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BSU FACULTY-RESEARCHERS' TIME-USE AND PERCEPTIONS ON HONORARIUM DISALLOWANCES

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HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Only 41% of the teaching employees of the University were identified as faculty researchers.
- ✓ The actual workload of the faculty researchers is nearly twice the required total workload in the University where a bulk is concentrated on teaching. Research functions are usually done before and after the official working hours.
- ✓ While workloads of men and women faculty researchers do not show significant disparity, accounts and observations showed otherwise. When it comes to managing workloads, it entails much time and effort for women which is sometimes 'normalized'. Aside from working during weekends and multi-tasking, women tend to bring home their work.
- ✓ Externally funded R&D projects brings in voluminous resources which are translated into capital outlay as well as employability of BSU graduates. Despite setbacks in incentives due to the ongoing Notice of Disallowances (NDs), resource generation through R&D project is increasing exponentially over the past years with recorded fund of Php125.9M in 2018 compared to the total Php59.3M from 2011-2013.
- ✓ Gratification and sense of fulfillment drive the faculty researchers to engage in research despite the limited compensation for doing research work in the University.



INTRODUCTION

Time use studies puts value to work including those that are outside the cash nexus. Data from time use can reveal an individual's activities that are specific as well as comprehensive (ESCAP, 2000). The study aimed to establish the work profile of the faculty researchers' in BSU in relation to time use for both paid work and 'other work' in the context of 'disallowance' stories.

If work is defined as any conscious, purposeful activity which serves the material and non-material needs of the individual and the community (Anderson, 1961 cited in UN-ESCAP, 2003), then how 'work' is compensated and recognized can define the well-being of a society (Batani et al., 2014). Against this backdrop, the study aims to capture workload of faculty-researchers with focus on their multiple functions, how they work out work complexities and how they manage research engagements despite disincentivizing policies. Faculty researchers in this study are defined as the faculty members who have produced, published or presented at least two research-based papers within the last

three years and/or received award for research and publication at any time, and must have at least two research outputs/or awards listed.

In the context of Audit Observation Memos (AOMs) and Notice of Disallowances (NDs), the output of this study hopes to provide evidences to support the claim of the faculty researchers for overtime compensation. At the minimum, it has to point to the efforts of the faculty researchers in doing research as well as their work management strategies, including efforts to negotiate for an incentivizing policy.

METHODOLOGY

Faculty researchers of Benguet State University served as the respondents and informants of the study. The stylized survey questionnaire answered by 42 faculty researchers was used to capture the time allocation of the respondents. Furthermore, 16 key interviews with faculty researchers were done to supplement the data gathered from the survey as well as to capture nuances. In addition, secondary data such as Daily Time Records (DTR) as well as the Position Description Forms (PDF) of the employees were reviewed. The data gathering period was from 2016 to 2017.

FINDINGS

Time-Use of Faculty-Researchers

The 'typical routine' of the faculty researchers starts with household chores from around 5:00 am to 7:30 am and from 6:00 pm to 8:45 pm. In between these timeline is spent at their workplaces.

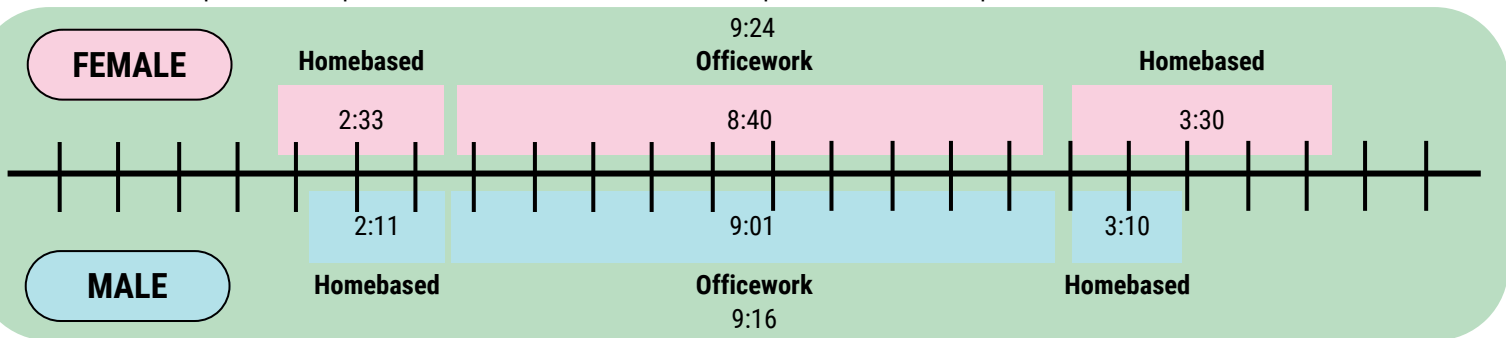


Figure 1. Time-Use of Faculty-Researchers

For paid employment, the total average time spent by the faculty researchers reflected on the figure does not necessarily reflect their time spent performing all their functions in a day. There are many instances where they could only carry out their teaching function and administrative work in a given day whilst research works will be carried out the next day or it would be taken home as 'work at home.'

Table 1. Average actual workload and equivalent working hours

	Male	Female	Total
Instruction			
Actual workload (units)	19	21	20
No. of working time (hrs/week)	36	40	38
% Working time	90.5%	100%	95.2%
Administrative			
Actual workload (units)	11	10	10
No. of working time (hrs/week)	21	19	19
% Working time	52.4%	47.6%	47.6%
Research and Extension			
Actual workload (units)	5	6	6
No. of working time (hrs/week)	10	11	11
% Working time	23.8%	28.6%	28.6%
Other related work			
Actual workload (units)	2	3	3
No. of working time (hrs/week)	4	6	6
% Working time	9.5%	14.3%	14.3%
Total			
Actual workload (units)	37	40	39
No. of working time (hrs/week)	70	76	74
% Working time	176.2%	190.5%	185.7%

Source: 2016 Position Description Forms

The required workload in the University is 21 units only with an equivalent of 40 hours of work per week. This should already include workload for teaching, however the 2016 Position Description Forms of the faculty researchers showed a much higher actual workload, an average of 39 units where 51% is on teaching. A 39-unit workload requires 74 hours of work per week, 85.7% more than the required working hours.

Consequently, a 20-unit teaching load requires 38 hours of work per week. The remaining time from the required 40 hours per week, after teaching, which is approximately two (2) hours only is distributed to administrative, research and extension and other functions. Two (2) hours for administrative, research and extension and other functions is certainly not enough.

"...the main problem for teachers is that their minimum load of 21 units is already demanding in terms of time. So, any added work such as research equates to overtime without compensation."
– faculty researcher, 2018

As a result, majority of the respondents tend to perform simultaneous work during weekends and even bring home their work and work on it during the wee hours of the day. These are the 'invisible' time spent that do not appear on the faculty researchers' time records. If this will be put in numbers, a rough estimate of additional 2 hours of their daily time is being rendered by these faculty researchers working for the University. Adding this to their official time record, it would give us approximately 11 hours and 21 minutes. This is 41.88% more hours than the required working hours in a day.

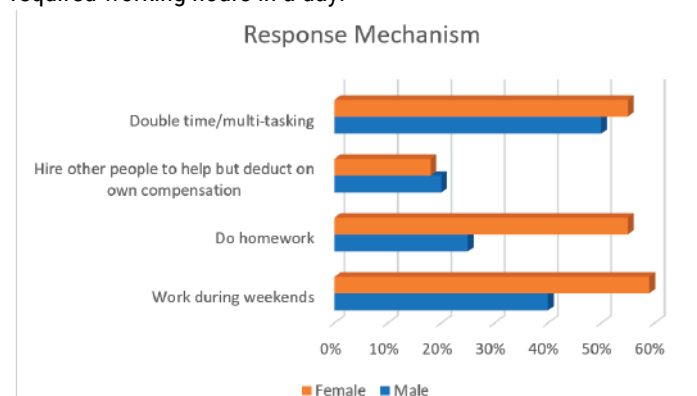


Figure 2. Response Mechanism of Faculty Teachers

Components of Faculty Work Load

Research and extension as an “add-on” function. As an academic workforce, teaching and administrative functions are the priority areas which consume time considering their total workload. Thus, research functions are often done outside their official working hours. While administrative tasks are often done simultaneously with teaching, this is not the case for research. In fact, Prince et al., 2017 mentioned that “first-class teaching and first-class research are each effectively full-time jobs, so that time spent on one activity is generally time taken away from the other.”

Disallowances. The ongoing issuance of Notice of Disallowances of honoraria received from the special projects were disallowed which caused alarm, hence, dialogues were pursued but to no avail. The position of the concerned unit was firm which translates to conditioning researchers not to expect incentives. The local papers also contained news about a seven million or so ‘illegally disbursed to BSU researchers.’ Some faculty researchers were traumatized with this experience, the fact that in the past, work beyond the ‘official workload’ gets compensated.

An analysis of the situation however showed conflicting interpretations of the real intent of the law and structural inconsistencies on the issuances of different concerned agencies. Researchers and even funding agencies would stand by the Line Item Budgets that recognize giving of honoraria for extra services rendered; on the other hand, the other side stands by its own interpretation and circulars. In effect, researchers are at the losing end with potential junior faculty researchers, no longer seeing incentives in undertaking research work.

Faculty researchers’ roles as parents, scientists, educators, and administrators can work in synergy but at the same time it causes conflict especially if the work environment is hostile. Marrying these roles together is almost impossible when time is concerned. The concept of the word ‘choice’ seems to have vanished in the case of the faculty-researchers of the University. As one role demands more time, the time for the other decreases. Simultaneously performing these roles seems to be the only way but the word ‘quality time’ should be eliminated.

Contributions of R&D to University Ranking and Professional Development

Research and Development (R&E) engagements are important sources of additional resources for the University. This gets translated into the employability of graduates, usually BSU graduates. On the average, hired Science Research Assistants under the externally funded projects fluctuated from 80 to 110. Capital outlay is another benefit taken from the packaged and delivered R&D projects by senior faculty researchers. As far as University ranking and levelling is concerned, R&D engagements count significantly. This is often raised by faculty-researchers during dialogues and registered by the accounting and budget sectors. Yet what remains unthinkable is the horrors of disallowances. Despite setbacks in incentives, data show a continuous increase in resources generated through R&D.

Table 2. Resource generation through R&D Projects

Year	Generated funds from R&D
2011-2013	PhP 59,327,489.65
2014-2016	PhP 61,174,541.41
2018	PhP 125,944,012.00
2019 (Jan-June)	PhP 95,000,000
2019 (Technology transfer projects only)	PhP 66,297,707.40

The number of faculty members involved in research seemingly did not decline over the years based on the University Annual Agency In-House Review (AIHR), a mechanism to monitor ongoing and completed R&D projects for both teaching and non-teaching.

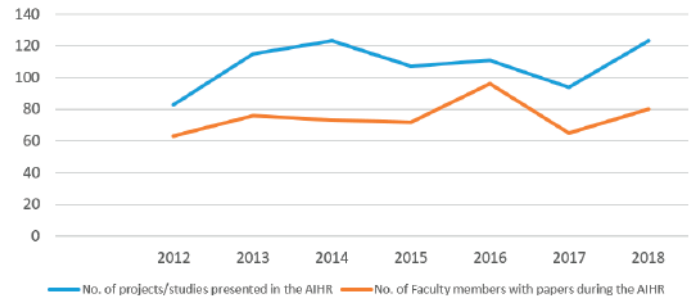


Figure 3. Number of researches presented in AIHR from 2012-2018

From the interviews, faculty researchers are continuously engaged in research despite the disallowances and lack of incentives. Certainly, promotion through the National Budget Circular is an important motivation. An interesting observation is that researchers are largely senior faculty researchers with Professor VI positions. It can be deduced that research is being done not for promotion but for University accreditation and mentoring of junior researchers. Another note is that only several junior faculty researchers are joining the seasoned research team, even considering the fact that in the last 2 years (2018-2019) senior-junior collaborative researches have been engaged in. When asked why - they all point to the ‘disallowance’ phenomenon which to them is disappointing and stressful.

Other than this, respondents say they still continue to pursue research because of career fulfillment (36%) and because of the gratification that they get from doing research (21%) aside from it is mandated (31%) and one of the requirements (43%) for promotion. In relation to gratification, one can sense a ‘research culture’ embedded in the institution. As stated by one of the faculty researchers, “*kasla kurang ti biag nu awan ti research*” translated as ‘without research, life is seemingly incomplete...’ with a note that the informant has developed a passion for research.

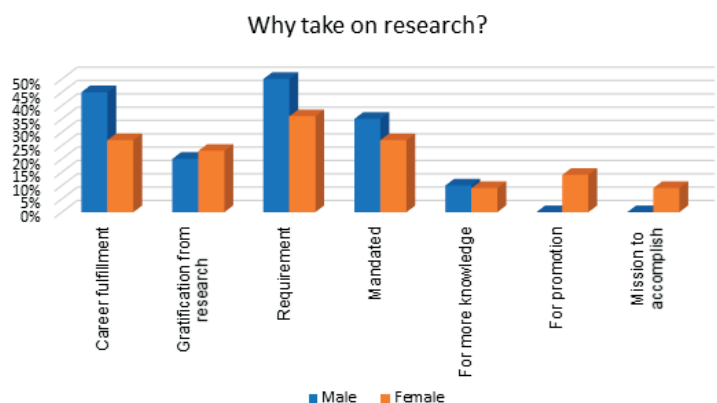


Figure 4. Research Motivations (n=42)

Contributions of R&D to University Ranking and Professional Development

On the other hand, though there are existing policies on the workload of faculty researchers (2015 revised REMO) these are not consistently being implemented as far as incentives are concerned. For some respondents, this is understandable considering resource limitation - however this becomes a big issue the fact that the volume of Notice of Disallowances issued for externally funded projects have far reaching implications. Faculty-researchers who have been issued NDs look forward to institutional incentives, including deloading.

Table 3. Awareness on the existing policies on ETL

	Aware	Implementation		
		Fully	Partly	No
Inclusion of ETL for research and extension activities in the computation of overload pay	70%	28.00%	53.30%	12.00%
A faculty member may engage in research, extension and production activities for a minimum of 3 and maximum of 9 ETL units	75%	33.80%	51.30%	8.80%

Source: Launio et al., (2019). Survey on motivators of researchers and research mentors (n=107)



CALL TO ACTION



Time use data show time poverty of faculty researchers for pleasure and for family; as such the full implementation of the provision on incentives to include giving of ETL will be helpful; implementation of the incentives as per REMO must be consistently done and if need be, a revisit of existing policies on workload allocation of the faculty members should be prioritized so as to harmonize with national circulars;



A more comprehensive time use research can be undertaken that will include all the employees of the University in all sectors.



There is an existing tension between research and teaching particularly in terms of demands on time and variable recognition and rewards. In this case, the relationship between research, teaching, broader work expectations, and rewards need to be reviewed and managed at the institutional and individual levels to avoid potentially undesirable effects and counterproductive behaviors. In the case of the University, this might entail the need for the concerned national agencies to come together to resolve issues on conflicting incentive instruments.



MAJOR REFERENCES

Batani, R.S. & Labon, K.O. (2019). BSU Faculty Researcher's Paid and Unpaid Work. 2019 Agency In-House Review Proceedings.



ABOUT THE MATERIAL

Informing Policy and Practice is published quarterly by the Institute of Social Research and Development and R & E Publications Office of Benguet State University. It synthesizes findings from research and development activities, or presents results of quick survey and opinion poll on social, economic, and policy issues and concerns affecting the Cordillera region. It also distills the key messages and provides recommendation for the information and consideration of relevant stakeholders and policymakers.

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