

Strengthening Research Culture through Praise

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Abstract: State universities and colleges (SUCs) like the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College (ISPSC) are mandated to perform along the four-fold functions: instruction, research, extension and production. Anchored on the Maslow's Theory of Motivation, ISPSC proposed a program for awards and incentives in Research, Development and Extension to address the very limited research outputs and number of faculty doing research. The RDE PRAISE as approved, aimed to provide cash incentives to faculty researchers who has presented an output in local, regional, national and international research fora and more for winning papers, presentations and publications.

This paper analyses the effect of the RDE-PRAISE on the performance of ISPSC in the areas of Research and Extension and Community Development Services under the SUC Levelling instrument. Result of the three-year implementation of the program showed a highly significant increase in the number of faculty researchers and extension workers; and of research and development outputs in the college which created a remarkable impact on the college's performance in the SUC levelling. Issues and concerns however, still exist especially in the amount of cash awards given as incentives to faculty researchers, thus, the administration is recommending the program for further review and enhancement.

Keywords: Research incentives, research culture, incentivizing researchers, awards and incentives.

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INTRODUCTION

In an innovative knowledge society R&D activities and implementation of its results are becoming one of the most important tasks for universities (Laliene & Sakalas 2014). Research and development, as a major function in higher education, sets higher education apart from basic education (NHERA 2-CHED). Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are acknowledged as the place where education is converted to specific and new knowledge thru R&D.

The Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College (ISPSC) was created on February 24, 1998 by virtue of R.A. 8547, which was authored by Congressman Eric D. Singson and signed into law by then President Fidel V. Ramos. It is a comprehensive multi-campus institution of higher learning with its main campus situated in Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur. Originally, it had eight campuses spread in the second district of Ilocos Sur. Only six campuses have remained; the other two campuses were reverted back to the Department of Education.

R and D in ISPSC basically started in 1973 when the Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (BSA) was initially offered in the main campus, the then Ilocos Sur Agricultural College (ISAC) in Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur. Research conducted by faculty before was still very limited.

There were 19 researches completed: four in agriculture, six in fisheries, eight in education, and one in social sciences. These completed researches proved decisive in

convincing the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) to approve and recommend the ISPSC RDE appropriations for 2013 General Appropriations Act (GAA) by 60 percent.

Organization Competencies and Capabilities. An inventory of specializations and educational qualifications of ISPSC faculty members revealed that 69.8 percent (115) of them are MA/MS degree holders; while 15.7 percent (30) are doctorates (see Appendix Table 3). Only 14.5 percent (23) of them are bachelor degree holders. This indicates that ISPSC faculty members are highly qualified and competent to do researches in their respective disciplines.

In terms of specialization, only 27.98 percent (47) are aligned in agriculture, fisheries and allied courses but all of them are postgraduate degree holders. Those who have expertise in education constitute the majority at 47.02 percent (79); while 8.93 percent (15) and 4.76 percent (8) are along industrial education and engineering, respectively. The rest (11.31% or 19) are in various disciplines other than those enumerated above.

Of the 19 regular faculty members, only 21 or 11.31 percent are actually engaged in research, development and extension (RDE) programs, projects and activities (PPAs) from 2010 to 2012.

Utilization of Resources. The ISPSC annual appropriations for research and extension services both increased by about 60 percent from ₱ 1,786,000 in 2012 to ₱ 2,872,000 in 2013 and from ₱ 1,616,000 in 2012 to ₱ 2,569,000 in 2013, respectively. However, the total RDE fund in 2012 (₱ 10,117,000) was higher than in 2013 (₱

8,941,000) due to more benefactors and external sources of funds.

Beginning third quarter of 2012 and henceforth, the ISPSC Board of Trustees (BOT) approved the automatic appropriation of 10 percent of non-fiduciary income for research services and another 10 percent for extension services. Said amounts significantly enhance the conduct of researches and delivery of extension services of the college.

Management Processes. In terms of research management processes, annual action plans are prepared by every research coordinator in the campuses and consolidated by the Office of the Vice President for Research, Extension & Training (OVPRET). The consolidated action plans is the basis for the preparation of the annual RDE Plan and Budget for approval of the BOT. Fund allocation is based on proposals submitted, reviewed and approved. Approval of proposals is based on the policies and guidelines stipulated in the RDE Manual and the ISPSC Research, Development and Extension Agenda.

To monitor the implementation of approved researches, quarterly progress reports are required to be submitted by the researcher(s). Terminal reports are also required at the end of the study. On-going and completed researches are presented in the in-house review for evaluation. Results of completed researches are reviewed and consequently required to be presented in fora and/or submitted for publication in refereed journals (national or international).

To motivate faculty and staff researchers and extensionists, the ISPSC Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) for RDE was prepared by the OVPRET and subsequently approved by the BOT effective fiscal year 2013. The ISPSC PRAISE for RDE is also sanctioned by the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

Sufficiency of Human Resources. 'Too much teaching load' and 'no time for research' are reasons commonly cited why only few faculty members in SUCs are engaged in research. By and large, almost half of the faculty members have the normal 18-24 units workload in any given semester. However, there are more faculty members with workloads of more than 24 units during the first semester (24.0%) than during the second semester (15.6%). While there are 25.1 percent and 31.1 percent of the faculty members who have less than 18 units workload during the first semester and second semester, respectively, who are supposed to have time for research, majority of them however are key administrative officials and very few have research inclinations.

Notably, the graduate school faculty seems under loaded but then again all of them have administrative functions. Besides, they have teaching loads both in the undergraduate and graduate levels that require them to report for work from Monday to Saturday.

The operating unit of the college responsible for RDE is the Office of the Vice President for Research and Extension

(OVPRE). It is headed by a Vice President who is assisted by the Directors: re Research and Development (R&D), Extension, Training, SMART Agriculture and Fisheries Research Center. RDE PPAs in campuses are spearheaded by the campus-/institute-based Coordinators. These personnel are all designated by the BOT through the College President.

The conduct of and engagement in RDE PPAs is open to all faculty and staff members provided they comply with the policies stipulated in the ISPSC RDE Manual and IRDEA including requirements and conditions attached to their respective approved proposals.

Mission and Objectives of OVPRE

Mission. The OVPRET shall catalyze socio-economic and politico-cultural development in the province of Ilocos Sur and nearby municipalities through excellent, relevant, responsive and effective research, development and extension (RDE) and gender and development (GAD) programs, projects and activities (PPAs) that are equitably accessible to target clientele, especially the poor.

Objectives. The OVPRE, as a distinct operating unit of ISPSC responsible for RDE, aims to: (a) enhance productivity and increase household income of farmers, fisherfolks and other marginalized sectors through sustainable resource use; (b) create and preserve scientific knowledge through RDE PPAs geared towards food security, poverty alleviation, and environment protection and sustainability; (c) address with dispatch the scientific and technological problems, needs and other concerns of farmers, fisherfolks and other marginalized sectors; (d) disseminate RDE results and other matured technologies through various forms of instructional and educational communication (IEC) materials including information and communication technology (ICT)-mediated teaching aids to enhance their promotion, adoption and commercialization; and (e) advocate and promote the economic, socio-cultural and political well-being of women and enable them to become potent force for development as in men.

Guided by the vision of the college, the Office of Research & Extension hopes to increase the number of faculty doing research and the number of technologies and knowledge generated through the research projects which could be extended to the communities in order that ISPSC can truly become a nurturing service college for transforming lives and communities.

Recognizing research as a core and foremost function and responsibility of HEIs opened our eyes of the need to steer the college to higher heights, to make it a productive knowledge-generator and a potent force partner-in-development to reckon with. Educating and helping people does not only confine on instruction in the classroom but is also taking place in research to promote equality of opportunity among our clientele.

OBJECTIVES

The research paper main focus was to assess the impact of incentives on the research culture of ISPSC. It analyzed the effect of the RDE PRAISE on the performance of ISPSC in the areas of Research and Extension and Community Development services.

Specifically, the paper answered the following questions:

1. What is the percentage involvement of the ISPSC faculty before the implementation of the RDE PRAISE?
2. What is the percentage of involvement of the ISPSC faculty after the implementation of RDE PRAISE?
3. Determine the significant differences between the faculty involvement in RDE?
4. What are the RDE PRAISE incentives availed by faculty members in the three years of implementation (2014-2015-2016)?
5. What are the other RDE outputs generated after the implementation of the RDE PRAISE?
6. What are some issues and concerns identified by stakeholders as regards to RDE-PRAISE?

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted to assess the impact of the RDE incentives scheme on the ISPSC research culture. It is a descriptive- evaluative research utilizing both the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

It also used documentary analysis and informal interview as data gathering techniques. Quantitative data were presented in means and percentages and significant differences were analyzed using the t-test. Qualitative data were presented by themes.

Innovations Applied

a. Management Approaches Development planning and policy formulation are best realized when these are based on research inputs to come up with strategies, activities and sound alternatives to address specific development concerns.

Strategic planning focusing on the international, national and regional agenda were the basis in the formulation of Research Thrust and Priorities of the College. These were categorized according to the flagship program offered by the college namely: agriculture, fisheries, forestry, environment and natural resources, humanities, social sciences, education and HRM and ICT, technology and engineering.

In terms of management processes, action plan were prepared by every research coordinator in the campuses and consolidation takes place at the OVPRET. Budget for research were dependent on the submitted proposals.

To monitor and evaluate researches, terminal/progress reports were submitted and research proposals were also evaluated prior the start of the project. Coordination was also taken place through the different campus deans/directors before calling meetings, trainings and other activities conducted by the OVPRET. Awards and incentives given to faculty researchers were based on research proposal

presented and approved, research output presented and earned recognition during the presentation but researches copyrighted and patented were not yet included in the RDE Praise and hope to include in the revision of RDE manual for approval.

b. Agency In-House Review. The agency in-house review (AIHR) is conducted annually to assess the attainment of objectives of the college/university's completed and on-going R&D projects; to identify problems met during project implementation and recommend specific courses of action to these problems; to update the university's RD plans; to identify new researchable areas, generated technologies requiring field testing, verification and piloting; and to identify mature and potential technologies ready for packaging, dissemination and/or significant information for policy formulation and development planning of the agency.

Proponent shall submit proposals to College Research Coordinator for endorsement by the College Dean and the Executive Dean. The proposal shall then be submitted to the OVPRE for review by an Ad Hoc Committee or can be presented during the conduct of in-house review for evaluation. Consolidation of comments and suggestions shall be made by the OVPRE.

The proponent shall revise the proposal as required and shall be submitted back to the OVPRET through channels for endorsement to the SUC President for approval and funding and to funding agencies. On-going and completed researches are also required for in-house review as basis for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The evaluation of a completed research activity can go one step further to demonstrate the impact of the results on the people who are expected to benefit from it. In this case, the evaluation goes beyond the activity as originally planned to see if the reasoning underlying the activity was correct and to estimate the contribution of research to development.

All projects approved for funding by the College President shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees for final approval and confirmation. Research papers qualified for presentation in higher fora were determined during the in-house review. The suggestions and comments given by the evaluators were incorporated, terminal report submitted prior for presentation and or attending to conferences in higher fora.

c. Provision of Cash Incentives. As a means of motivation for faculty to conduct research, the ISPSC RDE PRAISE was approved through BOT Resolution No. 640, s. 2013 and contents noted by Civil Service Commission dated February 5, 2013.

To compensate their scholarly efforts and time in conceptualizing and developing project proposals/technical papers, faculty and staff members shall be accorded cash incentives and certificate of recognition according to the schedule presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Cash incentives given to researchers

For every approved RDE and GD proposal prepared and submitted to be funded by the College:	
Study	250
Project with less than 5 studies	1,500
Project with 5 or more studies	3,000
Programs with less than 5 projects	15,000
Programs with 5 or more projects	30,000
B. For every approved proposal prepared and submitted to be funded by outside benefactor:	
Local/Provincial Benefactor	1,500
Regional/National Benefactor	One percent of budget but not less than 3,000 and not to exceed 30,000
International Benefactor	One percent of budget but not less than 30,000 and not to exceed 50,000
For every technical paper presented in S and T forums and similar gatherings:	
Local	250
Provincial	1,000
Regional	3,000
National	10,000
International	25,000
For every winning entry in competitive S and T forums and similar gatherings; (if any capacity whether researcher or adviser)	
Regional	
1 st	5,000
2 nd	3,000
3 rd	2,000
National	
1 st	10,000
2 nd	7,000
3 rd	5,000
International	
1 st	20,000
2 nd	15,000
3 rd	10,000
Poster	
Regional	
1 st	3,000
2 nd	2,000
3 rd	1,000
National	
1 st	5,000
2 nd	3,000
3 rd	2,000
International	
1 st	10,000

2 nd	7,000
3 rd	5,000
For every technical paper published (in any capacity whether researcher or thesis adviser)	
Non refereed journal	250
Refereed journal (local/provincial)	2,500
Refereed journal (regional)	5,000
Refereed journal (national)	10,000
Refereed journal (international)	25,000
For every collaborative RDE and GAD PPAs downloaded to the college	
A corresponding proposal shall be prepared and submitted by the implementor/s as to the utilization of deliverables in the said collaborative project	When approved, the project shall be treated similar to item A hereof.

d. Incentives for Foreign Travel

Faculty and staff who are to present technical papers and/or attend international S and T conferences are entitled of the following incentives; official business while preparing travel documents, official time during the duration of the conference abroad not to exceed one week, except when the international conference is held in the Philippines where attendance is on official business, official business while returning back to official station, and other entitlements as provided by EO No. 248,,EO No. 248-A and EO No. 298.

Awarding of incentives and certificates of recognition herein provided shall be subject to the submission of the following documentary requirements and proofs; official invitation letter from the organizers, program of activities, copy of paper/poster presented, certificate of recognition, plaque, or any proof of award, visa (for international awards), endorsement of the OVPRET and approval of the college President and the BOT and other documents and proofs as required by the PRAISE Committee.

All awards and incentives shall be endorsed by the PRAISE Committee and approved by the College President and the BOT.

Cash incentive relative to RDE was drawn from the BOT approved RDE funds of the College sourced out from non-fiduciary incomes. The amount shall be equivalent to 10% each of the 10% allocated for research and extension purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The RDE Unit: Then and Now

Research activities have never been attractive to the faculty members since the ISPSC was established in 1973 being an Agricultural College until it became ISPSC in 2000. Within almost 17 years of existence as state college, its RDE has not yet fully matured.

Table 2. Involvement of Faculty in the conduct of RDE PPAs

Campus	Total No. of Faculty	Year (% . of faculty with on-going/completed research-ind./team/collaborative)		
		2010-2012%	2013-2016%	2017-present %
Sta. Maria Campus	61	16.39	32.79	39.34
Narvacan Campus	12	33.33	41.67	75.00
Santiago Campus	20	0	10.00	10.00
Candon Campus	20	0	15.00	15.00
Tagudin Campus	31	12.90	32.26	38.71
Cervantes Campus	13	0	23.08	23.08
Graduate School	9	11.11	22.22	44.44
Total	168	73.73	177.02	245.57
Mean		10.53	25.29	35.08

However, the above table reveals an increase in the number of faculty involved in research from 2010 (10.35%) to 2017 (35.05%). This proved that because of the incentives given to faculty researchers their interest in doing research was boosted. This has contributed to the performance of the college in the SUC levelling through the number of research conducted, published, RDE outputs copyrighted and patented. Likewise, the result also improved the faculty profile as faculty researchers earn points in the NBC for every research output and/or outcome.

T-test Result.

The implementation of RDE PRAISE for the year 2010-2012 and 2013-2016 causes an observable increase in percentage as manifested by the computed value of 7.62 which indicates that there is a highly significant difference between the number of faculty doing research before and during the RDE PRAISE implementation.

Same result was observed for the year 2010-2012 and 2017 as shown in the computed t-value of 6.14. This coincides with the findings of Condly (2008) that employee incentive programs have been found to be the most commonly adopted technique among organizations to reward productive performance, reinforce positive behavior, stir interest in employees and most importantly motivate them. Employee incentives offer a diversity of rewards that may be monetary or non-monetary.

Table 3. Result of the t-test of significance on the percentage of faculty involvement in RDE.

Variable	Computed t-value	Level of Significance
2010-2012 VS 2013-2016 (before and during the RDE PRAISE Implementation)	7.62	Highly Significant
2013-2016 VS 2017 (during and after the RDE PRAISE Implementation)	1.99	Not Significant
2010-2012 VS 2017 (before and after the RDE PRAISE Implementation)	6.14	Highly Significant

However, the t-test result during and after the RDE PRAISE implementation signifies no significant differences. This is in congruence with the result obtained by Zhang [10] that intrinsic motivators are more likely to be the main factors that motivate higher level academics to conduct research. This explained that though the monetary incentives are not yet given in 2017 to the faculty researchers still they are motivated to continuously work significantly and efficiently in research. Intrinsic motivation is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure, whereas extrinsic motivation is governed by reinforcement contingencies. As observed: “intrinsic motivation energizes and sustains activities through the spontaneous satisfactions inherent in effective volitional action [3]. It is manifested in behaviors such as play, exploration, and challenge seeking that people often do for external rewards”

RDE Initiatives – ISPSC PRAISE in full swing

More than one million pesos cash prize was awarded to faculty researchers in three years. This is presented in Table 4.

The table shows the cash incentives given to researchers with RDE outputs eligible for cash incentives pursuant to BOT Res. No. 620 s. 2013 (Amended ISPSC PRAISE) and BOT Res. No. 681 s. 2014 (Use of internally Generated Funds for RDE PRAISE). Said list of researches covers the period from March 12, 2013 to December 30, 2014.

Table 4. Cash Incentives from the RDE PRAISE availed by faculty researchers for the calendar year 2013- 2016

Description	Year		
	2013-14	2015	2016

For every approved RDE and GAD proposal funded by the college	2,750	17,000	6,000
For every approved proposal prepared to be funded by outside benefactor	7,994	13,000	9,705
For every technical papers presented in S % T for a and similar gatherings	257,000	312,750	423,750
for every winning entry in competitive S & T fora and similar gatherings	5,000	15,000	20,000
For every technical paper published	25,000	75,000	87,000
For every collaborative RDE and GAD PPA's downloaded to the college	500	-	15,000
Total	298,474	432,750	561,455

This indicates that awarding of cash incentives is one of the strategies adopted to enhance the research culture in the College and to inculcate quality and excellence in the RDE endeavors. This has been presented and approved by the Joint Academic-Administrative-RDE Council held on January 9, 2015 at FTC, Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur. The said ISPSC RDE PRAISE was approved and attested by the Civil Service Commission and the Certification of the Interim council Secretary for information and reference.

It also reflects that the amount given to faculty researchers for the year 2015 was increased by about 48% which indicates that research culture in the college is being enhanced through said incentives. Besides, these outputs entitle the college of 10.125 points out of 12.0 points maximum for research per CHED 2014 SUC Levelling instrument.

The performance of faculty member improved as shown by the increase of researches completed/presented for the year 2016. This is indicated by the dramatic change in values and work attitudes of faculty researchers towards research work. The provision of incentive created awareness and motivations for them to propose, think and conduct research topics in their respective field of discipline. The capability of the researcher was measured through his/her finished outputs like research papers or posters presented locally, nationally

or internationally and the publications of these papers in research journals.

Money is still the most important motivator for employees, which makes it work well in the company. Intrinsic rewards motivates directly, but after a certain point of his career, money seem to have greater importance. Long-term incentives are less effective than short-term performance based on incentives (4)).

As an output of researchers conducted for the period 2013-2017, patent works and copyrighted of the product developed were applied for registration. This further showed that the research conducted does not only stop in the dissemination of research results but more so in the protection of the output/product produced. Though, these items were not included in the ISPSC PRAISE to avail on ash incentives, this did not discourage the faculty researchers to continue doing their part being a member of the ISPSC community.

Faculty doing research are also motivated by intangible rewards such as points for NBC which supports to the study conducted by Frey (4). This states that long-term incentives are less effective than short-term performance based on incentives. This is the result of associated risk and uncertainty about the future that comes with long-term incentives.

CONCLUSIONS

Research culture through incentive scheme created a research climate at ISPSC. Institutional initiatives along research functions were geared towards faculty motivation to go into research. Interests, enthusiasm and confidence that were established in the faculty member ushered a sustained performance in R and D putting the college in local, national and international perspective but most especially in the attainment of the college for SUC Level III accreditation.

The incentive provided to the faculty researchers motivates them in the conduct of research and extension activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The ISPSC PRAISE need to be reviewed to properly incentivize faculty researchers in the conduct, publication of quality researchers. Copyrighted/Patented Works (Utility Model, Industrial Design and Trade Mark) should also be included in the ISPSC- PRAISE as this recommended for further utilization and commercialization of the product developed.

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Dr. Gloria Disono-Tuzon received her Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree at the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College (then Ilocos Sur Agricultural College) in 1979 and her Masters in Agricultural Technology Education from the Central Luzon State University in 1993. She finished her Ph. D in Technology Education and Management at the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University in 2003 after which she was designated major administrative positions including Director for National service Training Program (NSTP), Director for Training, Secretary of the Graduate School, OIC Dean, Graduate School, MIS Director, Campus Executive Dean, Executive Director and now the Vice President for Research and Extension. Her published works are in the areas of agriculture, postharvest technology and entrepreneurship.



Authors' Profile



Dr. Francisco D. Lopez is the SUC President III of his Alma Mater, the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College. He finished Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education at the then Ilocos Sur Agricultural College and now the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College. He finished his Master's degree in Education at the University of Northern Philippines and his Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Development at the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University. His researches are on educational management and extension delivery systems. Before he became the President, he was the College's Director for Planning.

Dr. Remely A. Sanidad, Professor III of ISPSC, Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur is currently holding fishery and research subjects aside from its function as Director for Research. She is a graduate of B.S. Fisheries from Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University and earned Masters' Degree and Doctorate Degree at University of Northern Philippines. Her interest in research does not only stop in searching relevant knowledge and information but specifically in imparting skills acquired through education and training in extension and community development. Her participation in research and extension activities such as the previously CHED funded research in the Species Inventory and Assessment of Sea Cucumber Fishery in Key Marine Geographic Regions of the Philippines 2012-2013 but also led the implementation of another CHED funded extension program on Philippine National Aquasilviculture Program in 2013-2014 and the DSWD SLP GAA-MD 2017 funded extension on the Skills Training on Microenterprise Development Projects of Sustainable Livelihood Program Participants in the Province of Ilocos Sur. Her published works are on Sea Cucumbers and Mangrove and has several registered utility models as a result of her being a researcher. She is at present the Director for Research at the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College.