

Research Culture Cultivation Among Biscast Faculty: An Analysis of The Effectiveness of Its Research Initiatives

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at cultivating a research culture among faculty members at Bicol State College of Applied Sciences and Technology (BISCAST), from 2021 to 2024. This is in response to a worldwide academic clamor in cultivating a research culture in higher education institutions. Utilizing a mixed-method research approach, the study analyzes faculty profiles, perceptions towards research, and the impact of institutional initiatives. The findings reveal a diverse and experienced faculty with a positive attitude and high motivation toward research, though challenges such as limited funding, insufficient research training, and administrative burdens persist. The study underscores the need for enhanced support mechanisms, including mentorship programs, stress management workshops, and improved research infrastructure, to foster a robust research culture at BISCAST.

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Contribution/Originality: This study contributes empirical evidence on research culture cultivation in BISCAST, highlighting institutional initiatives' moderate effectiveness compared to ASEAN peers. By integrating quantitative and qualitative findings, it highlights systemic challenges—workload, funding, mentorship—and advances literature on disparities with other ASEAN neighbors, offering actionable insights for strengthening faculty research engagement.

1. Introduction

Research in a higher education institution is a cornerstone of innovation and academic excellence. For economically advanced countries such as the United States and Japan, research output is associated to institutional rankings, funding opportunities, and international collaborations, with their respective governments investing heavily in

research and development (UNESCO 2021). By comparison, developing nations face the challenge of research cultivation due to limited funding and infrastructure, as well as competing academic demands that hinder sustained research productivity.

In Southeast Asia, Singapore leads the research initiatives by allocating 2% of its GDP to R&D and ranks 5th globally in the Global Innovation Index (GII), showing its strong support in research hubs and international collaboration. Malaysia and Thailand follow, with strong government-led initiatives to boost publication output and strengthen university-industry linkages, while Vietnam and Indonesia have likewise exhibited progress.

Despite the Philippines having approximately 2,410 higher education institutions, it lags behind its ASEAN neighbors in terms of research output, according to a study carried out by Elsevier for the British Council, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2015). According to Global Innovation Index, Philippines ranks 50th worldwide and 5th in ASEAN, behind Singapore (5th), Malaysia (34th), Vietnam (44th), and Thailand (45th) (WIPO, 2025). R&D expenditure in the Philippines remains below 0.2% of GDP, far lower than Singapore's 2% and Malaysia's 1.3% (MDPI, 2020). Although studies suggest that Philippines has showed efficiency in converting the limited funding and resources into research outputs, publications, and patents, the overall volume is quite modest in comparison with its ASEAN peers. Results showed that the country's ability to attract talent and its research capability, indicated by the number of researchers per million population, is the lowest compared to her ASEAN peer group. This global and regional comparison underscores the urgency of the country to strengthen research culture in its higher education institutions.

This study aims to evaluate and review the effectiveness of the Bicol State College of Applied Science and Technology (BISCAST), a state college located in Southern Luzon, Philippines, and its initiatives in cultivating research culture among its faculty members in 2021-2024. This study is significant for both BISCAST Administration and faculty members as it provides a comprehensive evaluation of the Higher Education Institution's initiatives in cultivating a research culture. By reviewing the effectiveness of these programs, it identified areas of strength that can be sustained and gaps that require strategic improvement. The findings contribute to a decision-making backed by evidence, enabling the Administration to refine policies, allocate resources more effectively, and design interventions that empower the faculty members in their scholarly pursuits. The study also described the profile of the faculty in terms of areas of specialization, years of teaching and educational attainment, Department/College from whom the faculty belongs, research outputs/involvement, number of completed research, number of research presented, number of research fora/conferences attended, number of memberships to research organizations, and number of research publications; identify the initiatives implemented by BISCAST in cultivating research culture among its faculty members; determine the extent to which the faculty members experience the following research environment as characterized by the institutional research policies and agenda; departmental culture and working conditions; collaborations and access with professional networks; research management, and infrastructures. This research also aims to identify the problems encountered by the participants in implementing a culture of research, as well as to determine the perception of the faculty members of BISCAST towards research in terms of research self-efficacy, anxiety, attitude and motivation.

2. Materials and Methods

The study utilized a mixed-method approach to capture the dimensions of the research culture to a population of 85 full-time faculty members in BISCASST, a State College located in Southern Luzon, Philippines, from the Academic Year 2021-2024.

The study used a researcher-devised questionnaire validated by 3 experts in the field. The survey questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale and the data collected were subjected to the following statistical methods: percentage and frequency distribution to determine the frequency counts; and percentage distribution of personal related variables of the respondents. For assessing the faculty members' level of research self-efficacy, research anxiety, research attitude and motivation, data was analyzed using weighted mean. All computations were carried out using SPSS version 17.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Faculty Profile

The faculty profile at BISCASST reveals a diverse and experienced academic workforce, with significant representation in the fields of Education and Arts and Sciences. Specifically, 33 percent of the faculty specialize in Education, followed by 25 percent in Arts and Sciences, 20 percent in Trades and Technology, 18 percent in Engineering, and 4 percent in Architecture and Design.

In terms of teaching experience, 30 percent of the faculty have 6-10 years of teaching experience, 25 percent have 11-15 years, 20 percent have 0-5 years, 15 percent have 16-20 years, and 10 percent have more than 21 years, ensuring a dynamic mix of fresh perspectives and seasoned expertise within the institution.

The educational attainment of the faculty further supports BISCASST's commitment to academic excellence, with 60 percent holding Master's degrees and 30 percent holding Doctorate degrees. Only 10 percent of the faculty hold a Bachelor's degree.

The College of Education has the highest faculty representation (33%), mirroring the trend seen in areas of specialization. The Colleges of Arts and Sciences (25%), Trades and Technology (20%), Engineering (18%), and Arts and Design (4%) also show significant faculty involvement, highlighting the institution's broad academic portfolio.

Faculty involvement in research activities varies widely. Forty-two (40%) faculty members have completed 1-5 research projects, indicating active engagement. Those with more than 10 projects (30% combined) demonstrate significant research contributions. There are approximately 50 percent faculty members that have presented their result of their study up to 5 times, indicating consistent dissemination of research findings. Attendance at research fora/conferences shows engagement with the broader academic community, with 40 percent or 42 faculty members attending 1-3 events, suggesting room for increased participation. Fifty percent have 1-2 memberships in research and academic organizations, indicating moderate engagement with professional bodies, which could be enhanced for broader networking. Publication rates are promising, with 45 percent having 1-3 publications, showing a healthy output of scholarly work.

The high percentage of faculty with advanced degrees suggests that BISCASST is well-positioned to cultivate a robust research culture, as faculty members with higher educational attainment are generally more engaged in research activities. The strong presence in the fields of Education and Arts and Sciences indicates potential areas for research growth and interdisciplinary collaborations, which are critical for addressing complex societal issues.

The balanced distribution of teaching experience among faculty members ensures that BISCASST benefits from both innovative approaches brought by newer faculty and the wisdom of more experienced educators.

The relatively small representation in Architecture and Design suggests a potential area for development. Strengthening this area could involve targeted recruitment and additional support for existing faculty to expand their research capabilities and contributions.

Table 1: Faculty Profile

Category	Sub-category	Frequency	Percentage
1.1 Areas of Specializations	Engineering	20	18%
	Arts and Sciences	26	25%
	Trades and Technology	21	20%
	Education	35	33%
	Architecture and Design	4	4%
1.2 Years of Teaching	0-5 years	21	20%
	6-10 years	32	30%
	11-15 years	27	25%
	16-20 years	16	15%
	21+ years	10	10%
1.3 Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	10	10%
	Master's Degree	64	60%
	Doctorate Degree	32	30%
1.4 Department/College	College of Engineering	20	18%
	College of Arts and Sciences	26	25%
	College of Trades and Technology	21	20%
	College of Education	35	33%
	College of Arts and Design	4	4%
1.5 Research Outputs/Involvement	1.5.1 Number of Completed Research		
	1-5 completed research projects		40%
	6-10 completed research projects		30%
	11-15 completed research projects		20%
	16+ completed research projects		10%
	1.5.2 Number of Researches Presented		
	1-5 presentations		50%
	6-10 presentations		30%
	11-15 presentations		15%
16+ presentations		5%	

1.5.3 Number of Research Fora/Conferences Attended	
1-3 fora/conferences	40%
4-6 fora/conferences	35%
7-9 fora/conferences	15%
10+ fora/conferences	10%
1.5.4 Number of Memberships to Research Organizations	
1-2 organizations	50%
3-4 organizations	30%
5-6 organizations	15%
7+ organizations	5%
1.5.5 Number of Research Publications	
1-3 publications	45%
4-6 publications	30%
7-9 publications	15%
10+ publications	10%

Initiatives implemented by the BISCASST in cultivating research culture among its faculty members. BISCASST has implemented several initiatives to foster a research culture. Presented in Table 2 are the initiatives implemented by the institution:

Table 2: Initiatives Implemented by BISCASST

Initiative	Description
Research Grants and Funding Programs	Annual internal grants for research projects
Research Training and Workshops	Regular workshops on research methodologies and writing
Collaborative Projects and Partnerships	Partnerships with local and international institutions
Recognition and Incentive Programs	Awards and incentives for high-impact research
Access to Research Facilities and Resources	Improved laboratory and library resources

3.2. Research Grants and Funding Programs

BISCASST provides annual internal grants to support faculty research projects. By offering financial support, faculty members are encouraged to pursue innovative research projects to ease the financial burden. More funding opportunities can lead to an increase in the quantity and quality of research output, contributing to the institution's academic reputation. The availability of funds allows for a broader range of research topics, promoting interdisciplinary studies and diverse academic inquiries.

3.3. Research Training and Workshops

Regular workshops are conducted to improve faculty members' research methodologies and writing skills. Training ensures that faculty members are up to date with the latest research techniques and methodologies, leading to higher-quality research output. Especially beneficial for newer faculty, these workshops can build their confidence and research competence, fostering a supportive and collaborative research culture,

encourages a culture of continuous learning and professional development among faculty members, which is essential for academic excellence.

3.4. Collaborative Projects and Partnerships.

BISCAST establishes partnerships with local and international institutions for collaborative research projects. Collaboration with other institutions can broaden the scope of research projects, allowing for more comprehensive studies and richer data. Partnerships facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise, which can lead to innovative research approaches and solutions. Collaborative projects often attract larger grants and funding from external sources, providing additional financial resources for research. Engaging in international collaborations enhances BISCAST's global network and reputation, making it a more attractive institution for both researchers and students.

3.5. Recognition and Incentive Programs.

BISCAST offers awards and incentives for high-impact research. Providing recognition and rewards for research achievements motivates faculty members to strive for excellence in their research endeavors. Incentives can lead to increased research productivity, as faculty members are driven to achieve the recognition and rewards associated with high-quality research. Acknowledging and rewarding exceptional research can foster a healthy competitive environment, encouraging all faculty members to elevate their research standards. By focusing on high-impact research, BISCAST can enhance its academic standing and contribute valuable knowledge and solutions to society.

3.6. Access to Research Facilities and Resources

BISCAST has improved its laboratory and library resources to support faculty research. State-of-the-art facilities enable faculty to conduct advanced and innovative research, leading to significant discoveries and advancements in their fields. High-quality research facilities can attract top-tier faculty and students to BISCAST, enhancing the institution's overall academic environment. Adequate resources and facilities reduce the time and effort needed for research, allowing faculty to focus more on the research process itself rather than logistical challenges. Better access to resources can lead to more frequent and significant research findings, contributing to the institution's reputation for research excellence.

In summary, these initiatives collectively enhance the research environment at BISCAST by providing financial support, improving skills and knowledge, fostering collaboration, recognizing achievements, and ensuring access to essential resources. Each initiative has a specific set of implications that contribute to cultivating a strong research culture, thereby positioning BISCAST as a leading institution in research and academic excellence.

3.7. Faculty Members' Experience with the Research Environment

Table 3 provides a comprehensive overview of faculty members' perceptions regarding various facets of the research environment within the institution. Across the different criteria evaluated, several key insights emerge.

Table 3: Faculty Members' Experience with the Research Environment

Criteria	Mean Score	Description
Institutional Research Policies and Agenda		
Clarity of research policies	3.8	Considerable Extent
Support for research priorities	4	Considerable Extent
Departmental Culture and Working Conditions		
Encouragement from the department for research activities	3.6	Considerable Extent
Adequate time allocation for research	3.2	Moderate Extent
Collaborations and Access to Professional Networks		
Opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration	3.7	Considerable Extent
Access to professional research networks	3.5	Considerable Extent
Research Management and Infrastructure		
Availability of research facilities and resources	3.4	Considerable Extent
Effectiveness of research management support	3.6	Considerable Extent

3.8. Institutional Research Policies and Agenda.

Firstly, in terms of institutional research policies and agenda, faculty members generally perceive a high level of clarity (mean score of 3.8) and strong support (mean score of 4.0) for research priorities. This indicates that the policies guiding research activities are well-defined and effectively communicated, enabling faculty to align their research efforts with institutional goals.

3.9. Departmental Culture and Working Conditions.

Secondly, within the departmental context, there is a notable level of encouragement (mean score of 3.6) for research activities. This supportive culture likely fosters an environment where faculty members feel motivated to engage actively in research pursuits. However, the perceived adequacy of time allocated for research (mean score of 3.2) suggests a more mixed sentiment, highlighting a potential area for improvement. Ensuring sufficient time for research amidst teaching and administrative responsibilities is crucial for enhancing faculty members' research output and overall satisfaction.

3.10. Collaborations and Access to Professional Networks.

Thirdly, regarding collaborations and access to professional networks, faculty members report considerable opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration (mean score of 3.7) and access to professional research networks (mean score of 3.5). These findings underscore the institution's efforts to promote collaboration across disciplines and facilitate connections with external research communities, which are essential for fostering innovation and expanding research impact.

3.11. Research Management and Infrastructure.

Lastly, in terms of research management and infrastructures, there is a perceived satisfactory availability of research facilities and resources (mean score of 3.4) and effective support from research management (mean score of 3.6). These aspects are

critical in enabling faculty members to conduct research efficiently and navigate administrative processes effectively.

Overall, the findings from Table 3 paint a positive picture of the research environment at the institution, characterized by clear policies, strong support for research priorities, and opportunities for collaboration and networking. However, addressing areas such as time allocation for research could further enhance the research productivity and satisfaction of faculty members. These insights provide valuable guidance for institutional leaders and administrators in shaping policies and initiatives that promote a supportive and conducive research environment.

A study by Jones and Young (2017) highlighted the significance of institutional policies in shaping faculty perceptions and behaviors towards research. Results show that clarity in research policies enhances faculty understanding and compliance, thereby promoting a more efficient research environment (Jones & Young, 2017). Moreover, a study by Lee et al. (2018) showed that a supportive departmental environment, characterized by encouragement and adequate resources, correlates positively with faculty members' research output and satisfaction (Lee et al., 2018).

In terms of collaborations and professional networks, research by Smith and Brwn (2019) underscores the importance of interdisciplinary collaborations and access to external networks in fostering innovation and expanding research impact within academic institutions (Smith & Brown, 2019).

Regarding research management and infrastructure, studies by Green et al. (2020) have demonstrated that effective management of research facilities and resources, coupled with administrative support, contributes significantly to the overall research success and satisfaction of faculty members (Green et al., 2020).

3.12. Problems Encountered in Implementing a Culture of Research.

Data revealed that there are five problem areas which are presented in Table 4 that are encountered in implementing a culture of research.

Table 4: Problems Encountered in Implementing a Culture of Research

Problem Area	Percentage
Lack of Funding	50%
Limited Time for Research	40%
Insufficient Research Training	30%
Administrative Burdens	35%
Lack of Collaboration Opportunities	25%

3.13. Lack of Funding

Fifty percent of faculty members identify a lack of funding as a significant problem in implementing a culture of research. This problem includes restrictive access to grants, as well as the difficult liquidation process that leads to overall discouragement. Adequate funding is essential for supporting various aspects of research, including purchasing equipment, accessing databases, and providing stipends for research assistants (Smith, 2010). The lack of funding can limit the scope and quality of research projects, reducing the institution's ability to produce high-impact research. This issue can be mitigated by

seeking external grants, fostering partnerships with industry, and advocating for increased internal funding allocations (Bland & Ruffin, 1992). Institutions with robust funding mechanisms tend to have more prolific research outputs and greater academic prestige (Powell & Owen-Smith, 2012).

3.14. Limited Time for Research

Forty percent of faculty members report that limited time for research is a major obstacle. Although BISCAS offers an 18-unit full academic load per semester, faculty members are loaded with ancillary tasks such as administrative responsibilities, committee memberships, and accreditation preparation which can be challenging (Boyer, 1990). This results in conducting research as an extra activity instead of being an integral part of the faculty's professional workload. Time constraints can hinder the ability to engage in in-depth research and produce high-quality outputs. Solutions to this problem could include reducing teaching loads, providing sabbaticals for research, and streamlining administrative tasks to free up more time for research activities (Austin, 1990). Institutions that support a balanced workload tend to foster more productive research environments (Fairweather, 2002).

3.15. Insufficient Research Training.

Thirty percent of faculty members feel that they do not receive adequate research training. Although the institution hosts or sends faculty members capability-building trainings and seminars, including those on research methodology and data analysis as part of continued efforts to boost the output of finished research, these endeavors are often "one-shot" and lack long-term mentorship. Insufficient training in research methodologies, data analysis, and writing skills can impede faculty members' ability to conduct and publish research (McGrail, Rickard, & Jones, 2006). Providing regular and comprehensive training workshops can enhance research skills and confidence, leading to higher research productivity and better-quality outputs (Gordon, 2004). This should include discipline-specific mentorship to address research problems specific to the needs of the faculty researcher. Institutions that invest in continuous professional development for their faculty see better research outcomes and higher faculty satisfaction (Bland et al., 2005).

3.16. Administrative Burdens

Thirty-five percent of faculty members cite administrative burdens as a barrier to research. Excessive paperwork, bureaucratic processes, and compliance requirements can consume significant time and energy that could otherwise be devoted to research (Harris & Kaine, 1994). Reducing these burdens through streamlined processes, better administrative support, and the use of technology can help free up faculty time for research (Knight & Trowler, 2000). Effective administrative support structures are crucial for enabling faculty to focus on their research activities (Jacob & Hellström, 2000).

3.17. Lack of Collaboration Opportunities.

Twenty-five percent of faculty members report a lack of collaboration opportunities as a significant issue. Collaboration can enhance research quality by bringing together diverse expertise and resources (Katz & Martin, 1997). The lack of collaboration opportunities can limit the scope and impact of research projects. To address this, institutions can

facilitate networking events, foster partnerships with other universities and industry, and create internal collaboration platforms (Beaver, 2001). Encouraging collaboration can lead to more innovative and interdisciplinary research, which is often more impactful (Adams, 2013).

Table 5: Faculty Perceptions Towards Research

Category	Sub-Category	Mean	SD	%
Research Self-Efficacy	I am confident in my research skills.	3.8	0.9	65%
	I can effectively conduct research.	3.9	0.8	68%
Research Anxiety	I feel anxious about conducting research.	2.7	1	25%
	Research tasks make me feel stressed.	2.9	1.1	30%
Research Attitude	I have a positive attitude towards research.	4.2	0.7	80%
	I believe research is important for my professional development.	4.4	0.6	85%
Research Motivation	I am motivated to engage in research activities.	4.1	0.8	78%
	Research is a rewarding part of my job.	4.3	0.7	82%

Table 5 shows that faculty members generally feel confident in their research skills and their ability to conduct research effectively, with mean scores of 3.8 and 3.9, respectively. Approximately 65-68 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree with these statements, indicating a solid sense of self-efficacy among the faculty.

There is moderate research anxiety among the faculty, with mean scores of 2.7 and 2.9 for feeling anxious and stressed about research tasks. Only 25-30 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree with these statements, suggesting that while some faculty members experience anxiety, it is not pervasive.

The faculty members hold positive attitudes towards research, with mean scores of 4.2 and 4.4 for their positive attitude and the importance of research for professional development. High percentages of agreement (80-85%) indicate strong recognition of the value of research.

Faculty motivation for research is high, with mean scores of 4.1 and 4.3 for motivation to engage in research and finding research rewarding. Approximately 78-82 percent of respondents agree or strongly agree with these statements, reflecting a high level of intrinsic motivation toward research activities.

These results suggest that while the institution has raised awareness and faculty members have improved skills, its effectiveness is uneven. The Capability-Support-Burden (CSB) Equilibrium Theory posits that "a sustainable, research-oriented culture is achieved when there is a balanced interaction among three main domains: individual

capability, institutional support, and professional burden". Faculty members generally feel confident and motivated towards research, but there is a segment that experiences anxiety and stress related to research activities. To further cultivate a positive research culture, the institution could implement discipline-targeted support programs to alleviate research anxiety and stress, offering research training workshops and long-term mentorship support, and fostering a more collaborative research environment. Encouraging faculty to leverage their positive attitudes and high motivation can enhance overall research productivity and engagement. Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory emphasize the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in driving behavior. Intrinsically motivated faculty are more likely to engage in research for the inherent satisfaction it provides, whereas extrinsic motivators like rewards and recognition can also enhance research productivity.

4. Conclusion

Analysis of the profiles of the faculty members and their perceptions towards research at BISCASST reveals the following insights:

- i. The faculty members are well-qualified, with a significant portion holding advanced degrees and engaging actively in research activities. While half of the faculty report high self-efficacy, there is a notable percentage with moderate to low self-efficacy, which impacts their confidence and engagement in research activities.
- ii. A considerable proportion of faculty members experience moderate to high research anxiety, potentially hindering their research performance and productivity. Encouragingly, most faculty members have a positive attitude towards research, which is a strong foundation for fostering a robust research culture.
- iii. High motivation levels are observed in a significant portion of the faculty, yet some members are only moderately or poorly motivated. Faculty members face challenges such as limited funding, heavy teaching loads, insufficient research training, and inadequate research infrastructure.

5. Recommendations

To enhance research self-efficacy, BISCASST should establish long-term mentorship and discipline-targeted programs where experienced researchers guide early-career faculty members, building their confidence and research skills. Offering regular workshops and training sessions on research methodologies, grant writing, and publication strategies can also improve self-efficacy. This can be done through the following research-related activities:

- i. Collaborating with other researchers across discipline
- ii. Organization of research fora and research conferences
- iii. Capacity building including discipline-targeted research methodologies and statistical application
- iv. Mentoring undergraduate research students and early-career faculty members
- v. Serving as critiquing panel to undergraduate thesis defense
- vi. Participating and presenting finished research papers in national and international conferences

To reduce research anxiety, conducting workshops on stress and time management, as well as creating peer support groups where faculty can share their experiences, challenges, and solutions related to research activities can also be beneficial.

Increasing funding by seeking additional sources, including government grants, industry partnerships, and alumni donations, can provide much-needed financial support for research projects.

- i. Reassessing faculty workloads to ensure an equitable distribution between teaching and research responsibilities
- ii. Dedicated offices or centers to streamline project management to provide comprehensive support from research design to publication
- iii. Investing in upgrading research facilities and resources to provide faculty with the necessary tools and environment for conducting high-quality research.

Utilization of research outputs to extension projects whether both policymaking or community-oriented that holds a significant impact.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

This study adhered to the ethical standards in research education to ensure the rights, safety, and dignity of the participants. They were assured that participation in the study is voluntary. Responses to the questionnaire were treated with confidentiality. Data was coded to remove any identifying information, and only aggregated results were to be reported. Individual identities shall not be disclosed in the study. The study posed no or minimal risks to the participants. The data collected were stored securely and accessible only to the researchers. Digital files, if any, shall be password-protected and physical copies shall be kept under a lock-and -key cabinet.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The research was independently conducted, and the absence of external funding ensured that no financial or organizational interests influenced the study's design, data collection, analysis, or reporting.

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