational Attainment

Several studies link higher educational attainment to greater faculty research engagement. Wa-Mbaleka (2015) found master's and doctoral holders more research-active due to enhanced skills. Naser-Abu Alhija et al. (2017) and Fox et al. (2017) similarly showed PhD faculty outperforming those with master's or bachelor's degrees, attributing this to deeper knowledge, experience, and training.

However, the study of Schudde L. (2019) suggest that faculty engagement, rather than highest educational attainment, is a stronger predictor of student engagement, satisfaction, and academic success. These findings lend further support to the notion that highest educational attainment does not necessarily correlate with faculty engagement.

Sex

Studies highlight sex disparities in research engagement. Sansone and Harackiewicz (2000) found women underrepresented in higher education research nationally and internationally, while the study of Ngussa (2018)

revealed higher male productivity, linked to biases, family responsibilities, and support gaps.

On the contrary, Wibowo et al. (2024) found no significant differences in faculty engagement between male and female faculty across disciplines, suggesting sex is not a significant factor in determining faculty engagement.

Rank

Higher rank positively impacts research engagement. Research by Ngussa (2018) revealed greater productivity among higher ranking faculty due to more experience, resources, and support. Supporting this finding, the study of Cagas J. (2021) similarly showed higher ranks more likely to participate compared to lower-ranking faculty members.

Length of Teaching Service

The length of an individual's teaching service has been found to affect faculty engagement in research. Research by Kotrlik, et al., (2002). This may be attributed to the accumulation of knowledge, networks, and research opportunities over time, allowing more experienced faculty members to actively engage in research.

Teaching Load

Heavy teaching loads inversely affect faculty research engagement. A study conducted by Sheik (2013) showed reduced productivity due to limited time and energy. Moreover, Mahilum (2021) similarly linked excessive loads to difficulties balancing teaching, research, and service, lowering engagement.

Status of Program/Course

Based on the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order No. 20 series of 2004, established COE/COD are envisioned to become centers of graduate education and research in their fields of strength contributing to increased funding, resources, and infrastructure dedicated to research. These designated programs/courses may attract faculty with

stronger research interests and provide them with a more supportive environment for conducting research. Furthermore, COE/COD programs/courses likely have higher expectations for research output, which could motivate faculty to be more actively involved in research activities.

Research Involvement (Presentations, Conducted Research, Publications)

Research involvement varies from local to international levels. Kwiek (2020) distinguishes "internationalist" (over half of polish scientists, with more experience and higher positions producing most co-authored publications) from resource limited "locals". Similarly, Eam (2016) notes abroad degrees and support strengthen engagement in Cambodia. Additionally, Jacob et al. (2014) highlight partnerships' role in productivity.

Relationship between Faculty Research Engagement and Organizational Support

Organizational support encompasses various institutional initiatives, policies, and resources provided to facilitate faculty engagement in research. Elbshir (2023) found that seed grants and funding opportunities are vital for initiating research projects, as evidenced by studies showing a direct correlation between financial backing and faculty engagement in research activities. Similarly, Li and Serrano (2024) revealed that providing administrative support helps faculty manage their research responsibilities more effectively, allowing them to focus on their academic work. Additionally, Wang et al. (2025) indicated that mentorship enhances faculty skills and confidence, leading to increased research output and collaboration.

On the contrary, a study conducted by Cagas (2021) examined faculty engagement in research. The author found that the level of organizational support did not have a substantial impact on the extent of faculty engagement in research.

Challenges and Gaps in Research Engagement: Factors Influencing Faculty Engagement in Research

Several studies have identified various factors that influence faculty engagement in research. A study by Wa- Mbaleka, (2015) found that faculty members' intrinsic motivation, including curiosity, passion, and the desire for intellectual stimulation, strongly influence their engagement in research activities. Additionally, the study highlighted the significance of external factors such as research funding, collaborative opportunities, and institutional recognition.

Another study by Okon et, al, (2022) emphasized the role of mentorship in promoting research productivity. They found that mentorship practices significantly contribute to research productivity of faculty members.

Faculty Engagement in Research

Faculty research engagement encompasses definitions, influencing factors, and effects. Artates (2023) deems it vital for Philippine institutions, impacting student outcomes and risking disengagement issues. Raina and Khatri (2015) clarify its dimensions and university variations via literature review.

Multiple studies have investigated elements which affect an educator's research involvement. Sahu et al. (2023) review entrepreneurial engagement influences. Raymunde et al. (2024) explore tertiary instructors' experiences, noticing barriers like finances and strategies such as teamwork and applied problems. Ngussa (2018) highlights gender, rank, and institutional support. Research engagement by faculty members stands as a major investigation interest. Tran (2024) links R&D to improved methods and achievements while King and Imai (2022) show benefits in undergraduate programs for learning and mentorship.

Barriers include individual, professional, and institutional hurdles. Greig et al. (2024) detail agriculture faculty's science communication obstacles. Nakijoba and O (2022) expose Uganda's resource and setting issues and Suart et al. (2023) discuss SoTL participation barriers, valuing collaborative methods.

Finally, some studies examine broader institutional factors and their influence on faculty engagement. Arcega (2023) finds Capiz State University

faculty prioritize autonomy, competence, and relatedness for performance via support. Heng et al. (2020) framework categorizes influences (individual, institutional, national) for developing countries. Askar (2019) stresses quantitative models and Disastra et al. (2024) positions self-efficacy as a moderator between digital skills and engagement, urging professional development and policies

Organizational Support for Research Provided by the Administration

Studies link organizational support to enhanced faculty performance, engagement, and satisfaction. Novitasari (2020) found it strengthens private lecturers' performance in Tangerang via supportive environments and training. Wanyama and Eyamu (2021) showed supervisors' perceptions of support increase commitment, engagement, and research completion rates. Broader analyses include Francis et al. (2022)'s bibliometric review tracing support research since the 1960s, identifying patterns, institutions, and authors for planning and scholarship.

Wang (2024) demonstrated support improves Chinese university teachers' performance and satisfaction, offering a framework for welfare, retention, and institutional success amid educational challenges. Overall, these findings affirm support's direct ties to achievement outcomes

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to assess the level of faculty engagement in research and the level of organizational support provided by the administration at Western Mindanao State University. Specifically, the study answered the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of respondents, including educational attainment, sex, rank, teaching load, Status of Program/course and research involvement (presentations, conducted research, publications) at local, national, and international levels?
2. What is the level of faculty engagement in research?
3. What is the level of organizational support for research provided by the administration?

4. Is there a significant difference in the faculty engagement when data are grouped according to:
   a. Highest Educational Attainment
   b. Sex
   c. Rank
   d. Status of Program/Course
   e. Teaching Load
5. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of faculty engagement in research and organizational support?
6. What are the challenges, gaps in research engagement, and recommendations for policy development?

Scope and Limitations

This research study focused on the level of faculty engagement in research and the level of organizational support provided by the administration at Western Mindanao State University (WMSU). This study investigated faculty demographics (educational attainment, gender, rank, etc.), measured faculty engagement in research, evaluated the level of organizational support, and examined the relationships between these factors. Additionally, the study identified challenges and gaps in research engagement and developed recommendations.

Moreover, this study used survey questionnaires to gather data. Thus, the respondents of this study were only regular WMSU faculty members.

Conceptual Framework

This study assessed the level of faculty engagement in research and the level of organizational support provided by the administration at Western Mindanao State University (WMSU). A survey was conducted to collect data on faculty demographics, perceptions of research engagement, and organizational support provided by the administration to research. The data gathered was analyzed using appropriate statistical tools to assess both faculty engagement and organizational support for research (Figure 1).

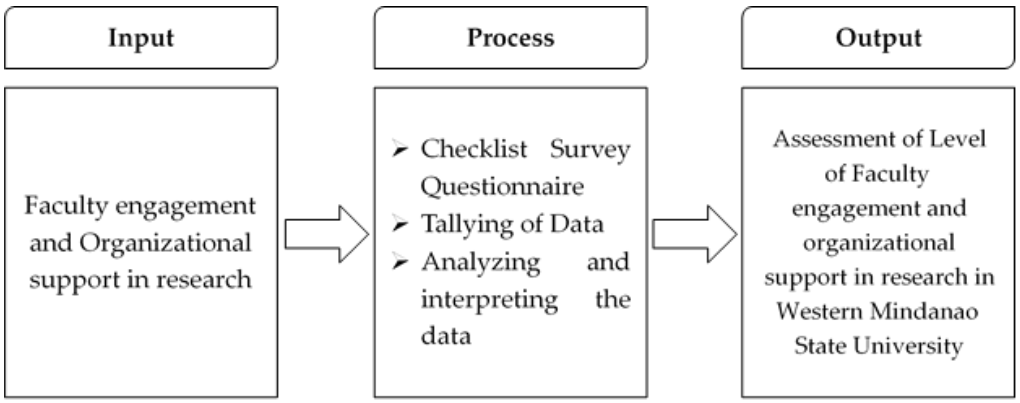

Figure 1. *Conceptual framework of the study*

Theoretical Framework

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory posits that relationships involves the exchange of resources, and individuals engage in reciprocal actions to maximize benefits and minimize costs (Emerson, 1976). Within the context of faculty research engagement and organizational support to research, this theory suggests that faculty members who receive adequate support from their institutions are more likely to engage in research activities. In return, increased faculty research engagement can lead to improved institutional outcomes, such as enhanced reputation and increased funding opportunities.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is a significant difference between faculty engagement in research and their demographic profiles.
2. There is a significant relationship between the extent of faculty engagement in research and organizational support.

Methods

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive research survey method to examine the level of faculty engagement and organizational support in research at WMSU. Likewise, factors that provided significant outcomes and those that hindered benefits were identified through the survey. Finally, the quantitative data were used to analyze the frequency of responses for each category (e.g., sex, rank, etc.), the level of faculty engagement, and the level of organizational support in research provided by the administration and the significant differences and relationships between factors.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Western Mindanao State University's (WMSU) main campus in Zamboanga City and its External Studies Unit (ESU) campuses. WMSU is located in Zamboanga City, the third-largest city in the Philippines, situated on the southwestern coast. Zamboanga, known for its beauty, is often referred to as "Ciudad de Flores" (City of Flowers), a name derived from the Malay term meaning "flower garden" (wmsu.edu.ph). WMSU has two primary campuses: the main campus, comprising 79,000 square meters and 9,147 square meters in the city proper, and a satellite campus of 200,000 square meters in San Ramon, approximately 20 kilometers from the city. ESU campuses are located in the provinces of Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay. The university has a student population of over 32,000, more than 600 regular faculty members, and over 200 administrative personnel.

WMSU comprises 16 colleges, and external campuses, offering undergraduate and postgraduate courses specializing in accounting, education, engineering, nursing, arts and humanities, social work, science, and mathematics. In addition to these major fields, WMSU also offers courses in agriculture, architecture, forestry, home economics, nutrition and dietetics, computer science, criminology, Asian and Islamic Studies, and special degree courses for foreign students.

WMSU ranked sixth among 68 universities nationwide, according to a survey of the Top Academic Institutions in the Philippines conducted by the Commission on Higher Education. The university's College of Teacher Education and College of Architecture are Centers of Development, while the College of Social Work and Community Development was awarded the distinction of Best School for Social Work in the Philippines. Respondents in this study were regular faculty members selected from the various colleges and ESUs, stratified by academic rank.

Population and Sampling Method

This study employed a multi-stage sampling method to select a representative sample of Western Mindanao State University (WMSU) faculty members. Based on the August 2024 Human Resource Management Office report, there were 645 regular faculty members across all colleges consisting of 57 professors, 192 associate professors, 200 assistant professors, and 196 instructors. A sample size calculator (statulator.com) was used with a 95% confidence level and a 50% assumed response distribution (p=0.5) to determine the sample size of 241 faculty members. After determining the sample size, the first stage used stratified sampling among the academic ranks to ensure that all ranks (Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, and Instructors) were well represented. The second stage used an online randomizer for the simple random sampling to determine the final respondents per rank. The computation for the percentage of respondents per rank and the number of target respondents per rank was based on Cochran's (1977) method.

Formula for the percentage of computation per rank:

$$\%\ per\ rank = \frac{Total\ number\ of\ faculty\ per\ rank}{Total\ population}$$

Formula for the number of respondents per rank:

$$No.\ of\ target\ respondents\ per\ rank\ = sample\ size * \%\ per\ rank$$

Table 1
Number of respondents per academic rank

Academic Rank	No. of Faculty	Percentage Rank	No. of Target respondents
Professor	57	9%	22
Associate Professor	192	30%	72
Assistant Professor	200	31%	75
Instructor	196	30%	72
Total	**645**	**100%**	**241**

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The study included regular WMUS faculty members, excluding those on study or rehabilitation leave during the data collection, as well as visiting lecturers.

Research Instrument

The research instrument that was used in data gathering was an adopted survey questionnaire from the study of Chan et. al. (2021) and Soe (2019). The questionnaire consisted of different questions which required the personal opinions and preferences of the respondents. The different questions identified (Part I) - the Profile of the Respondents, Educational Attainment, and Research Background. (Part II) - The extent of faculty engagement in research, and the extent of organizational support on faculty research provided by the administration with guided questions using a 5-point Likert Scale (5 – Highly engaged/Highly supportive, 4 – Engaged/Supportive, 3 – Moderately Engaged/Moderately Supportive, 2 – Less Engaged/Less Supportive, 1 – Not Engaged/Not Supportive), (Part III) recommendations to improve the research engagement of the faculty..

Validity and Reliability Test

The questionnaire was not subjected to content validation since it was an adopted questionnaire with modifications. However, the questionnaire

underwent pilot testing and was subjected to reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha to determine its reliability. The results revealed a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.785, which implies that the questionnaire is reliable. Overall, the Cronbach's alpha of .785 suggests good reliability, indicating that the items are moderately to strongly correlated and measuring the same underlying construct.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before the conduct of the study, a formal letter addressed to the University President through the endorsement and recommendations from the Chairperson of Graduate School, Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (OVPAA) was submitted to seek permission to conduct the study. Next, the researcher formally gave a letter to the different college deans to ask permission to gather responses from the faculty. Upon submitting a letter to gather data to the deans, the researcher invited and oriented all the faculty regarding the study and inform the participants of the positive effects of the study. Also, the researcher provided a consent form to the respondents to inform their voluntary participation and their right to withdraw from the study. No conflict of interest `was involved throughout the study. The researcher ensured the respondents of their protection against harm. Thus, the researcher informed the respondents that the survey questionnaire was good for 5-10 minutes. Additionally, the respondents of this study were oriented regarding the parts of the instrument from answering a survey questionnaire. For the faculty in the External Studies Units, the researcher was able to solicit their responses through an online modality. The survey questionnaire was encoded using Google Form software. The survey questionnaire's link was given to the respondents who agreed to participate in the study. Meanwhile, faculty in the WMSU main campus answered the survey questionnaire through the printed handouts. The survey questionnaires were distributed to the respondents who gave their voluntary participation at their most convenient time.

Ethical Considerations

To avoid any inconvenience, an ethics clearance was secured before the data gathering. The researcher sought permission from the participants through

a consent form and participants were informed of their rights to withdraw from the study if they are not confident to disclose any information. The researcher asked the participants their preferred time of answering the survey questions during the interview to eliminate fear and pressure. The researcher secured the responses of the participants in a manner that intended to produce valid, interpretative, and reproducible results. The researcher informed the respondents that the materials will be protected and will never be disclosed to anyone. Also, to protect the anonymity of respondents and institutions, some specific information about the respondents has been omitted throughout the report.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data gathered from the survey were organized and integrated into a usable format for analysis. The data was summarized by tallying responses for each question across all questionnaires. The rating scale for each question was calculated, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Finally, the results were interpreted to draw conclusions aligned with the study's objectives.

Identifying Challenges and Solutions

Frequency responses were used to identify challenges and gaps in research engagement. Additionally, policy recommendations were also solicited from the responses of the respondents.

Statistical Treatment

Data Analysis

To investigate the demographic profile of the respondents, the researcher analyzed the frequency of responses for each category (e.g., gender, rank, etc.).

The level of faculty engagement in research and the level of organizational support provided by the administration was measured using an average weighted mean based on the respondents' rating scale.

To determine significant differences, the researcher employed the following statistical tests:

*Mann-Whitney U Test***:** This was used to compare faculty engagement in research according to Sex and Status of Program/Course.

Kruskal Walis Test: This was used to compare faculty engagement in research across categories such as highest educational attainment, rank, length of teaching service, and teaching load.

*Spearman Rho Rank***:** This was used to assess the significant relationship between the extent of faculty engagement in research and the level of organizational support, with an alpha level of 0.05 (two-tailed).

All data collected were entered into JAMOVI software for efficient data analysis.

Identification of Challenges and Gaps

Frequency responses were used to identify challenges and gaps in research engagement.

Results and Discussion

Table 2

Demographic profile of respondents

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	125	52
Female	116	48
Academic Rank		
Instructors	72	30
Assistant Professors	75	31
Associate Professors	72	30
Professors	22	9
Length in Teaching Service		
Below 6 years	55	23

6 – 10 years	60	25
11 – 15 years	43	18
16 – 20 years	27	11
21 – 25 years	14	6
26 – 30 years	27	11
31 – 35 years	10	4
41 years and above	5	2
Teaching Load		
6 – 8 units	27	11
9 -12 units	59	24
13 – 16 units	27	11
17 – 20 units	59	24
21 – 24 units	27	11
More than 24 units	42	19
Highest Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree with Master's Units	22	9
Master's Degree with Doctorate Units	67	28
Master's Degree	92	38
Doctorate Degree	60	25
Status of Program Course enrolled in Master's/ Doctorate Degree		
Center of Excellence/ Center of Development	125	52
Non-Center of Excellence/ Center of Development	116	48

Research Background of the Respondents over the Last Three Years

The figures presents the research background of the respondents over the past three years, detailing their research engagement across various dimensions. The data reveals a wide range of research experience, ranging from active involvement in multiple projects and dissemination activities to limited engagement.

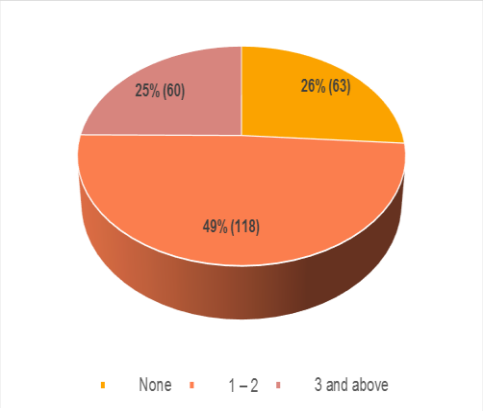

Figure 2. *Number of research conducted for the last 3 years*

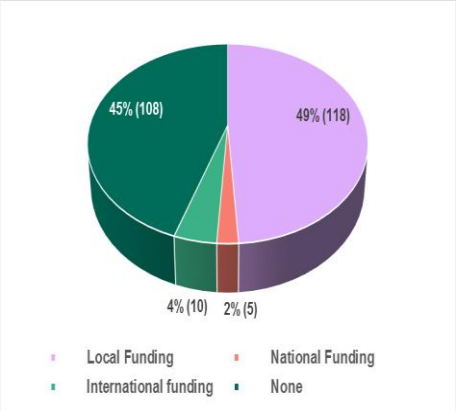

Figure 3. *Scope of researches conducted for the last 3 years*

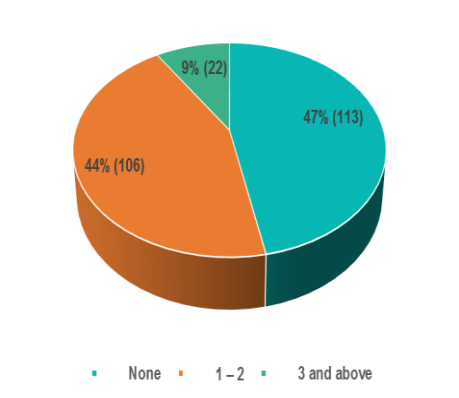

Figure 4. *Number of researches presented (Oral/Poster) for the last 3 years*

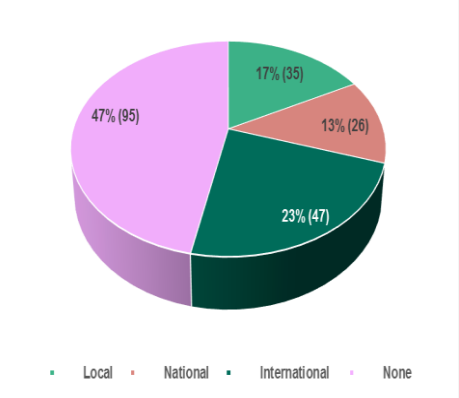

Figure 5. *Level of researchers presented for the last 3 years*

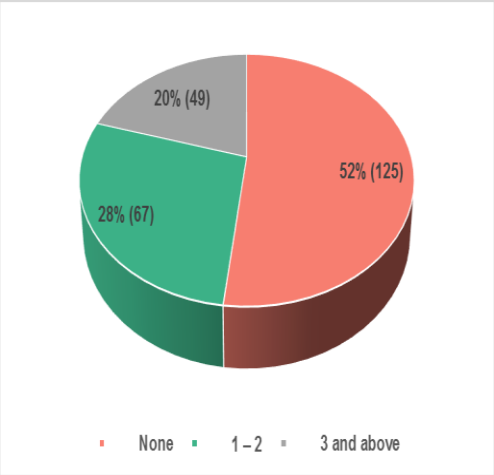

Figure 6. *Number of publications for the last 3 years*

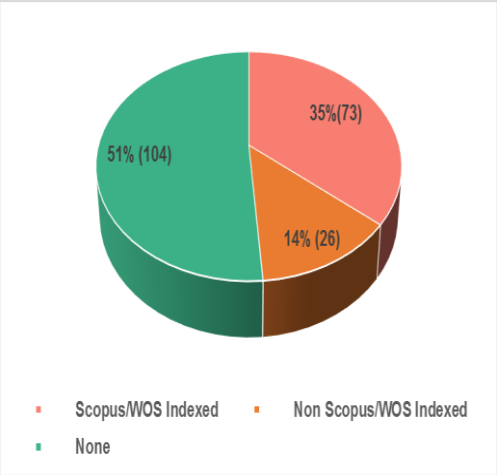

Figure 7. *Type of journal published for the 3 years*

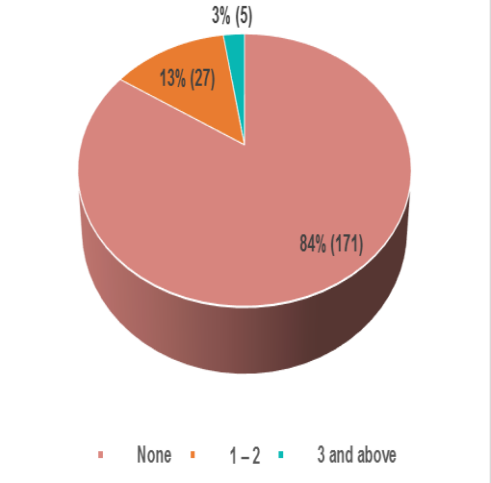

Figure 8. *Number of intellectual property applied/granted*

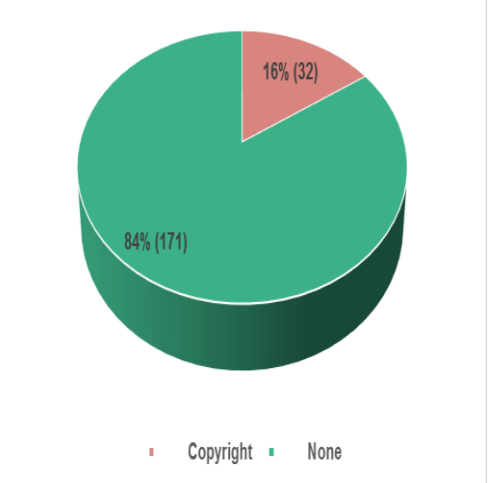

Figure 9. *Type of intellectual property applied/granted for the last 3 years*

The Level of Faculty Engagement in Research

The level of faculty engagement in research across six indicators, using a weighted mean and adjectival interpretation is provided. The data reveal a low overall level of research engagement among the faculty, although with notable variations across specific activities.

The highest level of engagement is observed in advising undergraduate and graduate thesis students (M = 3.32, average). This suggests that faculty members are actively involved in guiding student research, a crucial component of academic mentorship and training. Faculty also demonstrate average engagement in developing research proposals for their college/department (M = 2.85, average). This indicates a willingness to contribute to the research capacity of their units, although the level of engagement is slightly lower compared with student mentorship.

Furthermore, faculty report average engagement in incorporating research findings into their classroom instruction (M = 3.14, average). This highlights the connection between research and teaching, suggesting that faculty members are using research to inform and enrich their pedagogical practices. However, engagement in disseminating research findings through academic media channels (M = 2.15, low) and publishing in refereed journals (M = 2.39, low) is considerably lower. This difference highlights potential barriers to publication and broader dissemination, such as time constraints, access to publication resources, or a lack of incentives for publication.

The lowest level of engagement is observed in assisting the Editorial Board in the production of the research journal (M = 1.67, very low). This suggests that faculty involvement in the editorial process is limited. This could be due to various factors, including the structure of the editorial board, time constraints, or a lack of interest in this specific aspect of research engagement.

In summary, the overall level of engagement in research, as reflected by the composite weighted mean (M = 2.59), is low. While faculty demonstrate active involvement in mentoring students, developing proposals, and integrating research into instruction, their engagement in disseminating

research findings and contributing to journal production is less pronounced. This finding is consistent with the Statistics and Data Bank Unit's (2023) report, which also noted low research engagement among regular faculty.

This observation aligns with existing literature emphasizing the importance of faculty research engagement. Tran (2024) argues that faculty research and development (R&D) activities contribute to improved teaching methodologies, ultimately enhancing teaching quality and student learning outcomes. Similarly, King and Imai (2022) explored the benefits and challenges of faculty-mentored undergraduate research programs, highlighting positive impacts on both student learning and faculty mentorship experiences. Together, these studies, along with the present findings, highlight the multifaceted benefits of faculty research involvement, extending beyond scholarly achievements to encompass improved teaching practices, student development, and institutional growth.

The Level of Organizational Support for Research

The faculty perceptions of the level of organizational support for research provided by the administration, using weighted means and adjectival interpretations. The data reveals a generally average level of support, with some areas perceived as more supportive than others.

The administration provides average supportive travel allowances for faculty attending research-related seminars or training (M = 3.31, average). Average support is also reported for incentives provided to In-House Review presenters (M = 3.20, average), presenters at national and international fora (M = 3.31, average), and faculty researchers who won Best Paper Presenter during the In-House Review (M = 3.32, average). These findings suggest that while the administration provides some support for travel and recognizes research contributions through incentives, there may be room for improvement in the level of support offered.

A higher level of support is perceived for incentives given to faculty who publish in Scopus or Web of Science indexed journals (M = 3.56, high). This suggests that the administration prioritizes and actively encourages publication in high-impact journals. This focus on high-quality publications

is a positive indicator of the institution's commitment to research dissemination.

The administration is viewed as averagely supportive in providing free access to ICT and media literacy research facilities, including e-journals, online bibliographic databases, and e-books (M = 3.33, average). Average support is also reported for providing free statistical services, such as SPSS and other relevant software (M = 3.31, average). While the administration provides access to essential research tools, improvements in accessibility or the range of resources could be beneficial.

The highest level of support is perceived for the provision of software such as plagiarism detectors and grammar checkers, intended to ensure the originality and quality of research works (M = 3.64, high). This strong support for research integrity and quality control demonstrates the administration's commitment to ethical research practices.

The overall level of organizational support for research, as perceived by the faculty (M = 3.37), is averagely supportive. While valuable support is provided, especially for publication incentives and research integrity, further development is needed in travel support, research presentation incentives, and resource access.

WMSU has implemented several support strategies for faculty research, including access to funding, facilities, professional development, and administrative assistance (RDEC report 2023). This is intended to empower faculty research and boost the university's research output and reputation. Research consistently shows that organizational support benefits faculty performance, engagement, and satisfaction. For example, Novitasari (2020) found that organizational support improved the performance of lecturers in Tangerang by engaging them as key links between the support and enhanced performance.

Difference in the faculty engagement when grouped according to highest educational attainment, sex, rank, status of program/ course, and teaching load?

Research engagement differed significantly across the four educational attainment groups ($p = .001$). This indicates a non-uniform distribution of research engagement across faculty educational levels.

The mean ranks illustrate this difference. Faculty with a Doctorate Degree exhibited the highest mean rank (132.42), followed by those with a Master's Degree with Doctorate Units (106.95), then those with a Master's Degree (89.29), and lastly, those with a Bachelor's Degree with Master's Units (63.18). This pattern clearly indicates a positive correlation between educational attainment and research engagement, with higher degrees associated with greater research activity. This implies that faculty with higher academic degrees are more likely to be engaged in research.

Moreover, pairwise comparisons revealed significant differences in research engagement between faculty with Bachelor's Degrees and Master's Units and those with Master's Degrees with Doctorate Units, Doctorate Degrees, and Master's Degrees. Higher educational attainment is associated with increased research capacity, likely due to the advanced knowledge and skills gained through doctoral training. These findings align with the research of Wa-Mbaleka (2015). Wa-Mbaleka found that individuals with higher levels of education were more likely to be actively involved in research. Similarly, Naser–Abu Alhija et. al. (2017) revealed that faculty with doctoral degrees showed higher research productivity than those with master's or bachelor's degrees. This is consistent with the greater research engagement observed among faculty with doctorates in the study. Furthermore, Fox et. al, 2017 reported greater research engagement among faculty with PhDs, which they attributed to the deeper knowledge, research experience, and professional development associated with advanced degrees.

Mann-Whitney U test that compared research engagement between male and female faculty shows a statistically significant difference in research engagement between male and female faculty ($p = .018$). This indicates statistically significant, unequal research engagement between the sexes. On average, male faculty exhibit higher research engagement than female faculty.

Sansone & Harackiewicz (2000)) found that women were significantly underrepresented in research activities, particularly at the national and international levels. While institutional initiatives aimed at promoting equitable research productivity exist, Ngussa (2018) reported significantly higher research output among male faculty. This disparity warrants further examination, as it may be attributed to a confluence of factors. Potential explanations include pervasive gender biases, which can manifest in differential access to resources, mentorship, and collaborative opportunities (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012). Furthermore, unequal distribution of family responsibilities, often disproportionately borne by female faculty, may hinder research time and productivity (Misra et al., 2011). Finally, discrepancies in institutional support, such as access to research funding, teaching load adjustments, and promotion criteria, could contribute to the observed gender gap.

Moreover, the Kruskal-Wallis test reveals that a statistically significant difference in research engagement across the four academic ranks ($p = .001$). This indicates that research engagement is not evenly distributed among faculty at different ranks. The mean ranks show a clear upward trend: Instructors (87.47), Assistant Professors (95.65), Associate Professors (127.01), and Professors (152.67). This pattern suggests a positive correlation between academic rank and research engagement, with higher-ranked faculty generally exhibiting greater engagement in research activities.

Additionally, a pairwise comparison between academic ranks shows several significant differences. Instructors exhibited significantly lower research engagement than both Associate Professors ($p = .001$) and Professors ($p = .009$). Associate Professors and Professors also demonstrated significantly greater engagement than Assistant Professors ($p = .043$ and $p = .042$, respectively). However, there were no significant differences between Instructors and Assistant Professors ($p = 1.000$), or between Associate Professors and Professors ($p = 1.000$).

These findings suggest a hierarchical pattern of research engagement, with a clear increase from Instructors to Associate Professors and Professors. The non-significant differences between adjacent ranks (Instructor-Assistant Professor and Associate Professor-Professor) suggest that while a general

trend exists, the most substantial increases in research engagement occur at specific rank transitions.

Moreover, the results align with previous research conducted by Ngussa (2018) indicated that higher-ranking faculty generally exhibit greater research productivity, likely due to increased experience, resources, and institutional support. Similarly, a study by Cagas J. (2021) found that higher-ranking faculty were more likely to engage in research.

The results on Mann-Whitney U test, comparing research engagement levels between faculty members in Centers of Excellence/Development (COE/COD) programs/courses and those in non-COE/COD programs/courses are shown. The data indicates a statistically significant difference in research engagement between the two groups ($p = .007$). Faculty affiliated with COE/COD programs/courses demonstrated a higher mean rank (120.08) in research engagement than their counterparts in non-COE/COD programs/courses (95.11). This suggests that faculty within COE/COD programs/courses are more engaged in research activities.
This finding could be attributed to several factors. According to CHED Memorandum Order No. 20, series of 2004, established COEs/CODs are envisioned to become centers of graduate education and research in their fields of strength, contributing to increased funding, resources, and infrastructure dedicated to research. These designated programs/courses may attract faculty with stronger research interests and provide them with a more supportive environment for conducting research. Furthermore, COE/COD programs/courses likely have higher expectations for research output, which could motivate faculty to be more actively involved in research activities.

Moreover, a study by Tan & Lee (2016) study revealed that faculty in research-intensive or specialized programs engaged more than those teaching general courses. This suggests that program nature, demands, and scholarly activity significantly contribute to faculty engagement. Furthermore, this implies that faculty in COE/COD programs/ courses are more likely to be engaged in research.

Kruskal-Wallis test results based on research engagement across teaching load categories are provided. The results indicate a statistically significant difference in research engagement across teaching load categories ($p = .035$). This suggests that teaching load influences faculty research engagement. The mean ranks generally decreased as teaching load increased: 9-12 units (121.97); 6-8 and 13-16 units (both 111.16); 17-20 units (102.48); 21-24 units (90.72); and more than 24 units (78.92). This pattern suggests an inverse relationship between teaching load and research engagement.

Furthermore, pairwise comparisons revealed a significant difference in research engagement between faculty teaching more than 24 units and those teaching 9-12 units. This implies that faculty teaching more than 24 units are likely to be less engaged in research, while faculty teaching 9-12 units are more likely to have higher engagement. These findings are consistent with prior research conducted by Sheik (2013). Sheik discovered an inverse relationship between teaching load and research productivity, noting that heavy teaching loads limit faculty time and energy for research. Similarly, Mahilum (2011) found that excessively high teaching loads negatively affected faculty engagement. The finding that faculty teaching more than 24 units showed significantly lower research engagement supports these observations. This suggests that excessively heavy workloads hinder faculty's ability to balance teaching, research, and service, leading to decreased research engagement.

The Relationship between Faculty Engagement in Research and Organizational Support

The results indicate a weak positive correlation between faculty research engagement and organizational support ($r = .075$). However, this correlation is not statistically significant ($p = .289$). This suggests only a weak, and likely coincidental, tendency for faculty who perceive greater organizational support to be more research engaged.

The non-significant p-value (.289) confirms that the observed correlation is too weak to suggest a real relationship between research engagement and organizational support in this sample. Thus, while the positive correlation coefficient suggests a tendency in the hypothesized direction, we cannot confidently conclude that organizational support is associated with research

engagement based on these data. These findings align with prior research. J. Cagas (2021), found that organizational support did not substantially impact faculty research engagement in a university.

The Challenges, Gaps in Research Engagement, and Recommendations for Policy Development

The most frequently cited reason for not conducting research is a lack of time (39%). This suggests that time constraints due to teaching responsibilities, administrative duties, or personal commitments are a significant impediment to research involvement. Administrative duties also pose a substantial challenge (28%). This emphasizes the importance of finding ways to balance competing demands on faculty time.

A lack of knowledge about research methods is another notable challenge (19%), suggesting a need for professional development opportunities focused on research methodologies and skills enhancement. A lack of available mentorship or guidance is also a barrier (8%), indicating a need for accessible research mentorship programs.

Limited access to research resources (7%), despite the increasing availability of online resources, suggests that some faculty still face challenges accessing necessary scholarly literature. A lack of interest in research was reported by only 5% of respondents.

Less frequent reasons included the perception that teaching is the primary responsibility (4%), a lack of colleague engagement (3%), and perceived lack of cooperation (1%). While these reasons are less prevalent, they still provide valuable insights into the complexities of research engagement.

The data highlights perceived barriers to research engagement, other research emphasizes the influence of individual characteristics and institutional factors. This implies that various factors can affect research engagement of faculty. Wa- Mbaleka, (2015), for example, found that faculty passion for research is a key driver, while heavy workloads can hinder engagement. This aligns with the frequent mention of time constraints in the data (39%). Similarly, the importance of mentorship, highlighted by Okon et.

al., (2022), resonates with the 6 responses indicating a lack of available guidance. Finally, the positive impact of a supportive research environment, as noted by Schudde L. (2019), suggests that addressing the perceived lack of colleague engagement (3%) and cooperation (1%) could be beneficial.

Policy Recommendations addressing Challenges and Gaps in Research

Policy recommendations were derived from the responses of the respondents on the challenges and gaps in research and are supported by existing research from Wanyama and Eyamu (2021), Novitasari (2020), and Francis et al. (2022).

The University may explore other strategies to reduce administrative burdens on faculty, such as streamlining administrative processes, delegating tasks to administrative staff, or providing additional administrative support to departments.

The University may review teaching load policies to ensure that faculty have adequate time for research. The university may implement a system of course release time or dedicated research time for faculty actively engaged in research, particularly those with grant funding.

The University may enhance the Research Capability Program (RCP) by expanding its scope, frequency, and accessibility. The RCP may offer regular, discipline-specific training on research methodologies, data analysis, grant writing, and publication strategies, ensuring that all faculty members can participate.

The University may integrate a formal research mentorship component into the RCP, pairing experienced researchers with junior faculty. Clear guidelines, regular monitoring, and incentives (e.g., merit points, recognition) may be provided to encourage experienced faculty to serve as mentors within the program.

The University library is encouraged to regularly assess and expand its collection of electronic resources, including journals, databases, and e-books, to ensure that faculty have access to the latest research in their fields. The

library may also provide training and support to faculty on effectively utilizing these resources.

The University may clearly articulate its expectations regarding research engagement for all faculty members, regardless of their primary teaching responsibilities. This could be incorporated into faculty handbooks, performance evaluations, and promotion criteria.

The University may develop a culture of research collaboration and support by organizing regular research seminars, workshops, and networking events. Departments may create opportunities for faculty research collaboration.

Conclusion

Faculty at WMSU demonstrate strong engagement in mentoring student research, developing research proposals, and integrating research into their teaching. However, their involvement in disseminating research through publications and journal contributions is considerably lower, suggesting potential obstacles to these activities. The study also found a generally average level of perceived organizational support for research, with strengths in publication incentives and research integrity tools. Nevertheless, significant gaps persist in travel funding for scholarly activities, incentives for research presentation, and access to necessary research materials and facilities.

Statistical analysis revealed significant relationships between research engagement and several demographic and institutional factors. Higher educational attainment, male sex, and higher academic rank were all positively associated with greater research engagement. Faculty in Centers of Excellence/Development (COE/COD) programs/courses also reported higher levels of research engagement. On the other hand, higher teaching loads were associated with decreased research engagement. Interestingly, while perceived organizational support showed a positive trend with research engagement, the correlation was not statistically significant, suggesting that other factors may play a more prominent role in driving research activity at WMSU.

Furthermore, the study identified several key challenges hindering faculty research engagement, most particularly a lack of time, followed by administrative burdens and insufficient knowledge of research methods. Limited access to resources and mentorship, along with perceptions about the value of research and collaboration, also emerged as barriers.

Based on these findings, several policy recommendations are proposed to enhance faculty research engagement at WMSU. These include strategies to reduce administrative burdens and teaching loads, invest in research training and mentorship programs, improve access to research resources, clearly articulate research expectations, and promote a collaborative research culture. These recommendations are grounded in the study's findings and supported by existing research, which emphasizes the importance of institutional support, clear expectations, and a conducive research environment.

The findings of the study contradicted with the claim on the theoretical framework of the study on the Social Exchange Theory of Emerson (1976) that faculty members who receive adequate support from their institutions are more likely to engage in research activities. The presence of support structures does not automatically translate into widespread research participation, indicating that the exchange relationship between institution and faculty is not strongly as the theory would predict.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing faculty research engagement at WMSU. By addressing the identified challenges and implementing the proposed policy recommendations, WMSU can create a more supportive and stimulating environment for faculty research, ultimately contributing to the university's mission of advancing knowledge and scholarship. Future research could explore the long-term impact of these recommendations and further investigate the complex interplay of individual, institutional, and contextual factors that shape faculty research engagement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered to enhance faculty research engagement and support at Western Mindanao State University (WMSU):

*Address Time Constraints and Administrative Burden***.** The most frequently cited barrier to research engagement was lack of time, often due to heavy teaching loads and administrative duties. Therefore, WMSU may: (a) Implement strategies to reduce administrative burden on faculty. This could include streamlining administrative processes, delegating tasks to administrative staff, or providing additional administrative support to departments; (b) Review and revise teaching load policies to ensure faculty have adequate time for research. This could involve implementing a system of course release time or dedicated research time for faculty actively engaged in research, particularly those with external grant funding.

Strengthen the Research Capability Program (RCP) and Build Research Skills. A lack of knowledge about research methods and a lack of available mentorship were also identified as significant challenges. WMSU may: (a) Enhance the Research Capability Program (RCP) by expanding its scope, frequency and accessibility. The program may offer regular discipline on specific training on methodologies, data analysis techniques, grant writing, and publication strategies ensuring that all faculty members can participate; (b)Establish a formal research mentorship component into the RCP program that pairs experienced researchers with junior faculty. Clear guidelines , regular monitoring, and incentives (e.g., merit points, recognition) may be provided to encourage experienced faculty to serve as mentors within the program.

*Improve Access to Research Resources***.** Limited access to research resources, despite the increasing availability of online resources, remains a challenge for some faculty. WMSU may regularly assess and expand its collection of electronic resources, including journals, databases, and e-books, to ensure that faculty have access to the latest research in their fields. The library may also provide training and support to faculty on effectively utilizing these resources.

*Clarify Research Expectations and Promote a Research Culture***.** Some faculty perceived teaching as their primary responsibility, and others cited a lack of colleague engagement and cooperation. WMSU may: (a) Clearly articulate its expectations regarding research engagement for all faculty members, regardless of their primary teaching responsibilities. This may be incorporated into faculty handbooks, performance evaluations, and promotion criteria; (b) Promote a culture of research collaboration and support by organizing regular research seminars, workshops, and networking events. Departments may create opportunities for faculty research collaboration.

*Enhance Organizational Support for Research***.** While organizational support was perceived as averagely supportive, there are areas for improvement. WMSU may: (a) Review and enhance travel allowances for faculty attending research-related seminars or training, including national and international conferences; (b) Expand incentives for research presentations at in-house reviews, national, and international for a; (c) Ensure consistent and reliable access to ICT and media literacy research facilities, including e-journals, online bibliographic databases, and e-books; (d) Promote awareness and ease of access to statistical services, such as SPSS and other relevant software.

*Address Funding Challenges***.** A significant proportion of faculty reported not securing any research funding. WMSU may explore strategies to increase internal research funding opportunities and provide training and support to faculty on how to effectively apply for external funding (national and international).

*Encourage Research Dissemination and Publication***.** The study found low engagement in disseminating research findings. WMSU may: (a) Provide workshops and training on effective research dissemination strategies, including publishing in refereed journals and presenting at conferences; (b) Explore establishing or strengthening internal publication platforms (e.g., university journals) to provide faculty with more opportunities to publish their work; (c) Incentivize publication in high-impact journals (e.g., Scopus/Web of Science indexed journals) through recognition and rewards.

*Promote Intellectual Property Awareness and Support***:** The low number of IP applications suggests a need for increased awareness and support in this area. WMSU may conduct workshops and training on intellectual property rights and the process of securing IP protection. Provide resources and support to faculty who wish to pursue IP protection for their research.

Policy for Faculty Affiliation with Centers of Excellence/Development (COE/COD) Programs/Courses. Faculty affiliated with COE/COD Programs/Courses have shown a higher level of research engagement than those affiliated with non-COE/COD programs. WMSU may develop a policy for faculty members applying for study leave to enroll in institutions offering COE/COD Programs/Courses.

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