



Evaluating the Impact of an Extension-Based Capability Enhancement Program on Teachers' Professional Growth and Action Research Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of a capability-building extension project initiated by a teacher education institute in the Bicol Region, Philippines, for an elementary school in the same region. It examined the program's effectiveness in enhancing teachers' competencies in conducting action research. Fourteen respondents participated in the study. Using a concurrent mixed-method approach, data were collected through surveys, interviews, documentary analysis, and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analyzed using weighted means and frequency distributions, while qualitative data were interpreted through thematic analysis. The Theory of Change served as the guiding framework for evaluating the outcomes of the extension initiative. Findings indicated that while the participants generally held a positive perception of the program, it did not fully achieve its intended objectives. Many teachers remained hesitant or unable to engage in action research, with several failing to propose, conduct, implement, or publish research papers. A key challenge identified was the lack of time, which impeded their ability to complete research-related activities. These findings emphasize the need for the teacher education institute to strengthen its extension services by increasing contact hours and providing sustained support through to the publication stage. This approach can encourage consistent research engagement and improve overall outcomes. Moreover, the results highlight the need to revise and enhance existing institutional research policies to foster a more supportive research culture and ensure that extension programs are aligned with both practical classroom needs and broader academic goals.

RESUME

Este estudo avaliou o impacto de um projeto de formação de extensão iniciado por um instituto de formação de professores na região de Bicol, nas Filipinas, para uma escola primária da mesma região. Examinou-se a eficácia do programa no aperfeiçoamento das competências dos professores na condução de investigação-ação. Quatorze entrevistados participaram no estudo. Utilizando uma abordagem simultânea de métodos mistos, os dados foram recolhidos através de questionários, entrevistas, análise documental e discussões em grupos de foco. Os dados quantitativos foram analisados através de médias ponderadas e distribuições de frequências, enquanto os dados qualitativos foram interpretados através de análise temática. A Teoria da Mudança serviu de referencial para avaliar os resultados da iniciativa de extensão. Os resultados indicaram que, embora os participantes, de um modo geral, tivessem uma percepção positiva do programa, este não atingiu plenamente os objectivos pretendidos. Muitos professores permaneceram hesitantes ou incapazes de se envolver na investigação-acção, tendo vários deles falhado em propor, conduzir, implementar ou publicar artigos de investigação. Um desafio fundamental identificado foi a falta de tempo, que impediu a realização de atividades relacionadas com a investigação. Estes resultados enfatizam a necessidade de o instituto de formação de professores reforçar os seus serviços de extensão, aumentando o horário de atendimento e prestando apoio contínuo até à fase de publicação. Esta abordagem pode incentivar o envolvimento consistente na investigação e melhorar os resultados globais. Além disso, os resultados destacam a necessidade de rever e melhorar as políticas institucionais de investigação existentes para promover uma cultura de investigação mais favorável e garantir que os programas de extensão estão alinhados tanto com as necessidades práticas da sala de aula como com os objetivos académicos mais amplos.

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Article process:

Submitted: 06/01/2025

Approved: 09/30/2025

Published: 10/02/2025



Keywords:

Action Research,
Capability Enhancement
Program, Extension Project,
Concurrent Mixed-Method,
Theory of Change

Investigação-ação,
Programa de
Aperfeiçoamento de
Capacidades, Projeto de
Extensão, Método Misto
Concorrente, Teoria da
Mudança

Introduction

Action research is widely recognized as a powerful tool for improving education and fostering teachers' professional growth. It enables educators to reflect on their practices, develop innovative strategies, and enhance student learning outcomes (McNiff, 2017; Stringer, 2014). Globally, this approach has become central to teacher development efforts, aligning with international imperatives for evidence-based and reflective practice. Extension services—core mandates of state universities and colleges—play a key role in promoting such approaches by facilitating knowledge transfer and capacity building in schools and communities.

This global paradigm is mirrored in the Philippine education system. The Department of Education (DepEd) has institutionalized action research through policies like the Basic Education Research Agenda and several DepEd Orders (e.g., No. 43, s. 2015; No. 4, s. 2016; No. 39, s. 2016; No. 16, s. 2017), which mandate teachers to conduct and apply research to improve instruction, planning, and policymaking. However, national implementation faces persistent barriers. Teachers frequently struggle with time constraints, lack of research training, limited resources, and writing anxiety—factors that hinder their ability to meaningfully engage in research (Abelardo et al., 2019; Saboya, 2024; Tindowen et al., 2019).

Numerous studies highlight these challenges. De Borja (2018) notes the difficulties teachers face in designing frameworks and analyzing data. Tindowen et al. (2019) stress the compounding effects of heavy workloads on data collection and publication efforts. Reflective practices such as mentoring and coaching have been shown to help overcome these barriers (Hine, 2013; Gutierrez, 2016), while action research has been linked to improvements in teacher identity, confidence, and instructional quality (Mockler, 2011; Beijgaard & Meijer, 2017). Scholars like Taylor (1998) and Timperley (2008) emphasize the transformative potential of action research to drive sustained improvements through collaboration and critical reflection. Stenhouse (1975) and Morales (2016) further underscore the value of localized, participatory approaches for deepening professional learning.

Despite these insights, many Filipino teachers perceive research as an added burden rather than a reflective practice, especially in the absence of institutional support such as research mentoring, workshops, or clear policies (Berenguel & Villamor, 2023; Fadriquel et al., 2024). Difficulties in understanding research formats, accessing resources, and applying theory exacerbate the issue (Tingabngab & Binayao, 2023). Nonetheless, teachers who receive adequate support often report increased confidence, improved classroom strategies, and a stronger sense of professional empowerment (Abrenica & Cascolan, 2022).

Recognizing these challenges, localized solutions are crucial. One such initiative is the "Literacy and Capability Building Program – Component 2," an extension program implemented by a teacher education institute in the Bicol Region. Designed to bridge the gap between national research mandates and teachers' on-the-ground realities, the program aims to strengthen teachers' action research competencies through targeted training and mentoring.

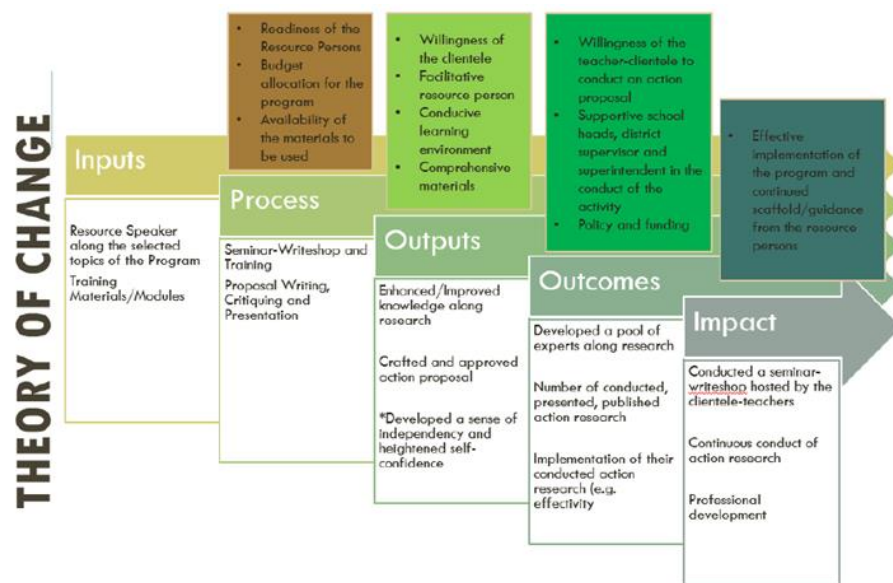
Although research-based practices are increasingly emphasized in education, there is still little understanding of how extension initiatives help encourage and support teachers in doing action research. While action research is known to improve teaching and promote professional growth, only a few studies have looked into how extension programs actually affect teachers' involvement in it. This study aims to fill that gap by evaluating an extension initiative through action research itself, offering real insights into its impact.

The study specifically aims to: (1) identify the factors that influence teachers to conduct action research, (2) find out how many teachers are engaged in action research, (3) describe the capability enhancement program implemented under the extension initiative, and (4) identify the challenges teachers face when doing action research. The findings will help improve support programs for teachers and promote a stronger research culture in education.

This study evaluates the impact of that program, focusing on teachers' perceptions, competencies, and continued challenges related to action research. Anchored in the Theory of Change (Anderson, 2005) and guided by an Input-Process-Output-Outcome-Impact (IPOI) model, the study examines how structured interventions contribute to developmental outcomes. It also identifies key assumptions, risks, and areas for potential replication or improvement.

Ultimately, the study contributes to multiple levels of educational advancement. At the global level, it adds to the growing body of evidence on action research as a professional development tool. Nationally, it offers policy-relevant insights for DepEd and other stakeholders seeking to improve support for teacher-led research. Locally, it demonstrates how well-designed extension programs can empower educators to fulfill their roles as practitioner-researchers—driving innovation, enhancing learning, and promoting a sustainable culture of inquiry.

The Program's Theory of Change (ToC) serves as a roadmap for building research skills. It begins with inputs like expert speakers, training materials, budget, and motivated participants. Then come the processes —activities such as seminars and "write-shops" where teachers learn how to write and present research proposals. These lead to outputs, such as improved knowledge, confidence, and approved proposals. As a result, the outcomes include more teachers becoming skilled researchers who produce quality work, present or publish their studies, and apply their research to solve real problems. In the long term, the impacts include teachers becoming mentors, integrating research into teaching, and achieving greater professional growth. Key factors for success include active participants, available experts, supportive leadership and policies, proper funding, effective training, and continued mentorship.

Figure 1.*Theory of Change*

The Theory of Change is useful for evaluating impact because it clearly shows how a program is expected to reach its goals. It helps identify what success looks like at each stage, explains the assumptions behind the plan, and improves planning, transparency, and learning. Evaluations often use a mix of data and stories (mixed methods) and tools like contribution analysis to assess whether the program actually caused the changes. Although there can be challenges—like setting clear goals or getting everyone on the same page—regular review and adjustments based on feedback help improve it.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a concurrent mixed-method approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques to comprehensively evaluate the outcomes of the extension program. A research-made questionnaire, including open-ended questions, serves as the primary instrument for gathering qualitative data. Additionally, survey questionnaires, interviews, documentary analysis, and group discussions are employed to ensure the collection of diverse and relevant data.

Respondents and Sampling Technique

The study involves 14 faculty members from an elementary school in the Bicol Region, Philippines, who are direct beneficiaries of the extension program. A total enumeration sampling method was used, including all eligible respondents within the study area.

Survey Instrument

The researcher-developed questionnaire was carefully validated to ensure reliability and validity. Content validity was established through expert review, where subject matter

specialists evaluated each item for clarity, relevance, completeness, and alignment with the program's objectives and Theory of Change. Based on their feedback, necessary revisions were made. Reliability, particularly internal consistency, was tested through a pilot study with a representative sample. To strengthen the accuracy of the findings, methodological triangulation was used by incorporating additional tools like semi-structured interview guides and focus group discussion (FGD) protocols, which were also reviewed by experts and pilot-tested. A standardized documentary analysis protocol was created to ensure consistent review of materials such as training documents, research proposals, and reports. To enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative data from open-ended responses, interviews, and FGDs, techniques like inter-coder reliability, possible member checking, and maintaining an audit trail during thematic analysis were applied.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers made sure all participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their role. Confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity were strictly protected, and no personal information was shared without consent. Permissions were secured from authorities, and informed consent was obtained. Participants also agreed to the publication of the study's results for academic purposes. These steps followed ethical research standards.

All data were securely stored and accessible only to the researchers. Hard copies were kept in a locked drawer, and digital files were protected by passwords. Data will be kept for one year after the study to allow for verification. After that, digital files will be permanently deleted, and printed materials will be shredded to ensure complete disposal.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection followed a clear and organized process to ensure reliable results. First, the researchers secured approval from the University Research and Development Office, following institutional protocols. Once approved, they visited the study site to distribute survey forms and conduct scheduled interviews and focus group discussions.

Before participants answered the surveys, the researchers explained the study's purpose, objectives, and questionnaire content to ensure clear understanding. Participants were assured of confidentiality and encouraged to respond honestly.

After collecting the completed surveys, the researchers analyzed the quantitative data using statistical tools, while qualitative responses were examined through thematic analysis. The results and recommendations were then shared with the Research and Development Office, the teacher education institute's administration in the Bicol Region, and stakeholders from the participating elementary school. These findings were used to prepare the final manuscript, offering practical insights and recommendations.

Data Analysis

To analyze the quantitative data, the researchers used appropriate statistical tools. The weighted mean was applied to measure the respondents' average perceptions of the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP), including its effectiveness, benefits, and areas for improvement. Frequency and percentage distribution were used to summarize demographic information such as academic rank, educational background, and involvement in action research. For open-ended responses, thematic analysis was used to identify common themes and better understand the participants' views and experiences.

Results and Discussion

Factors Influence Teachers' Decision to Engage in Action Research

Table 1.

Respondents' Engagement to Action Research Based on Academic Rank

Theme	Number of Respondents	Summary/Implication
1. Institutional and Professional Requirements	3 respondents (R2, R3, R5)	Action research is mandated by roles or institutional policies, especially for administrators and master teachers.
2. Desire for Professional Growth	2 respondents (R4, R6)	Teachers are personally motivated to grow professionally and improve their teaching practices.
3. Influence of Academic Rank (Mixed Views)	6 respondents: 3 affirming (R12, R13, R14); 3 denying (R8, R10, R11)	Some see academic rank as a motivator or requirement, while others feel it does not affect their engagement.
4. Administrative Perspective	1 respondent (R1)	Administrators use action research as a tool to address school-based problems and support learners and staff.

Respondents identified multiple factors influencing their engagement in action research, including professional responsibilities, personal growth, and academic rank. Several participants viewed action research as a job requirement, particularly those in leadership or higher teaching positions. For instance, Respondents 2, 3, and 5 noted its connection to institutional mandates and their roles as master teachers or administrators. Others emphasized personal and professional development, citing motivations such as career advancement and addressing classroom needs (Respondents 4 and 6). Views on academic rank varied; some, like Respondents 12, 13, and 14, saw it as a motivator, especially when tied to promotion.

Conversely, Respondents 8, 10, and 11 believed their rank had little to no influence. Leadership perspectives, such as that of Respondent 1, highlighted action research as a means of school improvement. Supporting this, Delaney and Devereux (2022) found that experienced educators, particularly those with higher ranks, positively impact student outcomes and program effectiveness. Overall, the data suggest that while academic rank and role-based responsibilities influence engagement, intrinsic motivation and professional development

aspirations also play key roles. These insights are crucial in designing initiatives that effectively support teacher involvement in action research.

The findings align with key themes in action research literature. Viewing action research as a job requirement for leaders and master teachers echoes participatory action research's emphasis on organizational change and accountability (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009).

Intrinsic motivation and personal growth, particularly in addressing classroom needs, align with research on teacher agency and self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). While academic rank may influence engagement, it is often secondary to perceived relevance and institutional support (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Evans, 2014). Leadership views linking research to school improvement are supported by Fullan (2007) and Delaney & Devereux (2022). Overall, engagement in action research is shaped by both extrinsic factors and intrinsic motivations, consistent with Self-Determination Theory, highlighting the need for supportive structures and motivation-driven professional learning communities.

Highest Educational Attainment

Table 2.

Respondents' Engagement to Action Research Based on Educational Attainment

Theme	Number of Respondents	Summary/Implication
1. Educational Attainment as a Facilitator	4 respondents (R1, R2, R3, R12)	Higher education enhances confidence, exposure to research, and ability to engage in research activities.
2. Lack of Educational Background as a Barrier	5 respondents (R4, R7, R9, R10, R11)	Limited academic background and personal constraints hinder participation in action research.
3. Motivation for Further Study & Promotion	3 respondents (R6, R8, R13)	Aspirations for higher education and promotion motivate educators to pursue research.
4. Non-Participation or Unclear Impact	1 respondent (R5)	No response given; may indicate lack of knowledge, interest, or clarity on the topic.

Several respondents indicated that higher educational attainment supports and motivates their engagement in action research by providing essential knowledge and exposure to research materials. Respondents 1, 2, 3, and 12 emphasized that their academic background helped them feel more prepared and confident in conducting research. Conversely, others viewed their limited educational background as a barrier.

Respondents 4, 7, 9, 10, and 11 cited a lack of basic research knowledge or confidence, with some also mentioning health as a constraint, highlighting the need for targeted training and support. For others, academic advancement served as motivation, with Respondents 6, 8, and 13 linking further studies to career growth, confidence, and classroom improvement. One respondent gave no feedback, possibly due to uncertainty or unfamiliarity with the topic.

Overall, the data suggest that while advanced education fosters research engagement, inclusive training and mentoring are essential to empower those with limited academic preparation.

These findings support and expand key themes in practitioner research literature. The link between higher education and greater research engagement aligns with Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, as advanced degrees often provide research training that boosts confidence (Mills, 2018). Conversely, limited educational background hinders participation, reflecting knowledge gaps and low self-confidence (Borg, 2010; Edwards, 2020). Health-related concerns highlight how personal factors affect research capacity (Kyriacou, 2001). Motivation tied to career advancement echoes Evans' (2014) insights on institutional rewards and career stages.

Varying engagement levels emphasize the need for differentiated support. Desimone's (2009) model stresses sustained, relevant training and mentoring to equip educators with diverse backgrounds. Collectively, the literature affirms that while advanced education aids participation, inclusive and well-structured support systems are essential to foster broader engagement in action research for professional and institutional growth.

Trainings/Seminars Related to Action Research Attended

Table 3.

Respondents' Engagement to Action Research Based on Trainings and Seminars Attended

Theme	Number of Respondents	Summary/Implication
1. Trainings as Catalysts for Engagement	4 respondents (R1, R6, R7, R10)	Trainings and seminars provide foundational knowledge and motivation to initiate or engage in action research.
2. Frequency and Quality as Key Influencers	5 respondents (R2, R3, R5, R9, R13)	Multiple, high-quality training sessions enhance research competence and increase the likelihood of sustained engagement.
3. Trainings as Motivational Tools	1 respondent (R8)	Participation in seminars motivates educators to begin or pursue research work.
4. Lack of Training as a Barrier	2 respondents (R11, R12)	Absence of relevant training limits awareness, confidence, and willingness to engage in action research.
5. External Constraints on Participation	1 respondent (R4)	External factors such as time constraints and the pandemic hinder research involvement even when interest exists.
6. Vague Acknowledgment of Importance	1 respondent (R14)	A general but unclear recognition of the importance of trainings without detailed explanation or context.

Training and seminars emerged as key motivators and enablers for teachers' engagement in action research. Many respondents emphasized that these activities build foundational knowledge and confidence. For instance, Respondents 1, 6, 7, and 10 highlighted that exposure to training increases the likelihood of participation in research, as it clarifies processes and inspires involvement. Some noted that the quantity of training significantly impacts competence, with Respondent 2 suggesting that more than ten sessions may be needed for quality research, while others (Respondents 3, 5, 9, and 13) attributed their ability to

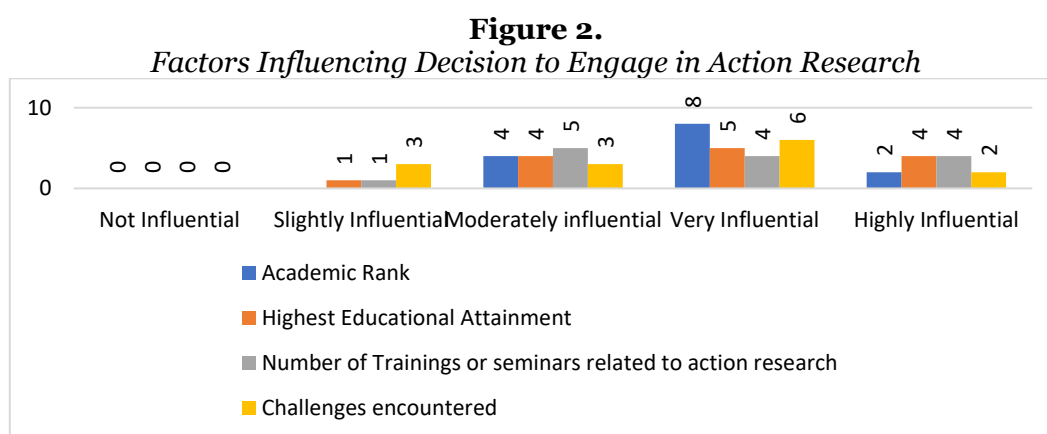
conduct action research to a series of sustained training initiatives. Trainings were not only educational but also motivational, as shared by Respondent 8.

However, the lack of access to such opportunities was a barrier for others. Respondents 11 and 12 admitted limited or no training contributed to their low engagement in research. External constraints, such as the pandemic and time limitations, also hindered participation, as noted by Respondent 4. The responses affirm that regular, high-quality, and accessible professional development opportunities are essential for cultivating a strong research culture among educators.

These findings closely align with established literature on professional development (PD) for teacher research. Emphasis on training as essential for building knowledge, confidence, and motivation supports Guskey's (2002) model, which asserts that changes in teacher attitudes and practices follow competence-building experiences. The link between sustained, high-quality training and improved research skills echoes Desimone's (2009) core features of effective professional development and is reinforced by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who found that intensive, longer-duration professional development is more impactful than brief workshops. Motivation gained through training reflects Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, where successful mastery experiences enhance confidence for engaging in research.

In contrast, limited access to professional development remains a significant barrier. Edwards (2020) identified training gaps and time constraints as key global challenges. Pandemic-related disruptions and workload concerns mirror Kyriacou's (2001) findings on contextual stressors affecting teacher capacity. Calls for regular, accessible, and high-quality professional development support Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (2009) view that sustained inquiry communities depend on institutional commitment to ongoing, relevant learning. Overall, the literature confirms that well-structured, accessible professional development is vital for broad teacher participation in action research.

Factors Influencing Decision to Engage in Action Research



The figure illustrates the extent to which various factors influenced teachers' decisions to engage in action research. Among the four factors—academic rank, highest educational attainment, number of trainings or seminars attended, and challenges encountered—academic rank emerged as the most influential, with eight respondents rating it as very influential and two as highly influential. This suggests that an individual's position in the academic hierarchy strongly motivates research engagement.

Training and seminar attendance also showed a significant impact, with six respondents indicating it was very influential and four marking it as highly influential. This emphasizes the critical role of continuous professional development in equipping teachers with the skills and confidence needed for action research (Osmanović et al., 2021). Similarly, educational attainment was found influential, with nine respondents rating it as very or highly influential, supporting earlier findings (Saeb et al., 2021) that link advanced education with greater research participation.

In contrast, challenges encountered had comparatively less influence; only five respondents found it slightly to highly influential. This indicates that while obstacles exist, they are not primary deterrents to research involvement. Notably, no factor was marked as not influential, reflecting that all variables exert some degree of impact.

Action Research Activities Engagement

Table 4.

Action Research Activities Engagement

Research Stage	0 papers	1-2 papers	Drop from Previous
Proposed	78.57% (n=11)	21.43% (n=3)	-
Conducted	85.71% (n=12)	14.29% (n=2)	↓ 33%
Presented	92.86% (n=13)	7.14% (n=1)	↓ 50%
Implemented	92.86% (n=13)	7.14% (n=1)	↓ 0%

The data reveals a systemic collapse in the action research pipeline among teachers, characterized by progressive disengagement at each stage. This pattern indicates significant structural barriers to research initiation, completion, and application. The collapse begins at the foundational level, where 78.57% (n=11) of teachers never propose research projects—suggesting motivational or support gaps in initial engagement. Only 21.43% (n=3) advance to the proposal stage, representing critically low entry-level involvement.

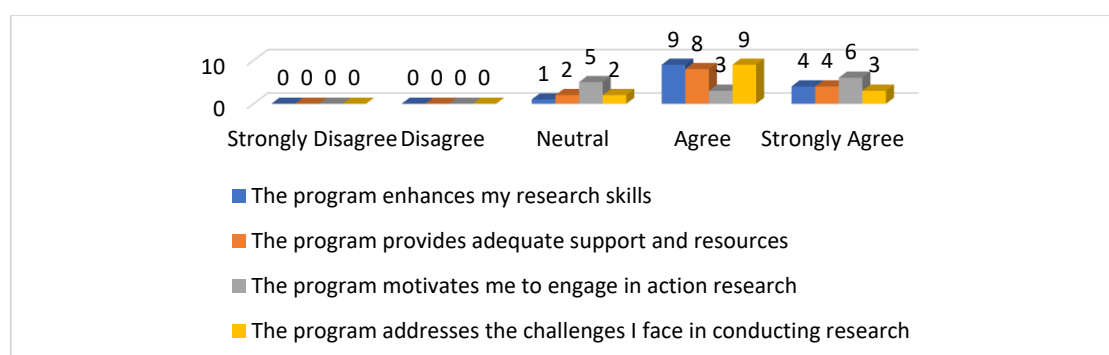
The pipeline deteriorates further at the conduction stage, with 85.71% (n=12) conducting no research despite proposals. This 33% attrition rate (from 3 proposers to 2 conductors) highlights execution barriers like time constraints or methodological challenges. Dissemination then suffers near-total failure: 92.86% (n=13) present no findings, leaving only 7.14% (n=1) sharing knowledge—exposing severe gaps in academic communication. Implementation flatlines identically (92.86% non-implementers), confirming that research

insights almost never translate to classroom practice. This cascading failure—from 21.43% engagement at proposals to 7.14% at implementation—demonstrates a broken research ecosystem.

Barriers compound at each phase, resulting in a >66% dropout rate after proposal submission and near-zero real-world impact. Systemic interventions addressing motivation, support structures, and practical application are urgently needed to sustain research beyond ideation.

Perception on the Capability Enhancement Program

Figure 3.
Respondents' Perception of the Capability Enhancement Program for Teachers



The data reveal mixed perceptions regarding the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP) of one of the universities in the Bicol Region. A majority of respondents (64.28%) remained neutral about the program's effectiveness in enhancing their research skills, with only 28.57% expressing agreement. Similarly, 57.14% were neutral regarding the adequacy of support and resources provided, suggesting that while the program holds potential, many participants believe it could further strengthen research competencies and offer more substantial support.

Notably, 57.14% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the program motivates them to engage in action research, highlighting the need to reinforce the program's motivational elements. Furthermore, 64.28% remained neutral on whether the CEP adequately addresses the challenges teachers face in conducting research, indicating these concerns may not be fully addressed.

Considering these findings, the program should consider implementing more targeted training and practical workshops aimed at specific research skills. Enhancing access to research materials, providing sustained mentorship, and allocating dedicated time for research activities within teachers' workloads may improve both engagement and outcomes. While the CEP is recognized for supporting professional development and classroom application, the

data point to areas for improvement in fostering motivation, support systems, and skill development.

Table 5.

Respondents' Perception of the Capability Enhancement Program for Teachers

Theme	Number of Respondents	Summary/Implication
1. CEP as a Tool for Awareness and Orientation	2 respondents (R1, R2)	The program was recognized for effectively introducing and familiarizing teachers with the concept and purpose of action research.
2. CEP as Beneficial and Helpful	3 respondents (R3, R4, R11)	General feedback shows that teachers found the program valuable and supportive in their research-related efforts.
3. CEP's Role in Enhancing Research Skills	2 respondents (R5, R13)	Teachers indicated that the program enhanced their ability to craft and conceptualize action research projects.
4. CEP as a Means to Professional Growth	4 respondents (R6, R7, R9, R10)	The CEP was viewed as a platform for career growth, professional development, and improved classroom practice.
5. Program Engagement and Participation	1 respondent (R12)	The structure and delivery of the program were described as engaging, helping foster active teacher participation.

Based on the responses of 14 participants, the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP) was positively perceived for its role in promoting teachers' engagement in action research. Key themes include improved knowledge, professional growth, and enhanced research capabilities. Participants emphasized that the CEP effectively introduced and clarified action research, especially for those with limited prior exposure. Many described the program as helpful, informative, and empowering, equipping them with the necessary skills to craft and conduct research.

Several respondents also noted its contribution to professional development, viewing it as a valuable tool not only for career advancement but also for addressing classroom needs. The program's structure, delivery, and engaging approach were appreciated, further reinforcing its impact. Overall, the findings suggest that the CEP successfully fosters a supportive research culture and enhances teachers' capacity to conduct meaningful action research.

The positive perception of the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP) aligns with key principles of effective professional development for practitioner research. Participants' reports of improved knowledge, empowerment, and skills reflect Timperley's (2008) theory that impactful professional development builds both expertise and self-efficacy. The program's success in clarifying action research for beginners supports Desimone's (2009) framework, emphasizing content focus and active learning as essential for practice change.

The structured and engaging delivery of the CEP echoes Joyce and Showers' (2002) findings that professional development incorporating modeling, practice, feedback, and coaching enhances skill transfer. Its link to professional growth, including career advancement

and classroom application, aligns with Guskey's (2002) model, which posits that changes in practice lead to changes in beliefs and motivation.

The CEP's role in fostering a supportive research culture reflects Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (2009) concept of "inquiry communities" and aligns with Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who found professional development most effective when collaborative and relevant to daily teaching challenges. Overall, the CEP's focus on foundational skills, structured support, and practical relevance exemplifies best practices in building research capacity.

Beneficial Aspects of the CEP

The beneficial aspects of the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP) as perceived by the respondents emphasize the practical application of learning, support for professional profiles, personalized mentoring and coaching, and the impact of special projects. These elements are crucial in reinforcing the theoretical knowledge and supporting effective research activities.

Table 6.

Beneficial Aspects of CEP Based on Respondents' Response

Theme	Number of Respondents	Summary/Implication
1. Mentoring and Coaching Support	4 respondents (R3, R4, R6, R8)	Personalized mentoring and technical assistance helped build confidence and provided crucial research guidance.
2. Crafting of Action Research	2 respondents (R1, R5)	The opportunity to apply learning through hands-on crafting of research was seen as a key learning experience.
3. Engagement of the Speakers	2 respondents (R4, R12)	The enthusiasm and active involvement of the speakers enhanced participant interest and engagement.
4. Project ReaP Implementation	3 respondents (R7, R9, R10)	Project ReaP was noted as impactful in supporting teachers' research engagement and structured implementation.
5. Comprehensive Program Delivery	2 respondents (R2, R13)	Well-organized discussions, workshops, and alignment with teacher needs contributed to the program's success.

Based on participant responses, key elements of the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP) that were found most beneficial included mentoring and coaching, hands-on research crafting, engaging speakers, and the implementation of Project ReaP. Mentoring provided personalized guidance that enhanced teachers' understanding and confidence in conducting research. The practical process of crafting action research allowed participants to apply their learning directly, bridging theory and practice. Respondents also valued the speakers' energy and expertise, which made sessions more interactive and impactful.

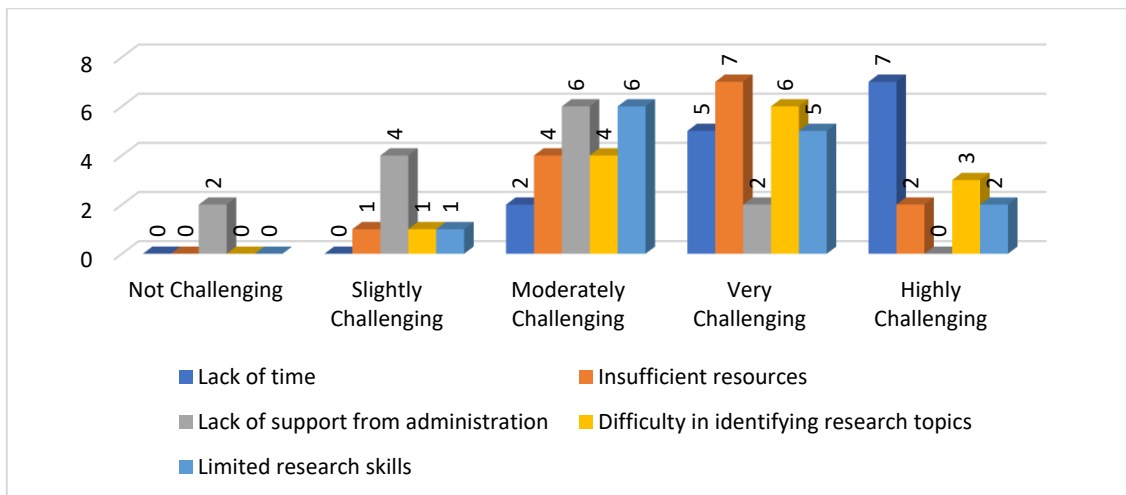
Project ReaP was frequently cited for its structured support and research-based activities. Additionally, the program's overall design—featuring workshops, discussions, and alignment with teachers' professional needs—further enriched the learning experience. These

components were instrumental in motivating teachers and equipping them with the skills to engage effectively in action research.

Challenges Encountered in Crafting Research

Figure 4.

Challenges Faced by the Respondent's in Crafting Action Research



Despite the support provided, teachers continue to face several challenges in engaging with action research. Half of the respondents (50%) identified lack of time as a major hurdle, reflecting the difficulty of balancing research with teaching duties. Similarly, 50% cited insufficient resources—such as funding, materials, and tools—as a significant barrier.

A moderate level of difficulty was reported in relation to administrative support, with 42.86% rating it as moderately challenging, suggesting room for improvement. Identifying research topics was also a concern, with 42.86% finding it very challenging, indicating the need for clearer guidance in the early stages of research. Additionally, 35.71% of respondents cited limited research skills as a major challenge, highlighting the need for targeted training in research methods.

Qualitative responses reinforced these findings, revealing recurring themes such as time constraints, lack of resources, difficulty selecting topics, health issues, and limited institutional support as key factors affecting teachers' engagement in action research.

The most frequently reported challenge in engaging with action research was lack of time. Nearly all respondents cited difficulties in balancing research with teaching and other school responsibilities. Time constraints and overlapping tasks were common concerns, leaving little room for research activities. Another recurring issue was difficulty in selecting appropriate research topics, which hindered initiation and progress. This points to a need for more training and guidance in topic formulation.

Table 7.*Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Crafting Action Research*

Theme	Number of Respondents	Summary/Implication
1. Time Constraints and Workload Overlap	9 respondents (R1, R3, R5, R6, R7, R9, R10, R11, R12)	The most cited challenge. Teachers struggle to balance teaching duties with research due to overlapping school activities.
2. Difficulty in Identifying Research Topics	4 respondents (R4, R5, R8, R13)	Many educators find it hard to choose relevant, manageable research topics, indicating a need for training and mentorship.
3. Lack of Resources and Financial Support	4 respondents (R5, R8, R10, R13)	Limited funding and materials inhibit research efforts, particularly in under-resourced schools.
4. Health and Personal Limitations	2 respondents (R2, R8)	Health issues and personal circumstances reduce the capacity to engage in demanding tasks like research.
5. Limited Administrative Support	1 respondent (R14)	Perceived lack of institutional backing discourages teachers from pursuing research.
6. Pandemic-Related Impacts	2 respondents (R3, R6)	The pandemic disrupted schedules and priorities, affecting research engagement differently across individuals.

Limited resources and financial constraints were also identified as significant barriers. Respondents emphasized the lack of funding, materials, and logistical support needed to carry out research effectively. Health-related concerns and the absence of administrative support further compounded these challenges, making it difficult for some teachers to sustain research efforts. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic was cited as both a disruptive and enabling factor, depending on individual circumstances.

Overall, while educators acknowledged the value of action research, their participation was hindered by practical barriers. Addressing these through time allocation, research training, financial and institutional support is crucial to fostering a sustainable and research-oriented school culture.

The reported challenges and improvement areas align with established literature on teacher research engagement. "Lack of time" remains the most cited barrier, consistent with global findings on workload and stress (Edwards, 2020; Kyriacou, 2001), requiring structural solutions like protected time (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015). Difficulties in topic selection reflect foundational skill gaps (Borg, 2010), while resource and support shortages echo systemic issues in PD implementation (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Health concerns and the COVID-19 pandemic's mixed impact further underscore contextual constraints (UNESCO, 2021; Trust & Whalen, 2020).

Respondents' recommendations for improving the Capability Enhancement Program align with evidence-based PD principles. Requests for longer sessions and follow-ups support the need for sustained, coached practice (Desimone, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 2002). Calls for publication support and streamlined systems highlight the role of mentorship and capacity-building in sustaining engagement (Murray, 2013; Fullan, 2007). Overall, these findings affirm that sustainable action research requires integrated support—combining skills training, time and resource allocation, and committed leadership (Guskey, 2002; Desimone, 2009).

Areas Needing Improvement

To further strengthen the ongoing extension initiatives of a teacher education institute in the Bicol Region, the respondents identified several areas for improvement in the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP). These include the need for increased contact hours, the provision of follow-up programs and publication support, and the allocation of sufficient time alongside rigorous validation processes. Addressing these concerns can significantly improve the program's effectiveness and better support teachers in their research activities.

Table 8.

Suggested Area for Improvement by the Teachers in the Conduct of Extension Activities

Theme	Number of Respondents	Summary/Implication
1. Consideration of Time Constraints	5 respondents (R1, R7, R8, R9, R10)	Teachers emphasized the need for extended time for crafting and completing research projects.
2. Continuation and Sustained Support	3 respondents (R3, R6, R14)	Respondents suggested continued mentoring, monitoring, and institutional support to sustain research efforts.
3. No Changes Required (Pandemic Factor)	3 respondents (R4, R11, R12)	Some believed no changes are necessary and attributed program interruptions to the pandemic.
4. Resource and Material Support	1 respondent (R13)	A recommendation was made to provide additional resources and funding to aid in research.
5. Teacher Readiness and Willingness	1 respondent (R2)	The success of the program also depends on teachers' motivation, interest, and availability.

Based on participants' responses, several key themes emerged regarding suggested improvements to the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP). These include time allocation, sustained support, resource provision, and responsiveness to teacher readiness—all of which aim to strengthen the program's effectiveness and address ongoing challenges in action research engagement.

The most common recommendation was to allocate more time for discussions, research writing, and project completion. Many teachers expressed the need for flexibility and dedicated time to balance research with existing responsibilities. Others emphasized the importance of continuing the support already provided by the program, noting that consistent monitoring

and follow-through are critical to maintaining teacher engagement. A few respondents viewed the program positively as is, attributing past challenges to external factors like the pandemic rather than flaws in the program itself.

Resource provision was also highlighted, with participants calling for additional support to address material and financial constraints. Furthermore, some noted that participation depends on teachers' interest and availability, suggesting that the program should be adaptable to different levels of readiness and commitment.

Overall, respondents viewed the CEP positively, recognizing its value in orienting teachers to action research, promoting professional growth, and enhancing classroom practices. They appreciated the practical components such as action research crafting, mentoring, and support in building professional profiles. However, improvements were suggested in areas like increased mentoring time, follow-up for publication, and extended time for research validation. These insights are essential for refining the CEP to better support teachers' research capabilities and long-term professional development.

Suggested improvements to the Capability Enhancement Program (CEP) align with core principles of effective professional development and sustainable research cultures. Calls for increased time allocation address workload barriers (Edwards, 2020; Kyriacou, 2001) and support Fullan's (2007) view that innovation requires freeing capacity. Requests for follow-up and ongoing support reflect evidence that sustained coaching enhances skill transfer (Joyce & Showers, 2002; Desimone, 2009), while the need for resources aligns with findings that materials and funding are essential for PD success (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Emphasis on teacher readiness—tailoring to interest, skill, and availability—supports Tomlinson's (2014) differentiated PD approach. Positive feedback on mentoring and hands-on components reinforces Timperley's (2008) model of knowledge-building through collaborative inquiry. Suggestions for more mentoring time and publication support highlight the need to move beyond skill development to dissemination, addressing a key gap identified by Murray (2013) in cultivating institutional research culture.

Conclusions

This study examined the factors influencing teachers' participation in action research within a Capability Enhancement Program offered by a teacher education institute in the Bicol Region, Philippines. It explored their backgrounds, motivations, challenges, and the types of support needed to sustain their research engagement.

Findings revealed that most participants held higher academic ranks and advanced degrees, indicating strong potential to contribute to educational research. However, their involvement was shaped by factors such as academic rank, educational attainment, and the number of relevant trainings attended. Despite their qualifications and willingness, many

faced barriers including time constraints, limited resources, and lack of administrative support.

To address these challenges, teachers emphasized the need for sustained mentoring, financial assistance, and moral support. While the Capability Enhancement Program was seen as beneficial, participants recommended improvements such as more accessible training schedules, adequate resources, and continuous follow-up to maintain engagement.

Strengthening the program requires frequent and flexible training sessions, mentorship opportunities, and clear policies that allocate time for research activities. Providing access to research materials, funding, and technology is essential, alongside administrative support that fosters a research-driven culture. Incentives tied to career progression can further motivate participation, while collaborative platforms like workshops and research groups can build a strong community of practice. These measures are key to empowering teachers and promoting meaningful, sustained involvement in action research.

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