



## Evaluating the University of the Philippines Visayas action research project based on the context, input, process, and product model

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Submitted: 04 Sep 2024  
Revised: 13 Sep 2024  
Accepted: 05 Dec 2024  
Published: 20 Dec 2024

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### ABSTRACT

The University of the Philippines Visayas Action Research Project (UPV ARP) is a public service initiative of the UPV Division of Professional Education (DProfEd) formed in response to the Department of Education Region VI's call to strengthen the action research culture in the region and align assessment guidelines with national policies. This qualitative study examined the experiences of teacher action researchers participating in UPV ARP's capacity-building activities, focusing on exposure, implemented strategies, resource use, project modifications, and success indicators. Utilizing Stufflebeam's Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) Model, data were collected through interviews with eight stakeholders, including three DepEd teachers, two DepEd officials, and three UPV ARP faculty and staff, as well as through an analysis of submitted action research proposals. Results revealed key themes such as Teacher Education Institution Research Competencies Gaps, Clarificatory yet Prescriptive Processes, Beyond Academic Performance, Moving Forward, and Action Research in the DProfEd Curriculum. These findings offer insights for refining DProfEd's program offerings and advancing public service as an academic endeavor. The study recommends that UPV ARP, DProfEd, DepEd, and Teacher Education Institutions integrate these findings into their initiatives to enhance research capacity-building and public service programs.

**Keywords:** Action research, capability-building activities, CIPP Model, public service

**How to cite:** Amoto, J. A., Sodusta, D. J. P., Fernandez, P. R. Jr., Firmase, J. T., and Nanta, E. M. M. (2024). Evaluating the University of the Philippines Visayas action research project based on the context, input, process, and product model. *Davao Research Journal*, 15(4), 120-130. <https://doi.org/10.59120/drj.v15i4.280>



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## INTRODUCTION

Action research is generally defined as an approach practitioners employ to improve their practice (James & Augustin, 2017). It is a required product and an inevitable practice in pre-service and in-service teacher education. Deliberate use and systematic integration of action research in in-service teacher practice are needed for teachers to (re)claim their optimal status as professionals (Carr & Kemmis, 2003).

The Philippine notions and practices of action research are drawn from its strong American education traditions, like most previous and current education policies (Low et al., 2021). Philippine primary public education, for example, promotes action research as a fundamental practice in learning support and professional development through promulgating key policy documents such as DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2017 (Research Management Guidelines) and DepEd Order No. 14, s. 2022 (Adoption of E-Saliksik: The DepEd Research Portal). Furthermore, DepEd Memorandum No. 028, s. 2022 (Adopting Tools to Improve Quality Management of Completed Research at the Department of Education) highlights action research as a reflective process among teachers that can contribute to the professional development of its proponents. These directives are cascaded to the grassroots, where the crucial activities of teacher action research need to happen. Support of various institutions in furthering the capacities of their current and emerging pool of teacher action researchers is also recognized by DepEd.

The University of the Philippines Visayas, through its Action Research Project (ARP) of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Division of Professional Education, responds to this need through active engagements with its public education counterparts. The most recent milestone in the engagements between UPV ARP and DepEd Region VI resulted in the crafting and implementation of Regional Memorandum 648 s2022 (Adoption of Appraisal Tools for Research Proposal and Completed Research

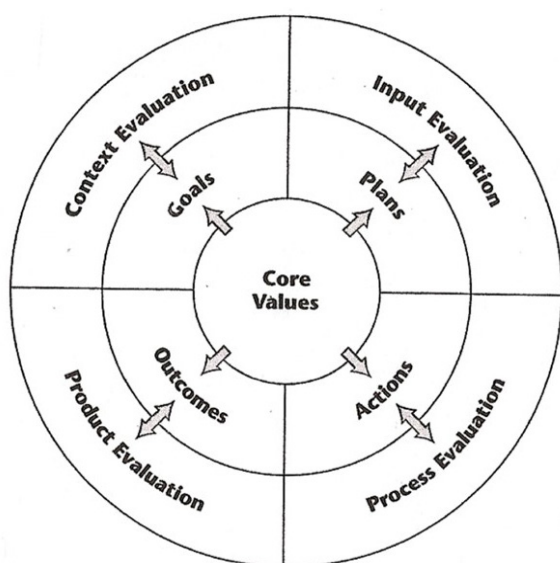
Output). The ARP Team acknowledges the need to evaluate its implemented and existing capacity-building activities with DepEd and to understand the current inquiry landscape of action research in the region post-distance learning to help refine the Division of Professional Education's post-graduate teacher education program offering. This will enable the ARP, DepEd, and its other stakeholders to chart, pursue, and calibrate a common and grounded approach in infusing and institutionalizing the logic and mechanics towards grassroots-based, dialogic, and participatory teacher action research in this part of the country.

In addition, despite the significant role of public service in the academe, research shows the need for more interest, acknowledgment, and incentivization among higher education institutions (Watermeyer, 2015). More research should focus on public service delivery in universities (Sulasula & Moreno, 2023). The existing literature lacks comprehensive studies on the challenges, best practices, and factors contributing to the successful delivery of services (i.e., training on research and publication in peer-reviewed journals). Dissemination of such is possible if public service initiatives are documented and shared with others. In an effort then to contribute to the literature on public service as an academic endeavor, an evaluation of the context, input, process, and product of the UPV Action Research Project, one of the significant public service initiatives of the Division of Professional Education (DProfEd) of CAS, was conducted.

The two-fold significance of this study is 1. For the Action Research Project Team to evaluate the capacity-building activities conducted and to create one of the baseline data sets to enable itself and its partners to understand the current conditions, gaps, needs, and potentials of teacher action research in the region; 2. For the Division of Professional Education, the proponent of the ARP, to critically evaluate how it conceptualizes, implements, and evaluates the impact of its current and

future public service initiatives in teacher education as a resource for insight into refining its post-graduate teacher education offerings.

This study is anchored on the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) Model developed by Stufflebeam (2007). The CIPP model is a guiding framework for evaluating programs, projects, personnel, products, institutions, and evaluation systems. Context evaluation assesses needs, problems, and opportunities in a defined setting. Input evaluation assesses strategies, work plans, budgets, and approaches in implementation. Process evaluation monitors, documents, and assesses activities. Product evaluation assesses short-term, long-term, intended, and unintended outcomes or outputs. The CIPP Model is used for administration, development, effective service, harm prevention, dissemination, and research.



**Figure 1.** The CIPP model of evaluation.

*Note.* This model was produced by Stufflebeam in 2001, summarizing the Context, Input, Process, and Product Model of Evaluation.

In context evaluation, exploring the participants' background and cultural context is essential for reassessing or setting new project goals. When goals are reevaluated, we examine the implemented plans and those that were not. Given new information from previous activities, we

are also considering creating new plans. During the process stage, the implemented activities are assessed with a focus on continuous improvement. Finally, the outcomes are evaluated in product evaluation, and their implications are determined.

This evaluation model was primarily created for education departments, research, and development centers, and for government to assess projects (Stufflebeam, 2001). It is widely used to evaluate programs and projects, primarily in education. In 2020, the CIPP model for evaluation was used by the University of the Philippines National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education (UP NISMED) for the assessment of their implementation of Project HOTS, a professional development program together with the Department of Science and Technology-Science Education Institute (DOST-SEI). The project was designed to help Grade 4 science teachers of the Division of Taguig City, and Pateros develop inquiry-based science activities and lessons. At the macro level, Sankaran and Saad (2022) conducted a study evaluating research activities in Malaysia from 2020 to 2021 using the CIPP model.

This study then seeks to assess the current status of the Action Research Project using the CIPP model (context, input, process, and product) to improve project effectiveness. It will answer the four evaluation questions of the CIPP model: what needs to be done, how it should be done, whether it is already being done, and whether it is succeeding in improving the UPV Action Research Project's effectiveness.

This study examined the demographics, exposure, and previous experience of teacher action researchers participating in capability-building activities for context evaluation. For input evaluation, it examined the strategies and resources implemented in the capacity-building activities and the essential components perceived by the teacher action researchers. Project

modifications to better meet the needs of the teacher action researchers were identified as part of the process evaluation. Finally, success indicators for successful capacity-building activities and implications for the Division of Professional Education curriculum were included for Product Evaluation.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data were collected through interviews with stakeholders (3 DepEd teachers, 2 DepEd officials, and 3 ARP key members who are UPV faculty and staff involved in the project). These three are the main groups involved in the project. The 3 DepEd teachers were participants in the capability-building activities who conducted their action research in their respective schools; the 2 DepEd officials are directly involved in the implementation of action research in their school's division as well as coordinating with the UPV ARP and the 3 ARP key members are UPV faculty and staff who are part of the team who planned and implemented the capability building activities. The experiences of these three critical stakeholders are essential in gathering on-the-ground data to evaluate the activities of the UPV ARP. Furthermore, the team also analyzed submitted proposals, which are the products of the capacity-building activities. All the needed ethical and institutional procedures from the Department of Education Region VI-Western Visayas and the University of the Philippines Visayas were satisfied, including approval from the UPV Research Ethics Board.

Purposive sampling was used to identify the participants of this study. These individuals directly participate in planning and implementing the Action Research Project. Due to the limited resources of the Project, this research only evaluated the capability-building activities for one partner schools division in the region. This provided a baseline data set for the evaluation of other partners. There

is no clear-cut way to determine the sample size for qualitative research. However, there are many critical factors that we need to consider, such as the range of the study, the nature of the investigation, the study design, the researchers' experience, budget, and time (Bekele and Ago, 2022). Creswell in Bekele and Ago (2022) suggested 5 to 30 participants, Kezel in Bekele and Ago (2022) suggested 6-8 interviews for a homogenous sample, while Guest et al., in Bekele and Ago (2022) recommended 6-12 interviews enough for qualitative research. For this study, a total of eight participants were interviewed. Of these eight participants, three are UPV faculty and staff who are part of the planning and implementation of the Action Research Project; two are DepEd Officials who are directly involved in the project; and three are teacher action researchers who have attended all the capability-building activities.

The welfare and privacy of the participants were given utmost importance in this research. Informed consent was secured from the participants before the interviews were conducted. All the information gathered was not associated with the names of the participants. Pseudonyms were used to ensure confidentiality. The purpose of the study and why they were invited were explained to them in detail. The following were also presented: expected duration of the data gathering; procedures to be carried out; discomforts and inconveniences; benefits and risks of their participation; contact person and information for questions and assistance related to the study.

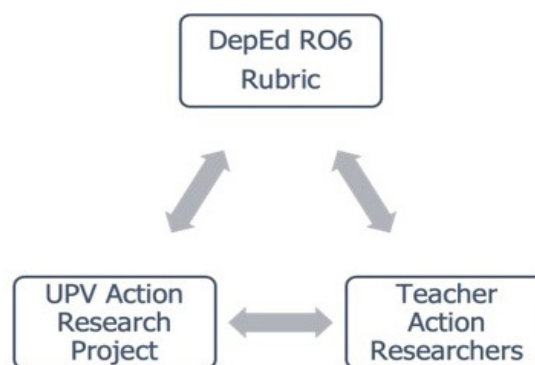
In addition, the participants were made aware that they could withdraw at any point during the study and were free to do so without prejudice to future interactions with the researcher. The team also obtained the participants' consent to record the interviews. Regarding the raw data, the video recordings and transcripts will be kept



in a safe storage space where only the research team has access to them about this study. They will be destroyed five years after the data-gathering period. Furthermore, qualitative data, including text, audiovisual recordings, documents, and official communications, were analyzed through thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as identifying, analyzing, organizing, and reporting patterns and themes within qualitative data. They suggested a six-phase framework for thematic analysis used in this study.

## RESULTS

The Department of Education Regional Office VI (DepEd RO VI), through a negotiation with the UPV Action Research, released the rubric for assessing action research proposals of teachers in the region. This rubric guides teacher action researchers in crafting and implementing their action research. Though having its merits throughout its implementation in the last 3 years, the rubric has been identified to have certain limitations. This shows that this rubric is a living document that should be constantly subjected to changes and with actionable transitory provisions and revision mechanisms. The co-conducted capacity-building activities of the DepEd RO VI and the UPV Action Research Project provided an avenue for the Team to explain in detail the rationale and processes that underlie the nature of action research that informed the creation of the rubric and mechanism of its use. Equally important, these capacity-building activities served as listening posts and data-gathering conduits where the participants and the service providers could engage in meaningful conversation to thresh out details and valuable details that can inform subsequent decisions. Figure 2 shows such a relationship



**Figure 2.** Relationship of the three main actors in the capacity-building activities.

*Note:* Evaluation involved all three main actors to ensure that the project was meeting the needs of its beneficiaries and to increase stakeholders' ownership.

### Context evaluation: TEI Research Competencies Gaps

The Department of Education required public school teachers, especially those in the Master Teacher position and those with intentions to be promoted to Master Teacher positions, to produce action research as indicated in their Key Result Areas. However, Teacher Education Institutions revealed in the interviews have not optimized their emphasis and training in conceptualizing and conducting action research to improve instruction and change processes and conditions in the teaching and learning spaces. There must be explicit and direct teaching of approaches, designs, and methodologies deliberately intended to conduct action research and appropriately deploy data insights from such endeavors. Participants have expressed their lack of understanding and confidence in conceptualizing and conducting action research because of this minimal to no exposure to this framework and methodology during their undergraduate teacher education training and even, to some extent, their in-service teacher training to date save for the ones they have attended under the UPV Action Research Project. This insight is captured in the following narrative of Teacher Anne, an elementary school mathematics teacher with 15 years of teaching experience:

“I was able to finish my thesis man. So may idea ko sa research as a whole pero ang orientation ko is quanti and thesis as a whole. So, I have an idea for research, but it is different from action research. That is why sa first and the second year nga na-involve ko sa action research, may mga cloudiness ko nga na-experience, maski background ko research na. Galingin ulo ko ngaa indi ko ka-intsindi man? Indi man nga indi gid ko ka-intsindi ah pero may mga confusions pa. Kay gali didto ko narealize that the format is different (Teacher Anne).” [I was able to finish my thesis. So, I have an idea of research as a whole, but my orientation is on quantitative research. So, I have an idea for research, but it is different from action research. During the first and second years, I was involved in action research; I was confused even though I already had a background in research. It was then that I realized that the format is different.]

#### **Input Evaluation: Clarificatory yet Prescriptive**

The earlier version of assessing and evaluating the Basic Education Research Fund (BERF) funded and non-BERF funded action research proposals was a more general tool. This opened different interpretations of the nature of action research, causing confusion among teacher action researchers. DepEd RO VI recognized the limitations of such a tool, and together with the UPV Action Research Project, they crafted the Expanded Rubrics for Assessing Action Research Proposals. This newly expanded rubric specifies what needs to be included in an action research proposal, and specific points are given if each element is included in the proposal. The rubrics’ clarificatory and specific nature was highlighted as a beneficial and practical aspect of this instrument based on all the participants’ interviews. The following vignettes capture the sentiment of Teacher Mae, a DepEd administrator in charge of research and planning.

“And ara kamo within the guidelines of the Basic Education Research Plan, DO-16, so swak siya ba, nang nag-align... you aligned it with the DepEd also. So, daw wala ya bala conflict sa delivery sang context. Wala. Kag nadayday pa gid siya. Nadayday siya isa isa. So, it makes it easier for our proponents to plan for their proposal and then to materialize their research proposal. (Teacher Mae)” [You are within the guidelines of the Basic Education Research Plan, DO-16, it aligns with our needs... you aligned it with DepEd also. S there was no conflict with the delivery. None. Also, the rubric is very specific. It specifies all the things needed. So, it makes it easier for our proponents to plan their proposal and then to materialize their research proposal.]

#### **Input Evaluation: More than Academic Performance**

One common theme of the research proposals submitted was improving learners’ academic performance. The interviews also noted this, as the participants shared how they use action research to enhance learners’ numeracy and literacy skills. One participant noted that students’ reading skills have improved since 2017.

While the UPV Action Research Project Team recognizes that improving academic performance is vital, it is just one of the unintended consequences of action research. Teacher action research, first and foremost, transforms structures, resulting in improved professional practice.

The capability-building activities conducted in the past years have successfully changed the culture of action research in the region from a quantitative experimental design to a qualitative method, as evidenced in the submitted action research proposal over the years. This was also evident in the interviews with the participants. This narrative of Teacher Ron, a faculty member of UPV and one of the pioneer members of the UPV Action Research Project, highlights such:

“Before, we had action research in quantitative form, but as we went on in the discussions and the presentations with the teachers, there was a suggestion to make it qualitative, and I know that it is being worked on now. So I think that is the most significant aspect that worked well... to focus on the experiences rather than the numbers”

However, much more can be done to encourage teacher action researchers to use action research to collectively change problematic systems, which is the primary goal of action research.

### Process Evaluation: Moving Forward

The UPV Action Research Project has had many significant accomplishments and has created linkages that allowed a partnership between UPV and DepEd. However, various challenges for both parties were made apparent in the interviews. For the UPV Action Research Project, the budget challenge was the first concern. Since its inception, the project has yet to secure funding for its capability-building activities. This has limited the reach of the UPV Action Research Project as it has been reliant on DepEd for its financing. This sentiment is reflected in the following narrative of Teacher June, one of the pioneer committee members of the UPV Action Research Project:

“Ok lang ina kung dalagko nga divisions ang aton ginaserbe, ok lang kung region ang aton ginaserbe pero isa man ina siya sa mga reasons kung ngaa ang mga smaller divisions siguro wala man gid nakarequest sa aton service kag ti basi napanumdom nila basi wala sila sang patulugan sa atun kag I’m sure ang iban na sa ila, abi pa na nila may ginarequire kita nga honorarium”. [It is OK if we are serving large divisions or the region. But I think this is the reason why smaller divisions do not request for our services because they might think that they do not have the resources. And I’m sure some of them thinks we require an honorarium.]

The second challenge for the UPV Action Research Project is human resources. While several capable faculty members in the Division of Professional Education may aid the team, they need to be adequately trained in the nature of action research in the Department of Education. Teacher June noted that one of the shortcomings is that several faculty members from DProfEd need more orientation on the nature of the UPV Action Research Project activities. They need to familiarize themselves with such activities.

For the Department of Education, teachers and administrators revealed that the successful implementation of action research in schools largely depends on their administrators’ support and personal views. Teacher Mia, an English teacher and school research coordinator, narrates:

“Kag siguro, the school head dapat ara sa pirme nga magbulig sa teacher, i-follow up niya si researcher kung puede na ma-apply ang iya nga result kung may positive siya nga impact sa iya classroom, puede niya i-apply sa school by creating sang project. For example, i-reflect niya sa school improvement plan. Tapos gina-report na siya. Then may mga allocated na siya nga budget kay nag-reflect na sa sa school improvement plan. Tapos aside sina, kinahanglan si researcher i-push man ni school head nga ipa-utilize man sa district. So, kinahanglan support man ni district supervisor.” [Maybe the school head should help the teacher through follow-ups or by asking the teacher if the project impacts the classroom or if the teacher can apply the research to the whole school by creating projects. For example, it can be reflected in the school improvement plan. There is a budget allocation if the school improvement plan reflects the project. Aside from that, the school head should also push the teacher to utilize the project in the district. So we also need the support of the district supervisor.]

### Product Evaluation: Action Research in DProfEd's Curriculum

Data gathered from the teacher participants revealed that their undergraduate training in research may need to have sufficiently covered action research as a methodology. The Division of Professional Education may respond to such research competencies gaps through its postgraduate teacher education training. Firstly, courses such as Instructional Planning in all subject areas may be an excellent avenue to strengthen in-service teachers' knowledge of designing and implementing action research in their classrooms. Second, those pursuing the particular problem track may opt to conduct action research for their specific problem or investigate how action research is conducted in their schools.

### DISCUSSION

For in-service teachers to properly undertake action research, there should be an assumption that their prior undergraduate training would have sufficed to enable them to do as such or, at the very least, have given them enough familiarity with the nature, intention, processes, and outcomes expected of this type of inquiry. Ideally, a healthy foundational background on the various forms of research needed for actual professional practice is necessary for preservice teacher training (Smith, 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2016). While it was noted that preservice teachers during their stint in conducting educational research were able to position their inquiries to fill in gaps or continue inquiry traditions in this field based on the gaps and recommendations of existing literature, the more immediate concern and equally importantly so, in the context of the teachers' interview would have been the competencies that would enable them to design, conduct, and strategically deploy actions based from insights gathered from data sourced from their immediate context and communities. This

is the most apparent gap that has been identified between the competencies in formal teacher education programs and the professional activities expected of them in the field. This finding is supported by various studies in the Philippines, which revealed that teachers' difficulties and challenges in doing action research include, among others, lack of training in action research, heavy workload, and personal life (Cortes, 2019; Tindowen et al., 2019; Abelardo et al., 2019). These studies also emphasized the need for in-service and preservice teacher training in action research and for higher education institutions to constantly evaluate their programs, allowing them to keep pace with what is required in the field and improve their performance and services (Dela Gente et al., 2024).

Furthermore, although the clarificatory nature of the rubric has been touted as its most welcomed and usable feature, it must be noted that the forming attitude of this instrument as a judge for quality has been demonstrated to tend to form some templates and unintended restrictions. This is exemplified by endorsed recipe-like formats from their immediate superiors, who are also part of the initial level of assessors for BERF and non-BERF action research proposals. This defeats the emancipatory, customizable, and contextualizable nature that is supposed to be the hallmark of teacher action research from the grassroots. It almost resembles an assembly line and cookie-cutter logic in crafting such proposals. The mainframers and proponents of teacher action research as a central part of pushing towards professional practice have intended its approach and design to reflect, demonstrate, and celebrate the creative and innovative endeavors of teachers as they make sense and work together with stakeholders and process holders to recognize a common problem and a host of solutions they can pursue together, ultimately leading to various forms of identity and structural transformations (Carr & Kemmis, 2003).



Moreover, it was also highlighted that school administrators play a significant role in the action research culture of a school. In a study by Evarado (2024), it was noted that a significant reason for the failure of teachers to achieve desired skills and competencies is the failure of the administration to provide appropriate support and professional development opportunities. Teachers become more effective if school administrators are well-equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge in the different programs of the Department of Education (Dilbaz, 2023; Quinal & Dupa, 2024). To successfully implement action research in our country's public school system, school administrators must be supportive and knowledgeable in fostering an environment conducive to inquiry-based practices. The results of this study show that if school administrators actively promote action research in their schools, teachers feel more empowered and capable of implementing their action research.

The importance of action research in teacher education programs must be considered. Various studies locally and abroad discussed the place and importance of action research in teacher education institutions and the teaching profession (Benitt, 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2017; Ryan et al., 2017). They emphasized the need for teachers to engage in critically reflective activities while teaching and how embedding action research in teacher education curricula can benefit students, teachers, and administrators. In addition, Morales (2016) and Hopkins et al., (2014) noted how action research may help quality teachers attain quality assurance in learning and, in turn, result in school and system improvement.

Furthermore, results also showed the potential for the Action Research Project to be integrated into the post-graduate teacher education curriculum of the Division of Professional Education. There is strong support from research that integrating public service into instruction can significantly affect students' participation in relevant community service, their understanding of their role in nation-

building, and their personal development (Able et al., 2014; Howard, 2014; Tiippana, 2022). Moreover, teachers' public service motivation has been seen to improve students' performance effectively (Andersen et al., 2014). This allows for meaningful learning and the development of students' and teachers' values and orientations. There is a strong potential for the Division of Professional Education to integrate its public service initiatives into its instruction and research. This is a move towards an interconnected agenda in teaching, research, and public service, the tripartite function of the University of the Philippines.

## CONCLUSION

The UPV Action Research Project and the Department of Education partnership have significantly changed the region's action research culture. Narratives from teacher action researchers and DepEd administrators evidence this. It was also seen in the submitted action research proposals over the years, which shifted from a quantitative experimental design to a qualitative inquiry. While recognizing the project's merits, much more can be done to improve its services.

The partnership between the UPV Action Research Project and DepEd offers valuable insights into effective models of academe-community collaboration. By utilizing the strengths of both institutions to address local educational challenges, the partnership leads to research-based practices, curriculum development, teacher professional development, service learning, resource sharing, and long-term impact.

Moreover, this study hopes to contribute to the literature on public service as an academic endeavor. It also hopes to use the study results as a resource for insight into refining the Division of Professional Education program offerings. Furthermore, this output hopes to strengthen the UPV ARP's current partnership with the Department of Education. It will create a baseline dataset for policy-

making in action research in the region.

It is recommended that the UPV Action Research Project utilize the results as a source of insights for future capacity-building activities and reevaluate the existing rubric for assessing action research proposals. For the Department of Education, it is recommended that more training on action research be conducted, especially in smaller schools divisions. For the Division of Professional Education to integrate action research in its various postgraduate courses, specifically on Instructional Planning and Special Problem. For teacher education institutions, it is recommended that action research be included in their preservice training courses to prepare future teachers for the action research culture in the Department of Education. For the University, it is recommended that an evaluation of its many public service initiatives be conducted to ensure project effectiveness.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to acknowledge the University of the Philippines Padayon Public Service Office and the University of the Philippines Visayas College of Arts and Sciences for funding this research.

#### FUNDING SOURCE

Study was funded by the University of the Philippines Padayon Public Service Office and the University of the Philippines Visayas College of Arts and Sciences

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