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The Role of Incentives in Increasing Scientific Publications and Their Impact on Lecturer Career Development at Bina Darma University

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ABSTRACT: Improving the academic productivity of lecturers is one of the main focuses of universities in addressing the challenges of globalization in education. Scientific publications play a strategic role in supporting lecturer career development while enhancing the institution's reputation. This study aims to analyze the effect of incentives on increasing scientific publications and their impact on the career development of lecturers at Bina Darma University. A quantitative approach was used with a survey involving 61 faculty members. Data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4. The results show that incentives do not significantly influence scientific publications or career development, while scientific publications positively affect career development. These findings suggest the need for administrative reform and enhanced research facilities to improve the effectiveness of incentive policies.

Keywords: Incentives, Scientific Publications, Career Development.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education in Indonesia is under pressure to improve academic quality and global competitiveness. One of the main indicators of institutional reputation is scientific publication productivity. Publications are not only a means of disseminating knowledge and research results, but also serve as a benchmark for academic achievement, promotion of functional positions, and international university rankings. Ranking institutions such as QS World University Rankings and Times Higher Education have made academic output one of the main metrics in assessing the global reputation of higher education institutions.

To encourage increased publication, the Indonesian government has established several regulations, such as Ministerial Regulation No. 17 of 2013 and Ministerial Regulation No. 20 of 2017, which require faculty members to have scientific publications as a prerequisite for academic promotion. However, despite these normative and supportive policies, lecturers still face various structural obstacles. (Hartono & Arjanggi, 2024), revealed that limited funding, minimal access to international journals, and administrative and teaching burdens are significant obstacles to

increasing lecturer productivity. This is exacerbated by the lack of adequate academic guidance and research facilities in most universities.

In response to these conditions, various institutions have begun implementing incentive programs to encourage increased scientific publications. In developed countries, incentive systems have proven to significantly increase academic output. However, in Indonesia, the effectiveness of these incentive programs remains a subject of debate. (Riani & Rusydiana, 2022), state that the success of incentive programs heavily depends on the transparency, sustainability, and relevance of such policies to the needs of faculty members. In the context of Bina Darma University, the Directorate of Research and Community Service (DRPM) has initiated a program of financial and non-financial incentives as a form of reward for lecturers' scientific publications. However, the evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy is still limited, especially in linking incentives, publication motivation, and their impact on academic career development.

Previous studies have not explicitly assessed whether publications act as a mediating variable between incentives and functional rank promotions. (Indrawati & Kuncoro, 2021), highlight that most research focuses solely on the direct relationship between incentives and performance, without considering the role of intermediate variables such as publication productivity. In practice, however, incentive policies do not always directly impact career promotion without the contribution of tangible scientific publications.

At Bina Darma University, the DRPM plays a central role in supporting faculty research. This unit provides incentives, training, e-journal subscriptions, and research funding support. However, the effectiveness of this policy has not been fully examined in terms of its contribution to the quantity and quality of faculty publications, as well as its impact on accelerating academic careers. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of incentive policies on increasing scientific publications, as well as their impact on faculty career development at Bina Darma University, considering publications as a mediating variable.

This study also aims to identify structural limitations that may hinder the effectiveness of incentive policies, such as limited access to international journals, minimal academic training, and high non-academic workloads. Thus, this approach is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the direct and indirect factors that influence scientific productivity and faculty career development in higher education.

Scope

The scope of this study includes an analysis of the impact of incentive policies implemented by the Directorate of Research and Community Service at Bina Darma University on the productivity of lecturers' scientific publications and their impact on their academic career development. This study focuses on lecturers at Bina Darma University during the period 2024–2025, with the main variables being incentives, scientific publications, and career development. Data was collected through a survey using a closed questionnaire and analyzed using the PLS-SEM method. The research results are expected to provide strategic recommendations for improving the

effectiveness of incentive policies in supporting academic productivity and faculty members' careers.

Problem Formulation and Objectives

The research question in this study is how incentive policies affect the increase in scientific publications by lecturers at Bina Darma University, how the increase in scientific publications relates to lecturer career development, and to what extent incentives can mediate this impact. These incentives are not only financial, but also include training and easier access to research funding. This policy aims to boost lecturer productivity and enhance the university's reputation. However, despite the implementation of incentive policies, their effectiveness remains questionable. In addition to affecting the quantity of publications, incentive policies also impact the quality of scientific publications. Lecturers motivated by incentives are more likely to prioritize publication in highly reputable journals, which in turn can enhance the university's reputation. In terms of career development, scientific publications play a crucial role as a prerequisite for promotion to functional positions for lecturers in Indonesia. Based on this formulation, the objectives of this study are to analyze the impact of incentive policies on faculty members' scientific publication productivity, evaluate their impact on academic career development, and identify the effectiveness of incentives in encouraging faculty members to achieve higher career levels. This study also aims to provide strategic recommendations for institutions in designing more optimal incentive policies.

Incentives

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, an incentive is additional income in the form of goods, money, and so on, given to someone to increase their enthusiasm for work. Another term for incentive is incentive money. Incentives are often given to employees as a form of appreciation from the company. Incentives have been shown to increase individual job satisfaction and performance, positively impacting their career development. Recent research (Cahyanto & Cahyono, 2025), shows that employees who receive regular incentives experience increased productivity and are more motivated to achieve organizational targets. Furthermore, in the education sector, incentives are often a key driver for academic and professional development, as lecturers have a higher need for recognition. According to (Wahyuningsih & Kirono, 2023), incentives serve as a motivational tool to encourage employees to work at their optimal capacity. The provision of incentives is intended to meet the needs of employees. Incentives function as an effective motivational tool designed to encourage employees to perform at their highest potential. By offering incentives, organizations aim to stimulate employee enthusiasm, enhance focus, and foster a greater sense of responsibility toward achieving work targets. The provision of incentives is not merely a financial strategy, but also a psychological approach intended to fulfill both the material and emotional needs of employees. When employees feel that their efforts are acknowledged and rewarded, they are more likely to be engaged, committed, and willing to go beyond their basic job requirements. Also according to (Wijaya et al., 2023), incentives are

monetary rewards given by the company to employees because they have succeeded in their performance and thus receive additional motivation from the employees themselves.

From the explanation above, it can be conclude that incentives are a form of reward or additional income, either in the form of money or goods, given to individuals to boost their work enthusiasm and productivity. The provision of incentives serves as a motivational tool to encourage employees or workers to perform optimally and achieve organizational goals. In addition to having a positive impact on job satisfaction and career development, incentives also play a vital role in the education sector as a driver of academic and professional achievement. Thus, incentives function not only as recognition for performance but also as a company strategy to fulfill the psychological and material needs of its employees.

Scientific Publications

Scientific publication is a crucial step in the research process, where the results of studies or investigations are communicated not only to the academic community but also to the broader public through various platforms, such as journals, conferences, and online repositories. This process ensures that new knowledge, findings, or innovations are accessible, can be reviewed critically, and built upon by other researchers. The primary aim of scientific publication is to share knowledge in an open and transparent manner, allowing the wider community to validate, reproduce, or challenge the results thus maintaining the integrity and credibility of scientific progress. According to (Haryanto et al., 2022), publication represents the final and most decisive phase of a researcher's efforts. It is not just an administrative task, but a meaningful achievement that gives value and recognition to all the hard work and time spent in conducting research. For this reason, the act of publishing becomes a central objective for researchers, especially in academic settings where publication is often linked to career advancement, funding opportunities, and institutional reputation. Futhermore (Darmalaksana & Busro, 2021), emphasize the importance of fostering a culture of publication among students. They suggest that student involvement in publishing scientific articles can be significantly enhanced through supportive policies and structured academic practices. These include providing training to improve citation and referencing skills, holding academic writing workshops, mandating publication as a graduation requirement, and offering incentives or recognition for students who successfully publish their work. Such initiatives not only help students gain valuable academic experience but also contribute to the overall growth of scientific literacy and research culture within educational institutions.

Lecturer Career Development

Faculty career development is a structured and continuous process designed to improve the competencies, academic qualifications, and professional capabilities of faculty members in both educational and research domains. This development can include a variety of activities, such as participation in training programs, academic workshops, research collaborations, further studies, and involvement in professional organizations. The primary goal is not only to enrich individual

faculty members' knowledge and skills but also to elevate the overall academic quality and reputation of the institution. According to (Sinollah & Arsyiantoc, 2020), the influence of career development extends beyond individual growth it plays a critical role in shaping the overall performance and productivity of faculty and academic staff. When faculty members are supported through well-structured development programs, they are more likely to be motivated, innovative, and effective in delivering quality education and conducting impactful research. Futhermore, (Solihah & Sugiarto, 2023), highlight that faculty career development has a direct, positive, and significant effect on faculty performance. Their findings underscore the idea that investment in professional development initiatives leads to measurable improvements in teaching effectiveness, research output, and academic engagement. As faculty performance improves, the institution itself benefits through enhanced educational quality, stronger research profiles, and better student outcomes. These insights support the hypothesis that faculty career development is a strategic and necessary effort in achieving excellence within higher education institutions.

Relationships Between Variables

The relationship between incentives and scientific publications is highly significant, particularly in the context of lecturer career development in higher education institutions. Scientific publications are often considered a key indicator of academic productivity and are directly linked to promotions, recognition, and professional advancement for faculty members. In this regard, providing appropriate incentives can serve as a powerful motivator to increase both the quantity and quality of scholarly output. Based on research (Gunarto & Haddy, 2023), demonstrates that incentives have a positive and significant impact on the increase in scientific publications. The study highlights how financial rewards can effectively encourage lecturers to engage more actively in research and publication efforts. When faculty members receive tangible rewards for their academic achievements, such as publishing in reputable journals or producing innovative research, they are more likely to dedicate time and energy toward scholarly work. Supporting this (Kemal, M., & Rosyidi, 2021), explain that incentives provided by universities typically come in the form of monetary rewards and are often tied to performance-based mechanisms. One such approach is the piecework system, in which financial compensation is directly linked to the number or quality of academic outputs produced such as journal articles, conference papers, or citations. This system not only fosters a competitive academic environment but also aligns institutional goals with individual performance, thereby driving continuous academic productivity. Overall, the strategic use of incentives not only boosts the motivation of lecturers to publish their work but also contributes to the broader goals of institutional development, research excellence, and international academic recognition.

The publication of scientific works is intrinsically linked to the career development of lecturers, serving as a critical benchmark for academic achievement and professional advancement in higher education institutions. Scientific publications are not merely a means of disseminating knowledge, but also function as a formal recognition of a lecturer's contribution to their field of expertise. Based on the results of the research mentioned in the source (Gunarto & Haddy, 2023), the publication of scientific works can enhance the career of lecturers. Scientific publications play a

crucial role in the career development of lecturers, especially in relation to promotions and functional positions. In the academic structure, scientific publications are directly associated with the requirements for ascending to higher functional positions, such as becoming an associate professor or full professor. As noted by (Simarmata, 2019), writing and publishing scientific works is one of the main requirements for lecturers to be promoted. This aligns with the perspective of (Firmansyah, 2022), who emphasizes the importance of academic activities in higher education institutions to enhance motivation among lecturers to engage in publishing their research findings. In summary, scientific publication is not just an academic obligation, but a strategic pathway for career advancement, intellectual growth, and institutional reputation within the landscape of higher education.

The relationship between incentives and faculty career development illustrates a strong and positive correlation, indicating that well-structured incentive systems play a crucial role in accelerating academic career progression. Incentives, when strategically implemented, not only serve as extrinsic motivators but also reinforce intrinsic motivation among faculty members to perform at their best and pursue higher academic goals. A study conducted by (Gunarto & Haddy, 2023), at Bina Darma University demonstrated that the integration of incentives with structured career development programs significantly enhances both job satisfaction and overall performance of lecturers. These incentives encompass material rewards, such as bonuses, research grants, and allowances, as well as non-material recognition, including awards, certificates of appreciation, and opportunities for professional exposure. Furthermore, one of the most tangible outcomes of an effective incentive system is the increase in scientific publications, which is a critical component in the career advancement process of faculty members. As publishing is often a prerequisite for functional promotions, incentives that encourage academic writing and research directly impact the likelihood of faculty members progressing to higher academic ranks. This connection was also highlighted in a study by (Pradana, 2023) conducted at the State Islamic University Raden Intan Lampung, which found that a combination of incentives and career development initiatives significantly improved job satisfaction. This heightened job satisfaction subsequently translated into improved faculty performance, further reinforcing the role of incentives as a foundational element of academic career development. In essence, the provision of both financial and non-financial incentives, when aligned with institutional career development policies, not only motivates faculty members to achieve individual academic milestones but also supports the broader mission of higher education institutions in cultivating excellence, productivity, and long-term faculty retention.

The provision of incentives has emerged as one of the most effective strategies to stimulate lecturers' productivity in publishing scientific works. In an academic environment where research and publication are key indicators of performance and professional growth, incentives serve as both motivators and enablers. According to (Putra, 2020), positive compensation particularly in the form of financial rewards has a significant influence on lecturer performance, especially in increasing publication productivity, commonly measured through metrics such as the number of articles published in reputable journals or the Degree of Journal Output (DOJ). This underscores the tangible impact of financial incentives in promoting scientific output and encouraging faculty members to engage more actively in research activities. However, the role of non-financial

incentives should not be overlooked. Additionally (Kosfeld & Neckermann, 2023), highlight that recognition based rewards, such as awards, public acknowledgment, and institutional appreciation, also play a pivotal role in enhancing academic motivation. These non-monetary forms of encouragement often appeal to intrinsic motivation, fostering a sense of accomplishment, academic identity, and long term commitment to scholarly excellence. Moreover. In the results of the study by (Gunarto & Haddy, 2023), explain that incentives act as mediating variables in the relationship between scientific publication productivity and career development. Their study reveals that higher levels of incentive provision lead to greater motivation among lecturers to produce and disseminate scientific work. This suggests that incentives not only trigger a short-term increase in research activity but also sustain long-term academic engagement that contributes to professional advancement through promotions and enhanced reputations. In conclusion, both financial and non-financial incentives are crucial not only for increasing the quantity of scientific publications but also for improving their quality. When properly designed and aligned with institutional goals, incentive systems can foster a research-oriented academic culture, drive innovation, and support faculty members in achieving their professional milestones.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive quantitative method with a survey approach to examine the effect of incentives on motivation, scientific publication productivity, and career development of lecturers at the Directorate of Research and Community Service (DRPM) of Bina Darma University. This approach was chosen to obtain measurable and objective data from respondents through structured questionnaires. As explained by (Sugiyono, 2022), quantitative research is a method based on positivism philosophy that analyzes a specific population or sample using research instruments and statistical data analysis to test predetermined hypotheses. The selection of this method is in line with the research objectives, which focus on evaluating measurable relationships between variables.

This research was conducted at Universitas Bina Darma, located on Jalan Jenderal A. Yani No. 3, Palembang, South Sumatra. The university's DRPM unit was selected because of its direct responsibility in managing research activities, providing publication incentives, and facilitating academic career development.

Data for this study were collected using a structured, closed ended questionnaire that was distributed electronically through Google Form. This method was chosen for its practicality, broad reach, and efficiency in gathering data from respondents across various locations. The questionnaire was carefully constructed based on the operational definitions of the research variables, which include: (1) Incentives, (2) Scientific Publication, and (3) Career Development. Each construct was represented by a series of statements designed to reflect the key dimensions and indicators relevant to the study. To ensure uniformity in responses and facilitate quantitative analysis, each item in the questionnaire was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale allowed respondents to express varying degrees of agreement or disagreement with each statement, thereby capturing nuanced attitudes,

perceptions, and experiences. According to (Rahmawani & Syahrial, 2021), the Likert scale is particularly effective in social science research for quantifying subjective phenomena such as motivation, satisfaction, and behavioral intention. Its use in this study ensures the data collected are both reliable and suitable for statistical analysis, such as descriptive statistics, correlation testing, and regression analysis. In addition, prior to distribution, the questionnaire underwent content validation by academic experts to assess the clarity, relevance, and alignment of each item with the intended variables. This step was taken to enhance the instrument's validity and ensure that it accurately measures what it is intended to measure. The structured nature of the questionnaire also supports the consistency of responses, minimizing ambiguity and bias in data interpretation.

Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method through SmartPLS version 4. This analysis technique is suited for exploratory research involving complex models and small to medium sample sizes. The analysis included: (1) Measurement model testing (outer model) for evaluating indicator validity and reliability through outer loadings, AVE, and composite reliability; and (2) Structural model testing (inner model) for assessing the strength and direction of relationships between latent variables using R-square values, path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values through bootstrapping. Hypotheses were tested at a significance level of $p < 0.05$ to determine the effects of incentives on scientific publication and career development, including indirect effects via mediation by publication variables (Sarstedt et al., 2020).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The measurement model was implemented in order to understand the validity and reliability of the experiment. In the measurement form, validity and reliability tests were carried out in order to understand whether the construct had fulfilled the conditions so that it could be continued as research. The measurement form is shown in Figure 1.

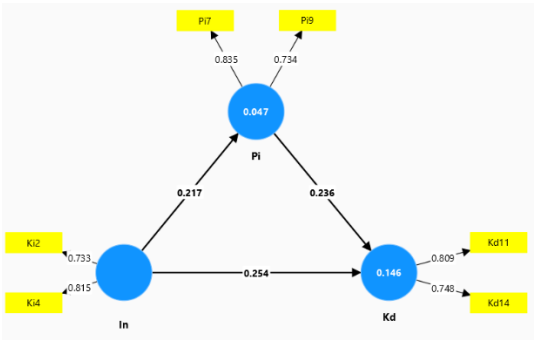

Figure 1. Measurement Model

Image Source: Data Processing Results from SmartPLS 4 (2024)

Outer loadings in structural model analysis, such as Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), are used to assess the validity of indicators against the measured construct. Outer loading values greater than 0.70 are generally considered valid indicators. According to (Sarstedt et al., 2020), The higher the outer loading value on a construct indicates that the indicators

on the construct have a lot in common. This characteristic is referred to as indicator reliability. It can be seen in table (1) that the test results have outer loadings above 0.70, so they can be declared valid.

Table 1. Outer Loadings Test Results

	Kd	In	Pi	Statement
Kd11	0,809			Valid
Kd14	0,748			Valid
In2		0,733		Valid
In4		0,815		Valid
Pi7			0,835	Valid
Pi9			0,734	Valid

Image Source: Data Processing Results from SmartPLS 4 (2024)

Composite reliability measures how consistently the items within a construct reflect the same concept. It helps researchers ensure that the various indicators associated with a factor, such as self-efficacy, provide stable and reliable results. The composite reliability value must be at least 0.70 to indicate adequate reliability. According to (Dewi et al., 2022), A construct is declared reliable if the value of the composite reliability is more than 0.7 and the Croncbach's Alpha value is more than 0.6. It can be seen in table (2) that the test results have a composite reliability above 0.70, so they can be declared valid.

Table 2. Composite Reliability Test Results

Indicators	Composite Reliability	Statement
In	0,755	Valid
Pi	0,750	Valid
Kd	0,763	Valid

Image Source: Data Processing Results from SmartPLS 4 (2024)

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value must be greater than 0.50 to indicate convergent validity. All variables in this study have AVE values above 0.50, which means that all indicators can be considered valid and reliable. The study used Smart PLS for data analysis. According to (Razak et al., 2021), convergent validity means that a set of indicators represents one latent variable and the underlying latent variable. So it can be seen in table (3) that the test results have an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) above 0.50, so it can be declared valid.

Table 3. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Test Results

Indicators	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Statement
In	0,618	Valid
Pi	0,601	Valid
Kd	0,606	Valid

Image Source: Data Processing Results from SmartPLS 4 (2024)

R-square is a value that ranges from 0 to 1, where the closer to one, the better the model is at explaining the dependent variable. This value indicates the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable. According to (Sukatin et al., 2022), the R-square value can affect how much the endogenous variable is influenced by the factors that influence it. It can be seen from the results of the R-square test that the R-square value in both simulations shows that the current model has weak predictive ability, the construct of scientific productivity, with an R-square of 4.7%. This indicates that only 4.7% of the variability. For the Lecturer performance construct, the first simulation showed slightly better results than the second simulation.

Table 4. R-square Test Results

Indicators	R-square	Adjusted R-square
Kd	0,203	0,175
Pi	0,047	0,031

Image Source: Data Processing Results from SmartPLS 4 (2024)

The outer model analysis shows high indicator validity. However, the structural test results (inner model) show that:

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis		*B*	T-test	Description	
No.	**Path**			***B***	**T-test**
H1	In - > Pi	0,067	1,067	Not Significant	Rejected
H2	Pi - > Kd	0,143	1,067	Significant	Accepted
H3	In - > Kd	0,060	1,555	Not Significant	Rejected
H4	In - > Kd - > Pi	0,241	0,702	Not Significant	Rejected

Image Source: Data Processing Results from SmartPLS 4 (2024)

These results are also supported by findings from (Yulianti & Suherman, 2023), who explain that even though incentives are available, intrinsic motivation and institutional support are far more decisive in determining the success of lecturers in producing scientific publications. A similar view is expressed by (Nofiyanti, A., & Rachmawati, 2022), who state that providing incentives without supporting capacity development systems only has a temporary impact on productivity.

The results of this study indicate that the incentive policies implemented at Bina Darma University have not had a significant impact on increasing scientific publications or career development, as reflected in the SmartPLS analysis. The rejection of hypotheses H1 and H3, which indicate that incentives do not have a significant influence on publication productivity or career development, suggests that financial incentives alone are insufficient to drive academic productivity. These findings align with the research by (Kosfeld & Neckermann, 2023), which emphasizes that non-financial motivators, such as recognition, institutional support, and access to resources, may play a more significant role in driving academic output.

One possible explanation for the insignificant incentive effect is the existence of structural and systemic barriers within universities. These barriers include high administrative burdens, limited access to research funding, lack of scientific writing training, and limited research time allocation due to heavy teaching loads. These conditions have the potential to neutralize the motivational effect of financial incentives. According to (Kosfeld & Neckermann, 2023), lecturers at Indonesian universities often face barriers that hinder publication activities, regardless of the existing incentive structure.

Furthermore, the acceptance of hypothesis H2 confirms the strong relationship between scientific publications and faculty career development. These results reinforce previous studies such as (Simarmata, 2019) and (Gunarto & Haddy, 2023), which found that scientific publications are closely related to academic promotion and the attainment of functional positions. Therefore, although incentives do not directly increase publications, the act of publishing itself clearly influences faculty members' career paths.

The rejection of hypothesis H4, which states that scientific publications mediate the relationship between incentives and career development, underscores the need for a more integrated and supportive research ecosystem. This finding suggests that policy interventions should not only focus on incentives but also address fundamental issues such as access to academic mentors, reduction of non-academic burdens, and facilitation of research collaboration.

CONCLUSION

Scientific publications play a pivotal role in lecturer career development. However, this study concludes that incentives alone are insufficient to increase publication productivity or academic promotion. Universities must adopt comprehensive strategies that combine financial, institutional, and professional development support to achieve meaningful improvements.

These findings contribute to ongoing discourse on academic policy reforms in Indonesia, especially in the context of Kampus Merdeka and institutional autonomy. By aligning incentive policies with capacity-building programs, universities can better meet national research output targets and improve global competitiveness.

In this section, the researcher provides suggestions for future researchers, particularly those interested in conducting studies on similar topics, based on the limitations outlined in the previous chapter. First, it is recommended that the distribution of questionnaires be carried out directly rather than online. This approach enables respondents to receive immediate clarification regarding the questions, thereby minimizing misunderstandings during the completion of the questionnaire. Furthermore, considering that the data in this study was limited and collected solely at Bina Darma University, future research should aim to gather a larger and more diverse dataset by involving multiple universities across Indonesia to obtain more comprehensive results. In addition to suggestions for future researchers, the researcher also offers recommendations for Bina Darma University to consider providing incentives for scientific publications and supporting the career development of faculty members.

By implementing the above recommendations, Bina Darma University can achieve significant improvements in scientific publication and faculty career development. Openness, efficiency, and awareness of faculty needs will form the foundation for enhancing positive relationships between faculty and students.

The study highlights the need for a shift from reward-based policies to supportive ecosystems. Universities should allocate dedicated research time, provide research funding, and reduce administrative burdens. DRPM at Bina Darma can serve as a facilitator by offering training, infrastructure, and publication mentoring.

Further, the Ministry of Education may consider standardizing incentive structures across institutions while still allowing local customization. This would help equalize opportunities for lecturers in both public and private universities.

This study is limited to one institution and a quantitative approach. Further studies could use a qualitative approach or cross-university comparative studies for a deeper understanding.

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