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RESEARCH PROFILE AND LEVEL OF RESEARCH SKILLS OF COLLEGE FACULTY IN SULU

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I. INTRODUCTION

The institutions of higher learning in Sulu are still on the infant stage compared to the pioneer academic institutions in the Philippines such as the University of Santo Thomas, Silliman University, and University of the Philippines. In particular, the Graduate School in MSU-Sulu and the Sulu State College were established only in the early 1990s. Notre Dame of Jolo College started earlier but it was on and off status due to lack of faculty members. Most local college faculty members earned their master and doctoral degrees only after the graduate courses have become a regular course offering of the Sulu's academic institutions. The purpose of the graduate school is to hone the research skills of the students and to enhance their level of analysis both oral and written presentation. It was presumed that graduate students are expected to learn how to conduct an independent research toward the end of the program. Yet, college faculty as well as the graduate students have yet to learn the rudiments of research and many of them have the handicap of writing skill.

This paper views the university as the locus of research and discovery. It therefore behooves that all faculty members are acquainted with the five general tools of research as propounded by Leedy. These are the library and its resources, computer and its software, techniques of measurement, statistics and the use of English language. The objective of the study is to determine the research level of the faculty members in public higher education institutions in the province of Sulu. This study is based on survey using the research instruments as follows: respondents, sampling method, questionnaire and statistical analysis. Library works were also undertaken.

II. Profile of Faculty Teaching Research in Public HEIs in the Province of Sulu

The frequency and percentage of responses obtained from one hundred ten (110) public HEI faculty teaching research in the Province of Sulu is presented in this section. It is shown that in terms of highest educational attainment, there are only 24 or 21.8 percent of the faculty teaching research in public HEIs with a doctorate degree, 46 or 41.8 percent have master's degree, and 40 or 36.4 percent are still with Bachelor's degree. Of the 24 faculty with a doctorate degree, 12 or 50 percent have Educational Management as area of specialization, 3 or 12.5 percent in Public Administration, 4 or 16.7 percent have other area of specialization such as Ph.D. in Agriculture, Ph.D. in Language Teaching, Ph.D. in Peace and Development. Five or 20.8 percent did not indicate their area of specialization.

Of the 46 faculty with a Master's degree, 18 or 39.1 percent have Organization and Management as Area of specialization, 10 or 21.7 percent have Public administration, 6 or 13.0 percent have other areas such as Nursing and administration and supervision while 12 or 26.1 percent did not specify their area of specialization. Of the 40 faculty with a bachelor's degree, 3 or 7.5 percent have

BSED or Bachelor of Secondary Education as area of specialization, 4 or 10 percent have Bachelor of Science in Nursing, 11 or 27.5 percent have other areas like Math, English, History, Filipino, Fisheries, Business Administration and TLE or Technology and Livelihood Education as area of specialization while 22 or 55 percent did not specify their area of specialization. As to why there are faculty who did not specify their area of specialization whether in the doctoral or master's degree, as the case maybe, it can only be deduced that perhaps these faculty did not actually complete their degree. Perhaps they are still halfway or almost to complete their degree but they are already claiming that they have obtained the degree.

As to the number of semesters teaching research whether in the graduate or undergraduate level, the majority 69 or 62.7 percent only taught for one semester, 8 or 7.3 percent for 2 semesters, 6 or 5.5 percent for 3 semesters, 7 or 6.4 percent for 4 semesters, 5 or 4.5 percent for 5 semesters. Only few faculty members have taught or are teaching research for the longest time. One has 18 semesters of teaching research, another one for 15 semesters, 3 for 14 semesters, 4 for 12 semesters and 3 for 10 semesters. The probable reason for this is perhaps there is a dearth of faculty with the research skills or expertise to teach research. Hence, the same person is given the research teaching load.

In terms of research exposures / involvement, 43 or 39.1 percent do not or did not have exposure as participant in local seminars and conferences. More than half (61 or 55.5 percent) attended only 1 local seminar/conferences as participant. Only a few became participants in local seminars and conference. In the Regional level, a great majority (78 or 70.9 percent) do not or did not have exposure as participant, 29 or 26.4 percent became a participant only once. One attended 2 times and 2 became a participant three time. As participant in the National seminars and conferences, a great majority (88 or 80.0 percent) do not or did not have exposure or involvement, 19 or 17.3 percent became a participant only once. But a few were given a chance to be a participant in the national level like 2 became a participant twice and one became a participant three time. In the International level, only one has exposure as participant, the rest (109 or 99.1 percent) did not have any exposure at all as participant in international seminars and conferences.

It was also observed that only very few faculty in public higher education institutions have research exposures/involvement as presenter in seminars and conferences not only in the local and regional level but more so in the national and international level. In the Local level, 32 or 29.1 percent had one exposure as presenter in seminars and conferences, one had two exposures, another one had four exposures. The rest (76 or 69.1 percent) have no exposures at all. In the Regional level, four had one exposure, two had three exposures and 104 or 94.5 percent have zero exposures. In the National level, only four had one exposure and 106 or 96.4 percent have no exposure at all. In the International level, only two had one exposure as presenter in seminars and conferences while 108 or 98.2 percent have zero research exposures or involvements.

In terms of research trainings attended in the Local level, 66 or 60 percent did not attend any research trainings; 27 or 24.5 percent attended one training, eight had two trainings; 4 had three trainings and one had 5 trainings; and another

one attended eight trainings. In the Regional level, 83 or 75.5 percent never attended any research training; 18 or 16.4 percent attended one training; five attended two; one had three trainings; another one had four trainings; and two attended five trainings. In the National level, 98 or 89.1 percent did not attend any research trainings; seven attended one training; three had two trainings; and two had three trainings. In the International level, an overwhelming majority (108 or 98.2 percent) have zero attendance in research trainings; one attended four trainings and one attended one training.

It can be said that in terms of research exposures or involvement as participant or presenter in seminars and conferences as well as attendance in research trainings, only few faculty members are given research exposures not only in the local and regional level but more so in the national and international level. It was also observed that in terms of thesis/dissertation advising or mentoring, 82 or 74.5 percent of the faculty teaching research in the three public higher institutions in the Sulu Province never had any exposure. It appears that thesis/dissertation advising or mentoring is assigned only to one or two people as evidenced by one with 53 number of advisees; another one with 40 advisees; one with 30 advisees and one with 10 advisees.

The same thing can be said of those with exposures as critic in the research panel. 84 or 76.4 percent of the faculty teaching research never had any exposure as critic. Only a few sat as critic in thesis/dissertation panel. While some of these faculty sat only a few times, one became a critic for 47 times and another one for 60 times.

As member of the thesis/dissertation panel, of the 110 research faculty respondents, 69 or 62.7 percent were never given an opportunity to sit as panel member; 14 or 12.7 percent sat only once; 6 sat two times; three sat three times; another three four times; seven, five times; one, eight times but one or two were given more exposures as panel member like one with 50 number of times.

Again, it can be said that in the public higher education institutions in the Province of Sulu, research exposures as adviser, critic or panel member are assigned only to a few people. The same people perhaps are given the assignment to act as Thesis / Dissertation adviser, critic or panel member. It could be possible that these are the only people with the research expertise to act as such or it is because of their association with the Dean or chair of the Graduate or undergraduate studies.

In terms of research works/projects engaged in, 72 or 65.5 percent did not engage in any research works/projects; 14 or 12.7 percent had one; 13 or 11.8 percent had two; 6 or 5.5 percent had three; three had 4 research works; and another one with ten research works or projects.

As to publication of research works and articles in Local Journal, 78 or 70.9 percent do not have any published research works; 18 or 16.4 percent have one published research works; ten or 9.1 percent published two; four or 3.6 percent published three research works. In the National Journal, three or 2.7 percent have one publication; two or 1.8 percent have two publication and the great majority (105 or 95.5 percent) do not have any publication of research works/projects. In the International Journal, only one has one publication while 109 or 99.1 percent do not have any publication of research of research works/projects. As to Online

Journal, one was able to publish one research work; another one was able to publish three but the great majority (108 or 98.2 percent) does not have any publication in Online Journal.

The findings revealed that a great majority of the faculty teaching research in public higher education institutions do not engage in research works/projects and do not have publication of research works/projects in local, national, international and online journal. On the whole, the level of research skill of the public HEI faculty teaching research in the Province of Sulu is Moderately Proficient in terms of techniques of measurement. This is supported by an average mean of 2.72181.

III. LEVEL OF RESEARCH SKILLS OF FACULTY TEACHING RESEARCH IN PUBLIC HEI IN SULU

The faculty teaching research in the public HEI in the Province of Sulu assessed their level of skill as Moderately Proficient in the use of the Library and its resources, particularly in 1) Locating the books/ materials they need with little assistance from the librarian ($\bar{X} = 3.2000$); 2) Locating the books / materials they need without the assistance of the librarian ($\bar{X} = 3.1818$); 3) Using the card catalogues to locate the title most likely to contain the information they need ($\bar{X} = 2.9182$); 4) Typing in the computer keyboard the area of knowledge/ title of the book or author of the books ($\bar{X} = 2.7091$) and 5) Using the computer keyboard instead of the card catalogue in searching for the books they need ($\bar{X} = 2.5091$). They consider themselves Slightly Proficient in 1) Identifying the library system of classification whether it is Dewey System of Classification or Library of Congress Classification ($\bar{X} = 2.4818$); 2) Using the CD-ROM for index information by merely typing in a keyboard and viewing a monitor ($\bar{X} = 2.4455$); 3) Doing electronic searching of books/ reference materials ($\bar{X} = 2.4000$); 4) Searching the library's holdings from any location with Internet Access ($\bar{X} = 2.3273$) and 5) Using the electronic catalogues data base often referred to as OPACs or Online Public Access Catalogues ($\bar{X} = 2.2636$). On the whole, the level of research skill of the faculty teaching research is described as Moderately Proficient in using the library and its resources as evidenced by an average mean of 2.63726.

In terms of using the computer and its software as a tool of research, the public HEI faculty teaching research assessed their level of research skill in this area as moderately proficient in 1) Encoding their own manuscripts and other research materials ($\bar{X} = 3.0909$); 2) Using the computer programs like Internet, Google and Chrome to search for relevant literature and studies ($\bar{X} = 3.0727$); 3) Operating the Printer to produce hard copy of the material they encode ($\bar{X} = 2.8455$); 4) Making tools and graphs using a computer ($\bar{X} = 2.8364$), 5) Creating, editing, revising and working with files ($\bar{X} = 2.8273$); 6) Uploading or searching a file to another computer ($\bar{X} = 2.8000$); 7) Downloading a copy of a file from a computer software like the Internet and placing it into their computer ($\bar{X} = 2.7636$); 8) Using the Microsoft Excel for the statistical treatment of data ($\bar{X} = 2.6273$); and 9) Using the other computer programs or application ($\bar{X} = 2.6091$). They only regarded their level of skill as Slightly Proficient in using the SPSS for the statistical treatment of data ($\bar{X} = 2.4273$). On the whole, the level of research skill of the faculty teaching research is described as Moderately

Proficient in terms of using the computer and its software as a tool of research as evidenced by an average mean of 2.7900.

With respect to techniques of measurement, the public HEI faculty teaching research assessed their level of research skill as Moderately Proficient in choosing a scale of measurement to use in the following situation:

1. When respondents are classified according to their religious affiliations ($\bar{X} = 3.0727$)
2. When respondents are categorized according to gender, as male or female ($\bar{X} = 3.0091$)
3. Thinking in terms of the symbols > greater than or < less than ($\bar{X} = 2.7909$)
4. When an object is so many times as big, or bright, or tall or heavy as another ($\bar{X} = 2.7818$)
5. When measuring data by assigning names to them ($\bar{X} = 2.7455$)
6. When the object being measured is quantified in terms of being higher or lower, greater or lesser ($\bar{X} = 2.7091$)
7. When one assigns equal units of measurement on a scale ($\bar{X} = 2.6727$)

These faculty teaching research assessed themselves as Slightly Proficient in choosing a scale of measurement to use in the following situations:

1. When a zero point is established arbitrarily on a rating scale ($\bar{X} = 2.4818$)
2. When an object or thing being measured is from an absolute point of origin ($\bar{X} = 2.4818$)
3. When there is no solid foundation upon which the scale rests ($\bar{X} = 2.4727$)

On the whole, the level of research skill of the public HEI faculty teaching research in the Province of Sulu is Moderately Proficient in terms of techniques of measurement. This is supported by an average mean of 2.72181. As to the level of skill in using Statistics as a tool of research, the public HEI faculty teaching research assessed themselves as Moderately Proficient in choosing an appropriate statistics to describe variables in nominal or ordinal form ($\bar{X} = 2.9182$); describe variables when data are in interval form ($\bar{X} = 2.7727$); compare the performance between two groups with pre-test and posttest ($\bar{X} = 2.7273$); describe the relationship between two or more variables ($\bar{X} = 2.7273$); test whether a significant difference exists between two groups with pre-test and posttest ($\bar{X} = 2.6091$); interpret the values of the statistical test in all these tests of difference between means or test of relationship or correlation ($\bar{X} = 2.5636$); present and describe the statistical data in tables, charts and graphs ($\bar{X} = 2.5545$); and test whether a significant difference exists among three or more group means ($\bar{X} = 2.5273$).

These faculty members teaching research regard themselves as Slightly Proficient in choosing appropriate statistics to test the relationship between two variables categorized into two or three groups ($\bar{X} = 2.4636$) and test whether a significant difference exists between two independent samples or uncorrelated samples ($\bar{X} = 2.4545$). On the whole, the level of skill in using statistics as a tool of research is Moderately Proficient based on the average mean of 2.63181. In terms of Using the English Language as a tool of research or as a medium to inform the readers of the findings of the research studies or write the research report, thesis and dissertation, the public HEI faculty teaching research in the Province

of Sulu assessed their level of skill in this area as Very Proficient particularly in punctuating sentences correctly and appropriately ($\bar{X} = 3.3455$) and in constructing sentences in grammatically correct fashion ($\bar{X} = 3.2909$). But they described their skill as Moderately Proficient in putting into words the ideas they wish to convey to the reader of their research report ($\bar{X} = 3.1909$); thinking logically, sequentially, and concretely before writing ($\bar{X} = 3.1727$); using the English Language to communicate with a degree of skill and accuracy ($\bar{X} = 3.1455$); supporting the findings of their study through deductive or inductive reasoning ($\bar{X} = 3.0727$); using the right vocabulary for the common exigencies of the exposition ($\bar{X} = 3.0364$); writing clear and coherent exposition ($\bar{X} = 3.0364$); using transitional sentences to achieve continuity from one paragraph to the next paragraph ($\bar{X} = 3.0182$); and delineating clearly all the aspects of the research problem ($\bar{X} = 2.8455$). On the whole, the faculty are moderately proficient based on the average mean of 3.11547.

IV. WAYS TO UPGRADE FACULTY RESEARCH PROFILE AND LEVEL OF RESEARCH SKILLS

There are seven common responses of the faculty on what they can suggest or recommend to upgrade their research profile and research skill, there were 23 or 27.71 percent who suggested that the School President should provide financial support to faculty teaching research to attend regional and national conference and seminars. This was followed by 18 or 21.69 percent who suggested that the sending of faculty for attendance in seminars and conference should not be given to a chosen few only and to the same people. There were 16 or 19.28 percent who said that the Dean/Chairman of the Graduate and Undergraduate Studies should involve other faculty to sit in the research panel as member, critic or adviser, as the case maybe. Ten or 12.05 percent said that the individual faculty should strive to pursue graduate studies in line with their Bachelor's degree area of Specialization. An equal number (8 or 9.64 %) said that research work by the faculty should not stop after doing a thesis/dissertation for the master's or doctoral degree but they should do other researches to gain expertise and the school administrator should provide funding support to faculty to undergo training in research and statistics.

There were 18 or 19.78 percent said that the faculty should be given an orientation on the use of the library and its resources especially in using electronic catalogues data base and that electronic searching should be made readily available in the library. There were 16 or 17.58% who suggested that there should be actual training on how to operate Microsoft Excel and SPSS. An equal number (12 or 13.19%) said that the faculty should be sent for upgrading on techniques of measurement and that the individual faculty should regularly operate the computer to be good at it. There were 10 or 10.99% who recommended that the faculty should read books in research and statistics as well as English grammar books. Another group of 5 respondents or 5.49% said that the faculty should develop the habit of writing a composition.

I. CONCLUSION

Research in higher education across all disciplines ensures the continued growth and development of the entire higher education sector (CHED, 2009). University in particular is the home of the intellectuals; the locus of research and discovery. In the light of the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn: The research profile of the faculty teaching research in the public higher education institutions in the Province of Sulu is somewhat low in terms of highest educational attainment and research exposure. There are only few faculty with doctorate degrees and the difference in number between the faculty with a Bachelor's degree and those with Master's degree is just small. Their research exposures/involvement are very limited in terms of seminars/conferences attended in research as participant and presenter in the local, regional, national and international level; trainings attended in research for the last five years; services rendered as adviser, critic and member in thesis/dissertation panel; number of research works/projects engaged in; and number of research works/articles published in local, national, international and online Journal.

The level of research skills of the faculty teaching research in the public higher education institutions in the province of Sulu is moderately proficient especially in the application of the five general tools of research, particularly use of the library and its resources, computer and its software, techniques of measurement, statistics as a tool of research, and use of the English language.

The data showed also that the level of research skill of the university faculty and college faculty is moderately proficient in using library resources, computer and its software, techniques of measurement, Statistics as tool of research. But in using the English language as a tool of their research activities/engagements, the level of skill of the faculty in the state university is described as very proficient while that of the state college faculty is moderately proficient.