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**Assessment of the Performance of Department Chairs of a Philippine Higher Education Institution**

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**ABSTRACT**

This research assessed the performance of academic chairpersons of a Philippine Higher Education Institution. It aimed to generate a model of effective departmental leadership. Twenty-seven (27) academic chairs were the subjects, and 143 faculty respondents assessed their performance through an instrument – the IDEA Feedback for Department Chairs. Through Factor analysis, the study identified the underlying factor structure of faculty ratings of the Chairs' performance in terms of administrative responsibilities, personal characteristics, and performance of administrative methods. There was no significant difference in the performance of the Chairs when grouped according to age, gender, and years of service. There was a significant difference in the description of their detailed responsibilities as administrators. A significant difference was noted in their broad and specific responsibilities when respondents were grouped according to employment status. The model of a Department Chair preferred by faculty involves one who can develop a work environment conducive for faculty, and who can provide both program and administrative leadership and support; one who possesses personal characteristics such as the ability to resolve issues, interpersonal skills, and willingness to listen. Openness, which includes flexibility in dealing with individuals and situations; accessibility to faculty; goal-orientedness, and being democratic and humanistic; and trustworthiness are also viewed as important traits.

*Keywords:* Performance, academic chairpersons, IDEA feedback

**Introduction**

The role of an academic head, termed department chair in college, is one of the most critical in an educational institution. The Chair is regarded as a front-line supervisor and he/she is the important link between the faculty and the top management. Among other functions, he/she is responsible for implementing the curriculum, supervising the faculty, and resolving conflicts involving both faculty and students; and the top management of the school expects so much from him/her, particularly in terms of effective delivery of instruction and assuring that faculty members are doing their best in this regard. The nature of the job requires a department chair to not only able to have an organizational ability, leadership and management capability, but also the capacity to not take everything too seriously (Pinto, 2013).

Many researches have pointed to the fact that most of the chairs are not prepared and do not have adequate skills and competencies required by the position (Hecht, Higgerson, Gmelch, & Tucker, 1999). Institutions rarely have any on-campus preparation for a person accepting this position. They may have been engaged in teaching and research for a number of years; they may have shown marked excellence in their fields of discipline – yet these do not guarantee that they would succeed as academic

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF

leaders when they get promoted as chairs. Becoming a chairperson demands a different set of skills – including managerial and administrative skills that are often not there when they were just plain teachers. The new position calls for a constant balancing of competing goals and interests – those of the faculty, the students, and those of the institution represented by its administrators.

Most of the time, the faculty members are engrossed in their given assignments – to teach, to do research, and to render community outreach, without giving due consideration to the challenges faced by the academic head. The students, on the other hand simply expect to gain optimum learning from their classroom experiences and from their engagement in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. The top administrators, however, do have bigger expectations; i.e., they would want that the needs and aspirations of students and faculty are met, while at the same time meeting the loftier goals and objectives of the institution.

It becomes a necessity then to determine to what extent these academic heads – or chairs – are able to live up to the expectations of the institution. In more concrete terms, are they able to contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the institution? Are they able to transform themselves from mere purveyors of knowledge (as teachers) to conflict managers, information disseminators, or decision makers? To what extent have they been able to motivate the faculty such that the latter would be able to contribute their best in the fields of teaching, research, and community service? These are some of the questions that this proposed research intends to answer.

This research intends to assess the performance of the academic chairpersons, (called by the terms “Department Chair” and “Area Chair”) in De La Salle Lipa.

Specifically, this study aims to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the faculty respondents in terms of the following:
  - 1.1. age
  - 1.2. gender
  - 1.3. years of experience in DLSL
  - 1.4. employment status
  - 1.5. college affiliation?
2. What is the performance of academic chairs as perceived by the faculty?
3. What is the underlying factor structure of faculty ratings of the department chair’s performance of administrative responsibilities?
4. What is the underlying factor structure of faculty ratings of the department chair’s personal characteristics?
5. What is the underlying factor structure of faculty ratings of the department chair’s performance of administrative methods?
6. Is there a significant difference in the perception of the respondents on the performance of their Chairs when grouped according to demographic profile?

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF

This research conducted an investigation of the performance of the academic chairs who have been in the post for at least one year, or since the start of the AY 2010-2011. There are twenty-seven (27) of them, distributed among the five degree-granting colleges of DLSL – the Colleges of Nursing; Information Technology and Engineering; Education, Arts, and Sciences; International Hospitality and Tourism Management; and Business, Economics, Accountancy and Management.

Since this study probed into the performance of the Chairs as perceived by their faculty, a standardized instrument known as the IDEA (Individual Development and Educational Assessment) Feedback for Department Chairs was used to attain said objective. This instrument was intended to be an assessment tool used by faculty members. It is divided into four (4) parts – the first dealing with the twenty (20) responsibilities which some academic chairs pursue, the second dealing with ten (10) items on the strengths and weaknesses of the chair, the third consisting of thirty (30) items pertaining to the professional characteristics of the chair, and the fourth consisting of five (5) items that detail the potential impediments to the chair's effectiveness.

The performance that is envisioned here is the overall performance of the Chairs – the study did not intend to look at the individual performance of each of the administrators. The nature of the instrument was such that the results obtained simply gave an overall view of how the Chairs have been performing with respect to the administrative duties and responsibilities expected of them by the institution. This overall assessment of performance shall provide to those interested with a model of effective departmental leadership in Philippine academic institutions.

### **Hypothesis**

The following hypothesis will be validated by the study:

Ho: There was no significant difference in the perception of respondents on the performance of their Chairs when grouped according to demographic profile.

### **Theoretical Background**

Supervision involves the activities performed by supervisors in overseeing the productivity and development of employees who account directly to the supervisor. (Robert, 2010, p.1). Regarding the extent of an organization, middle-class managers will supervise first level supervisors, while chief executives will supervise the middle-managers, etc. thus supervision is a managing activity and supervisors have management roles in an organization (Rue and Byars, 2007).

In the educational field, Alfred Kadushin stated that a supervisor has to ensure educational advancement of every individual worker on the organization in a way calculated to stir up his/her entirely to realize his/her potential of usefulness (Robert, 2010, p.1).

Salaman (1995) argued that supervisors should be concerned about both learning and performance of workers. The critically managerial aspect of supervisors' work is their duty to monitor and improve the work of other workers. Their managerial efficiency is determined through their capability to improve others work. Supervisors have a lot of work to do in the area of improving the capacities and even tapping the hidden potentials of their workers. Thus, for many management writers, their task involve constant mentoring and coaching of the workers, especially those new recruits in the organization.

**Key Functions of a supervisor.** Supervisors are part of human resources management and thus have important role in ensuring that the objectives of the organizations are achieved and at the same time ensuring that good relationship between the management and the employees is maintained. To this end the supervisors have got the following roles in an organization which they have to perform as indicated below (Robert, 2010, pp. 2-3):

- **Counseling/discipline.** Employees need to be counseled at work as they may have both personal and organizational problems.
- **Planning.** As part of the management, the supervisor will have a duty of planning work for the employees in accordance to the goals of the organization and the ability of individual workers.
- **Delegation.** The supervisor will have to delegate duties to his/her subordinates; effective delegation of duties encompasses defined objectives, tolerance, timely feedback, and corrective actions.
- **Communication.** Communication is usually used within the organization's internal communication by the supervisors as they shared information with the employees, management and customers.
- **Motivation.** Employees need to be motivated in order for the organization to get the best out of them. An employee who is well motivated will easily stay in the organization and be more productive.
- **Interpersonal relations.** Personal relationship in a workplace is crucial, it makes an employee feel valued and cared for, the supervisor will therefore have a duty of cultivating good interpersonal relations between himself and the employees.

### Literature Review

In a study conducted in 2006 by Dunning and associates on "The State of the Art in Evaluating the Performance of Department Chairs and Division Heads", the following qualitative findings were revealed:

1. Deans and chairs agreed that effective formal evaluations should be related to outcomes (such as annual departmental reports/strategic plans) and should be based on goals that are agreed on in advance. Additionally, deans felt chairs should be evaluated on how well they managed their departments. Chairs felt the evaluation process should include feedback from peers and students.
2. Deans agreed on key obstacles that prevented formal performance reviews from being effective, including interpersonal issues with faculty, finding time to dedicate to the task, and lack of resources to link performance to reward.
3. Deans felt not having goals and timelines as a reference before the evaluation made for an ineffective performance evaluation. Deans also felt that poor conduct such as defensiveness or anger by the person during the evaluation interview/meeting led to an ineffective formal evaluation. The chairs indicated as a group that they were not aware of any problems in the formal evaluation process.

A more recent study conducted by Jan Middendorf in 2009 entitled "Evaluating Department Chairs' Effectiveness Using Faculty Ratings" revealed that faculty ratings of the chair's performance of responsibilities, personal characteristics, and administrative methods are positively related to faculty members' overall judgment of the chair's effectiveness. The faculty had more confidence in the department chair's ability to provide leadership and were less likely to believe that the department chair should be replaced if they perceive him or her as supporting the faculty, promoting a positive environment, and

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF

focusing on democratic and goal-oriented behaviors in their position. Flexibility/Adaptability was also a significant predictor. This implied that faculty have confidence in the department chair's overall performance if they perceive that he or she demonstrates the ability to resolve issues, communicate, and demonstrates traits of trustworthiness, openness and patience in implementing change.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Knight and Trowler, in their study of English and Canadian university departments, suggest that departmental leaders should be seen as 'interactional' leaders, that is leaders who are sensitive to the unique qualities and culture of their departments. This notion reflects the prominent belief that leaders are custodians of organisational culture as much as they are cultural change agents. Knight and Trowler suggest that departmental leaders in particular can be successful by working with and through existing cultural patterns, and by using these patterns as the basis for cultivating trust relationships and helping to get things done (Knight and Towler, 2000).

The instrument that was used in this study is a standardized tool used in most other countries and was intended to find out the qualities, traits, and behaviors of an effective academic chairperson.

As this research wanted to find out if there was no significant difference in the perception of respondent-faculty members with respect to the performance of their Chairs when the former are grouped according to profile, it was done through the test of difference between mean values obtained after they have assessed the supervisory performance of their Chairs. These perceptions of faculty members then served as the benchmark for future investigations regarding their performance as academic supervisors. In other words, such results indicated the type of supervisory skills desired or preferred by faculty members.

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

This research made use of the descriptive research design as it probed into and explained the role of the academic chair in helping achieve the mission and goals of a higher education institution, particularly in the aspect of overseeing the faculty who, collectively, form or make up the academic departments. The performance of the chairs was assessed with the end of coming up with an inventory of qualities of a successful and effective academic supervisor or chair.

### **Study Site**

This research was conducted at De La Salle Lipa, a multi-level educational institution located in Lipa City. During the academic year 2010-2011, there were twenty-seven academic heads or chairs in the institution. The faculty served as respondents who, by accomplishing the questionnaire, assessed the performance of their bosses. These faculty members were chosen based on proportionate sampling technique. If, for example the criterion was to include at least 50% of the faculty in the department, then they were chosen on the basis of their length of stay in the department, as well as on their having worked with the current chair or head under investigation.

### **Data Outcome Measures**

A standardized instrument was accessed from a previously conducted study by Middendorf (2009) referred to as the "**Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) Center's Feedback for Department Chairs**". The Faculty

## **ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF**

Perceptions of Department Head or Chair's Instrument (FPDHS) is a 70-item instrument containing 67 objectively worded items and 3 short-answer written-response items. All objective items were constructed using a Likert-type format with five possible responses ranging from 1 to 5 (1=low; 5=high); however, the wording of the scale anchors varies depending on the subscales. In the first 20 items on the FPDHS instrument, the faculty rates their department chair's performance on various administrative responsibilities. Five a-priori subscales are assumed for administrative responsibilities (Administrative Support, Personnel Management, Program Leadership/Support, Building Image/Reputation, and Developing Positive Climate). The scale for these items ranges from "Poor" (scored as "1") to Outstanding (scored as "5").

On the next set of items, 21-30, the faculty rated their respective department chair's strengths and weaknesses on personal characteristics. Five a-priori subscales are assumed for personal characteristics (Ability to Resolve Issues, Communication Skills, Steadiness, Trustworthiness, and Openness). The scale for these items ranges from "Definite Strength" (scored as "5") to "Definite Weakness" (scored as "1").

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data for this research were gathered through the administration of the IDEA Feedback instrument to the faculty members who were being supervised by the Chairs. Collection of data was done in the First Semester of AY 2010-2011. Likewise the researcher conducted interviews with the deans of the various colleges to validate some other information pertinent to the study.

### **Data/Mode of Analysis**

The main tool used in the analysis of the responses was the Factor Analysis of each of the items included in the IDEA Feedback Instrument. The hypothesis was tested using the test of difference between means, the t-test. Likewise ANOVA was used.

## **Results And Discussions**

### **Socio-demographic profile of Respondents**

Forty-one percent (41%) of the respondents of this study have ages ranging from 31-40 while thirty-two percent (32%) have ages ranging from 21-30. More than three-fifths (61%) were females and the rest were males. These respondents have mostly from 1-6 years of experience as faculty members of the institution as revealed by 30% who have had 1-3 years of experience and another 30% who have had 4-6 years of experience in De La Salle Lipa. Fifty-five percent (55%) were full-timers and the rest were part-timers. Almost half (49%) of the respondents were faculty members of Arts and Sciences while the rest came from the College of Information Technology & Engineering, College of Business, Economics, Accountancy & Management, College of Nursing, and College of International Hospitality and Tourism Management, with 18%, 17%, 10% and 7% respondents, respectively.

### Factor Structure Factor Structure of Faculty Ratings of the Department Chair's Performance of Administrative Responsibilities

Table 1

*Component Matrix Coefficients and Communalities for FPDHS Items 1-20 under Factor1: Development of a Work Environment Conducive to Productivity*

Variables from FPDHS Instrument (N=143)		Loadings	Communalities	M	SD
Item 18.	Establishes trust between himself/herself and members of the faculty.	0.926	0.857	4.29	1.13
Item 16	Stimulates or rejuvenates faculty vitality/enthusiasm.	0.913	0.833	4.24	0.97
Item 8.	Develops collegiality/cooperation among departmental faculty members.	0.913	0.833	4.41	0.94
Item 12	Improves the department's image and reputation within the campus community.	0.902	0.813	4.36	0.99
Item 9.	Encourages an appropriate balance among academic specializations within the department.	0.862	0.743	4.36	0.87
Item 13.	Fosters the development of each faculty members' special talents or interests.	0.846	0.715	4.19	0.96
Item 15.	Understands and communicates expectations of the campus administration to the faculty.	0.806	0.650	4.47	0.80
Item 20.	Recognizes and rewards faculty in accordance with their contributions to the department.	0.797	0.636	4.17	1.07
Item 14.	Sees to it that new faculty and staff are acquainted with departmental procedures, priorities, and expectations.	0.781	0.609	4.42	0.83
Item 19.	Improves the department's image and reputation with off-campus constituencies.	0.661	0.437	4.55	0.88

**Developing a positive climate.** Items 18, 16, 8 and 14 of Table 1 are all contributing towards developing a positive climate. As perceived by faculty respondents, this is one area where the department chairs under study have performed very well with factor loadings of .926, .913, and .913. It is very important for the Chair to establish trust between himself and the faculty, to rejuvenate faculty enthusiasm, and to develop collegiality/cooperation among faculty members. Also important is the necessity for the Chair to see to it that the new faculty and staff are acquainted with departmental procedures, priorities and expectations, having a factor loading of .781. The latter is the

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF

basis of all formal relationships and future interactions among the members of the department. Likewise, it would be difficult for the Chair to elicit cooperation and compliance from the faculty members without their clear understanding of the department's expectations as well as their own expectations from the department.

### **Building Image and Reputation**

Items 12 and 19 have to do with building image and reputation for the department, both within and outside the campus community. Such image and reputation are very important for the department since they are perceived by external and internal communities as characterized by that image based on the historical performance of both their faculty and students.

### **Personnel Management**

Items 13 and 20, "fostering the development of each faculty members' special talents and interests" and "recognizing and rewarding faculty in accordance with their contributions to the department" are basic functions of the Chair since the faculty members' motivation to deliver their best is influenced by how their efforts are being recognized, and how their competencies are being developed through the provision of specific faculty development activities.

Table 2

*Component Matrix Coefficients and Communalities for FPDHS Items 1-20 under Factor2: Program Leadership and Administrative Support*

Variables from FPDHS Instrument (N=143)		Loadings	Communalities	M	SD
Item 17.	Guides curriculum development.	0.888	0.788	4.37	0.84
Item 11.	Guides the development of a sound organizational plan to accomplish departmental programs.	0.875	0.766	4.33	0.96
Item 4.	Fosters good teaching in the department (e.g., encourages course updating, use of appropriate technology, attending to student feedback).	0.863	0.745	4.35	0.85
Item 6.	Leads in establishing and monitoring progress on annual and biannual department goals.	0.862	0.743	4.36	0.94
Item 10.	Stimulates research and scholarly activity in the department.	0.802	0.643	4.12	0.96
Item 2.	Takes the lead in recruiting promising faculty.	0.757	0.573	4.23	0.98



**ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF**

Variables from FPDHS Instrument (N=143)		Loadings	Communalities	M	SD
Item 3.	Attends to essential administrative details (e.g., class scheduling, budget preparation, promotion and tenure documentation).	0.752	0.566	4.70	0.59
Item 1.	Guides the development of sound procedures for assessing faculty performance.	0.728	0.530	4.27	1.03
Item 5.	Facilitates obtaining grants and contracts from external sources.	0.714	0.510	4.34	1.23
Item 7.	Communicates the department's needs (personnel, space, monetary) to the dean.	0.642	0.413	4.55	0.85

**Program leadership/support.** Items 17, 4, 6, and 10 all pertain to program leadership/support. Some of the primary functions of the Chair include leading the department's members to constantly develop the curriculum and fostering good teaching in the department. The latter is one of the most clearly visible or observable functions of a faculty member. Likewise, the function of leading in the establishing and monitoring of progress based on the predetermined strategic plan as well as stimulating research and scholarly activities in the department are critical functions of the department chair. It is worth-noting that these functions are done very well by these academic supervisors.

**Administrative support.** Items 11, 3 and 7 of Table 2 all pertain to administrative support. It is the chair's primary role to guide the department in the development of a sound organizational plan to accomplish departmental programs by coming up with specific strategies and plans of action. A chair who is unable to communicate the needs of the department to the Dean, and who is unable to attend to essential administrative details like class scheduling, budget preparation and promotion will find it hard to elicit the cooperation of the faculty members. In all three areas, the department chairs were rated very well by their subordinates. The mean value of 4.7 for attending to administrative details is indicative of a very responsible and committed crop of department chairs in the institution.

**Factor structure of the Chair's personal characteristics**

Table 3

*Component Matrix Coefficients and Communalities for FPDHS Items 21-30*

Variables from FPDHS Instrument (N=143)		Loadings	Communalities	M	SD
Item 26.	Practical judgment.	0.904	0.817	4.24	1.00
Item 28.	Flexibility/adaptability in dealing with individuals/situations.	0.901	0.812	4.28	0.91
Item 27.	Willingness to listen.	0.878	0.772	4.34	0.93
Item 24.	Patience in implementing change.	0.877	0.770	4.20	1.00
Item 22.	Problem solving ability.	0.872	0.761	4.20	1.06
Item 30.	Fairness.	0.863	0.745	4.20	1.11
Item 21.	Interpersonal skill.	0.849	0.721	4.20	1.09
Item 25.	Honesty.	0.835	0.697	4.41	1.00
Item 29.	Accessibility to faculty.	0.826	0.682	4.41	0.86
Item 23.	Appreciation for department's history.	0.596	0.356	4.38	0.99

It may be gleaned from Table 3 that practical judgment, as part of the trait involving the ability to resolve issues got the highest factor loading of .904, followed by flexibility which got a factor loading of .901. The willingness to listen comes close with a factor loading of .878 and patience in implementing change, which got factor loading of .877. Table shows that the ability to resolve issues (practical judgment and problem-solving ability) is a "definite strength" of the department chairs surveyed. This is supported by their flexibility in dealing with individuals and situations, as well as willingness to listen. The last skill is a must-skill that all leader-managers should have as this would enable them to have a comprehensive grasp of the issues and problems at hand.

Table 4

*Component Matrix Coefficients and Communalities for FPDHS Items 31-60*

Variables from FPDHS Instrument (N=143)		Loadings	Communalities	M	SD
Item 49.	Sees to it that the work of the faculty is coordinated.	0.903	0.816	4.31	1.02
Item 52.	Make sure her/his part in the department is understood by all members.	0.897	0.805	4.38	0.96
Item 45.	Looks out for the personal welfare of individual faculty members.	0.896	0.803	4.23	1.14
Item 59	Provides feedback to faculty on their major activities.	0.881	0.777	4.45	0.89

**ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF**

Item 54.	Maintains definite standards of performance.	0.874	0.763	4.38	0.94
Item 53.	Acts as though visible department accomplishment were vital to him/her.	0.873	0.762	4.41	0.91
Item 51.	Lets faculty members know when they have done a good job.	0.872	0.760	4.23	1.05
Item 39.	Is easy to understand.	0.861	0.742	4.31	0.91
Item 56.	Facilitates positive relationships between faculty and the clerical/technical staff.	0.861	0.741	4.46	1.07
Item 47.	Treats all faculty members as her/his equal.	0.858	0.737	4.23	1.16
Item 32.	Supports and protects academic freedom.	0.853	0.727	4.33	1.01
Item 42.	Sees to it that faculty members are working up to capacity.	0.847	0.718	4.25	1.02
Item 60.	Tries to learn about each faculty member's interest, talents, and aspirations.	0.840	0.706	4.10	1.19
Item 57.	Encourages teamwork among members of the faculty.	0.839	0.704	4.45	0.96
Item 35.	Makes sound suggestions for developing/changing departmental decisions/priorities.	0.835	0.698	4.36	0.92
Item 33.	Reduces, resolves, and/or prevents conflict among departmental faculty members.	0.834	0.696	4.24	0.99
Item 34.	Assists faculty in developing their own goals and priorities.	0.832	0.693	4.24	1.01
Item 38.	Acts as though high faculty morale is vital to him/her.	0.831	0.691	4.31	1.00
Item 31.	Allocates faculty responsibilities in an effective and equitable manner.	0.826	0.682	4.22	0.95
Item 50.	Explains the basis for his/her decisions.	0.822	0.675	4.29	1.03
Item 36.	Is willing to stand up to higher authority when departmental interests are threatened.	0.795	0.631	4.20	1.17
Item 41.	Does little things that make it pleasant to be a member of the department.	0.786	0.618	4.17	1.16

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF

Item 48.	Gains input from faculty on important matters.	0.786	0.618	4.46	0.79
Item 40.	Tries out new ideas with the faculty.	0.782	0.611	4.23	1.00
Item 58.	Encourages faculty ownership of a vision of the department.	0.781	0.610	4.32	1.07
Item 37.	Maintains steadiness in the face of crisis or unanticipated frustrations.	0.763	0.582	4.36	0.95
Item 55.	Puts faculty suggestions into actions.	0.737	0.543	4.38	0.88
Item 46.	Lets faculty members know what is expected of them.	0.706	0.499	4.31	0.87

It may be seen from Table 4 that all the department chairs studied are goal-oriented in their approaches. This can be seen from the high factor loadings of items 49, 52, 53, and 54 – seeing to it that the work of the faculty is coordinated (.903); making sure his/her part in the department is understood by all members (.897); acting as though visible department accomplishment were vital to him/her (.896) and maintaining definite standards of performance (.874). Bolman and Deal, in their classic work entitled *Reframing Organizations*, emphasized that effective leaders help establish a vision, set standards of performance, and create focus and direction for collective efforts (Bolman and Deal, 1997).

Looking out for the personal welfare of individual faculty members and letting faculty members know when they have done a good job are important indicators of democratic style of leadership.

Along with this goal-orientation is the manifestation of a democratic and humanistic approach by the Chair. Items 45, 51, 39, and 47, namely “looking out for the personal welfare of individual faculty members”, “letting faculty members know when have done a good job”, “easy to understand”, and “treating all faculty members as his/her equal”, respectively all indicate the great importance the Chair accords to each and every member of the department. Items 45, 51, 39, and 47 are indicative of the democratic/humanistic approaches adopted by the Chairs, as shown by factor loadings of .896 and .872, .861 and .858 respectively. A faculty member who realizes that his supervisor puts premium on his welfare and treats him as a co-equal will definitely exert his/her utmost effort in order to reciprocate this democratic treatment by his/her superior.

The promotion of a positive climate in the department can also strengthen the cohesiveness or solidarity of its members. Items 32, 33, and 57 – “supporting academic freedom”; “reducing, resolving, and/or preventing conflict among departmental faculty members”; “facilitates positive relationships between faculty and clerical/technical staff”; and “encouraging teamwork among faculty members” are all supportive of a strong organizational climate that can emotionally unify and build camaraderie among the department’s members.

### **Test of Difference in the Perception of Respondents when Grouped According to Profile**

**Age.** Statistical test reveals that there is no significant difference in the perception of the faculty respondents when they were grouped according to age. This simply shows that whether young or old, they have almost the same way of assessing the performance of

their superior based on the indicators shown namely responsibilities, strong and weak points, administrative responsibilities, and effectiveness.

**Gender.** Statistical tests show that there is no significant difference between males and females when it comes to assessing the performance of their respective department or area chairs.

**Years of service at DLSL.** Results of statistical tests indicate that with the exception of the dimension describing the way the Chair performs his/her tasks, there was no significant difference in all the other dimensions when the respondents were grouped according to the length of service. There was a significant difference only in the way they assessed their superior, particularly in the aspect describing their day-to-day managerial behavior. It is worth noting here that most of the departments in the College Division were established during the late nineties, while a few were put up between the years 2000 and 2005.

**Employment status.** Statistical tests show that there is a significant difference in the way the respondents assessed the performance of their Chairs when grouped according to employment status, particularly in the dimensions that have to do with the responsibilities of their Chairs as well as with the description of the Chair's behavior on a day-to-day basis. Full-timers will definitely have an edge over the part-timers on matters regarding their familiarity to their superiors and their awareness of the detailed activities that the latter are engaged in on a daily basis. Both responsibilities and descriptions deal with the general and specific aspects of the work being done by the academic head.

### Conclusions

The major findings of this study have captured the qualities of departmental leadership that can be considered a model. First, he/she is one who has the habit of developing a work environment that is conducive for faculty and one who can provide program and administrative leadership and support. The former can still be grouped into categories that include developing a positive climate, building image and reputation, and personnel management, particularly in the aspect of motivation. The latter, on the hand, involves matters concerning the curriculum, instruction, and program administration/management. He has to take the initiative and to provide strong leadership in these areas. Knight and Trowler (2000) suggest that departmental leaders in particular can be successful by working with and through existing cultural patterns, and by using these patterns as the basis for cultivating trust relationships and helping to get things done.

Second, he/she should possess certain personal characteristics like practical judgment, willingness to listen, flexibility in dealing with individual situations, and the ability to resolve issues. These traits are indeed very important in as much as one of the Chair's most important functions is problem-solving and decision-making.

Third, the Chair should be a very goal-oriented administrator as can evidenced by the high factor loadings of the following items: "sees to it that the work of the faculty is coordinated"; "maintains definite standards of performance"; "acts as though visible department accomplishment were vital to him/her"; and "provides feedback to faculty on their major activities." But this goal orientation must be blended with a style of leadership that is both democratic and humanistic. This is evidenced by the high factor loadings obtained by the items pertaining to it: "looks out for the personal welfare of individual faculty members"; "treats all faculty members as her/his equal"; "lets faculty members know when they have done a good job"; and "is easy to understand". Moreover, as Bolman and Deal cited the results of studies by Likert some fifty years ago, "employee-centered" managers were more effective in the long run than "task-centered" managers.

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS OF

Having mentioned these “internal factors” in the Chair’s role as academic head, there are also certain external factors that must be present. This study would seem to suggest that a highly supportive top management is a must and this must be coupled with the removal of certain bureaucratic rules and regulations that hinder the effective performance of the academic head. For instance, rigidity in the compliance with communication protocols is more a hindering than a promoting factor.

### Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are being advanced:

1. The department chair needs to communicate regularly to the Dean the various concerns, needs and plans of the department. Since this study found that this is one common weakness of most Chairs, there is a need to develop a system whereby the different academic concerns of the faculty are elevated to the Dean or to some other higher officials on a regular basis.
2. There is also a need to document the history, contributions, and accomplishments of the different departments over the years and to make these known not only to the department’s members but also to other sectors of the institution. With the fast changes in departmental leadership, oftentimes, the accomplishments and contributions of previous Chairs are forgotten or else relegated to the dustbins. These accomplishments usually become the springboard for future achievements.
3. Since almost half of the faculty members are serving the school on a part-time basis, there is a pressing need to always inform them of what is expected of them by the department and by the institution. Part-timers, just like their full-time counterparts contribute a lot to the formation of students. Thus, they have to be regularly apprised of updates and expectations from the institution.
4. Since the study disclosed that major impediments to the effective performance of the Chair include inadequate financial resources as well as inadequate facilities of the department, it behooves upon the school administration to provide these to the best of the school’s capability.
5. Further studies on factors or determinants of the effectiveness of Department Chairs need to be conducted. This may include a wider scope or coverage so that a greater sample size may be studied.

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