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## Research Article

### Exploring the Work-Life Balance Experience Of Academic Participants: A Phenomenological Inquiry

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## ABSTRACT

In the academic workplace, balance is under attack today more than ever before. It delves into the personal and social lived experiences of the participant who are faculty and at the same time academic leader of a state university in Northern Mindanao. Advanced research investigates how participants in higher education navigate and negotiate the multiple roles within and outside of their academic careers-pure description 14-campus environment used a phenomenological research design, involved academic leaders as participants, and individual, in-depth interviewed 14 campus participants with experiences deemed meaningful to exploring struggles and experience behind. In addition, coping behaviors and leaders' leadership philosophies. The academic experiences of these participants express the very real cost of wearing many hats, little time for oneself and high chances of burning out. But they also deploy several strategies that shape work culture to lean in a more positive direction. These involved controlling timing, limits and encouraging a healthy-lead culture. The participants also felt that they are the focus in this study and include everybody in policy construction and would want more diverse representations and on the other hand would guarantee campus acceptance of this policy. This study also identified that decision-makers need to act on evidence, and policy needs room to guide as the situation changes.

University leaders may use the findings of this study to draft policies that enhanced work-life balance and organizational effectiveness. The self-care and mission can enable academic volunteers to set a stage for learning that works, the researcher, the faculty, students, and the community. This study expands on the discourse on work-life balance in the academe, proposing a policy-level solution grounded in the context of Philippine settings concerns and with practice implications based on filipino experiences.

**Keywords:** *Work-life balance, Policy development, Academic leadership, Phenomenological research, Self-care, Higher education institution*

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## Background

It is convenient for many people, especially those with high-demand jobs, where achieving a work-life balance can be challenging. The work schedule takes considerable time. Thus, people must make schedules for their friends and families, neighborhood activities and involvement, personal development, and personal hygiene (Sabuero, 2023). Therefore, establishing a balance between work and personal life is crucial for maintaining individual health and fostering healthy relationships, which in turn enhance productivity and engagement at work, as expressed by Wolor et al. (2020). A balanced lifestyle is the foundation of an individual's happiness, striking a balance between work and free time. The consequences of staff being unable to find a harmonious balance with their colleagues depend on what they bring from their outside lives, including the companies that hire them (Sabuero, 2023). Moreover, work-life balance emerged as employees sought a more balanced approach to their personal and professional lives, aiming to lead a better life. The institution had to encourage work-life balance to achieve a better impact on faculty, such as increased motivation, reduced stress levels in the workplace, higher performance, and lower turnover rates (Rumangkit & Zuriana, 2019). Faculty stress levels can escalate to the point where they reach burnout, reduced work attachment, and increased health risks due to job-related stress. Any instances of absence will subsequently impact the organization's overall health, performance, and financial position (Laguador, 2017).

Furthermore, human capital is recognized as the primary form of capital in the institution today, whether that institution operates in the government or private sector, or in the life of a politician (Rumangkit & Zuriana, 2019). Considering humans as the basic unit for work, production, and development in an organizational or group academic setting, it is likely that evolved humans have endless possibilities and unknown sources. It may have been responsible for many remarkable developments. This has been steadily researched throughout different ages (Pradhan et al., 2016). Organizing

and achieving institutional goals with a view to effectively using HR to attract experienced and competent faculty into the workforce umbrella of the institution (Pawoko et al., 2019). In addition, balancing work and life is also a matter of human resource management or labor relations worldwide, capturing the attention of workers, employers, legislators, and trade unions. This is due to the employees' need to attend to work and non-work obligations (Sani & Adisa, 2024). A balance between work and personal life is essential for maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships and overall well-being. The productivity and commitment to my job improve if I have enough time with my family (Sabuero, 2023).

As people become more identified with their job role, however, they are perceived as spending less time with family and friends, but increasingly at work (Oyewobi et al., 2019). This is especially the case for lecturers and academics, as we often render extra time at work to execute or perform research, administrative work, and supporting students outside of hours. The "need" to excel in these roles may intrude or touch on our personal time, leading to difficulty finding a balance between work and leisure. This paper aimed to explore how academic leaders navigated these challenges through the leadership styles they employed and the strategies they adopt in response. The research aimed to understand from the participants' perspective how good leadership can help reduce stress and increase productivity, and how that could improve work-life balance.

## Research Questions

The study aimed to determine and understand the emerging effect and impact of participants' experiences that sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the academic participants' experiences with their organization regarding work-life balance?
2. How do the participants cope with the challenges as academic participants?
3. What insights can be drawn from the participants in aid of policies?

### **Theoretical Lens**

The theory behind the study was based on Wilensky's 1960 Spillover Theory, which posits that positive spillover is associated with another system outside of humankind that yields positive outcomes. Spillover also rewards prudent and informed decisions that benefit the overall system (Talip et al., 2020). On the other hand-negative spillover claims that a decision-maker should adhere to or propagate a choice without foreseeing its inevitable negative effects, and responding in ways that enabled taking responsible action for a more informed decision-making is essential (Katper et al., 2020)

Greenhouse and Powell suggested that the mechanism of benefits derived from job and family might be instrumental as well as affective pathways. In an even more immediate sense, there may be a closer relationship between the positive effect of people and their tendencies to respect their family or job, which would facilitate their performance (Lee et al., 2021). As such, as researchers continue to investigate spillover and the mediating processes driving spillover between responsible behavior, scholars are increasingly drawing attention to the importance of 'real-world' contexts (Gragnano, 2020). Additionally, it is underpinned by Breakwell's (1986) IDP theory of identity, which was designed to elaborate and elucidate the spillover theory. It assumes that prototypicality is based upon perceptions of their personal opinions. The sounding was translated into allowances for changes toward sustainability (Verfuerth et al., 2019). Furthermore, humans are driven by values and identity in their lives. It focuses on different but related aspects of the self and shares some ideas, particularly regarding human motivation. Moreover, the lack of any theoretical or empirical effort to integrate them is also surprising, given that they belong to different schools (Abid Alvi et al., 2014).

The university personnel hold various positions, including management staff. It is claimed, too, that the relationship between work and life is complex and nuanced. The ongoing investigation of such a topic, a social policy that requires cooperation and multidisciplinary work, remains to be explained. The

givens about work and life, about the relationship between the work and life balance are necessary for assessing the question.

Additionally, to develop in-depth insight into how leaders experience their "work-life" using the Identity Process Theory as well as the Spillover Theory. The participants face a negative spillover, where work stress spills over into their personal lives, affecting their relationships and resilience. Positive spillover can occur when their skills and job satisfaction lead to increased happiness and better relationships. Identity Process Theory explains how individuals adapt their self-identification and coping strategies, such as drawing boundaries and focusing on the self, to handle these issues. In harmonizing these theories, the research highlights the real-life difficulties faced by participants and the strategies they employ to balance their private and work lives with greater success, ultimately leading to more successful outcomes both personally and professionally.

### **Methodology**

The research was guided by a phenomenological design, which seeks to trace the flow of the variable about our subject matter (Davison, 2014). The phenomenological method attempts to illuminate the specifics by isolating phenomena from the participants' conceptions, which are particular to each case of how academic participants experience life. In the humanities, this often involves understanding the data from the perspective of those who participated in the research and deriving knowledge and insights through an inductive qualitative methodology, such as interviews, discussions, and participant observations (Pathak, 2017). Thus, the very use of phenomenological research methodology makes it increasingly difficult to distinguish between qualitative and statistical power (Greening, 2022). Additionally, the study employed intentionally sampled academic participants to investigate work-life balance and lived experiences at 14 institutions of higher education (Andrade, 2021). Initially, the research recruited 14 participants to ensure data saturation. The central appropriateness of the lived experiences in revealing academia practitioners' work-life balance experi-

ence. These views were expressed in depth interviews. As a result, it is so important and necessary to record the proceedings of the trial. In addition, the added comments were an expression of what participants saw. Furthermore, the recording of sound/and or videotape is an interpretational tool. On the other hand, data collection is a research activity that always requires permits and permissions from authorities above the institution. When conducting an in-depth interview, open-ended questions are extremely important because one is trying to gather thorough information. For in-depth interviews, it is also essential to establish a personal relationship with the source to make them feel at ease and trusting. The researcher employed techniques such as inductive probing, pursuing statements, and requesting clarification to gain a deeper understanding of what the interviewee is saying (Rutledge & Hogg, 2020). In-depth interviews were conducted via Google Meet, according to the participants' availability. It lasted for about 30 minutes to an hour. It is also pursued through follow-up interviews, which are randomly conducted and occur during casual talks between the investigator and the respondent at every monthly meeting. Additionally, participants capture audio or video to validate whether the provided facts are correct and accurate.

The information obtained through in-depth interviews was analyzed thematically. It became more favorable to quantitatively analyze the material if data are intended to check out or determine the correlation and differences between variables, while using thematic analysis as a tool in studying it (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012). In thematic analysis, one should first consider data interpretation, as thematic analysis can easily identify the theme (for example, factors or variables relevant to any problem that participants mention). Consequently, the explanations provided by participants are crucial in allowing for the richest justifications of attitudes, behavior, and actions (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012). Secondly, through the choice between deductive and inductive approaches, the researcher was able to manage observational data that arose during the study. As the collection of different types of data

(observation data) is intended to explain all procedures followed during the study, there should be an array of options for analysis based on terms used in such cases, such as "explanations" (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012). Third, data phases are promising in revealing the impact of a variable that participants used to explore and decide on influence(s), and how these views may limit (or can) affect the present. This technique applies to various stages of collection, both pre- and post-collection (Šula, 2018), including categorization and coding, as well as thematic analysis. As a continuum of descriptive analysis, we can segment processed data into those sharing consensus as well as diversity (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012).

### **Trustworthiness of the Study**

The study's contribution is therefore primarily intended to provide an orientation to the institutional setup. Similarly, other researchers' work in this area has developed the subcategories of credibility - which is roughly used to describe an idea similar to positivist internal validity, dependability - more akin to reliability, transferability- a form of external validity, and confirmability (which is essentially a presentational issue) into dimensions of trustworthiness (Gunawan, 2015).

The usefulness of the findings or results to other contexts, in line with how study participants have been represented. Further, others can judge whether the findings apply to their situation, researchers explain their method of study and the conclusions. Identifying appropriate treatments is at the heart of medical research. This method enables the researcher to judge the transferability of results to different contexts, akin to generalizability in quantitative research. It also acknowledges the subjectivity surrounding the application of these findings in other contexts (Gunawan, 2015).

Additionally, trustworthiness is a central concept in various disciplines, including business, IT, and engineering. Reliability is used to describe how reliable, safe, and robust a system or component is, and that users can depend on it. Reliability is a combination of many properties that lend confidence in operation and trust among users of the system (Nowell et al., 2017). By addressing both transferability

and reliability, researchers can enhance the utility and impact of reporting, ensuring that results are relevant to practice settings and acceptable for clinical use.

The revelation that complex human actions, emotions, and social surroundings within the context of a 'research setting' are vastly subjective is the primary motivation for qualitative research. As such, confirmability serves as a standard by which to determine the dependability of the data collected for the study and how it proves or disproves conclusions that are biased-oriented (Gunawan, 2015). In addition, credibility is also achieved by demonstrating the trustworthiness of the qualitative research results for both the participants and a wider audience. A related notion is concept, which is vital as it describes the degree to which a study determines and defines the phenomenon of interest (Anderson et al., 2014).

This study also aimed to enhance the trustworthiness, transferability, and confirmability of the findings by applying various strategies to gather phenomenological information. In addition, it enhances the validity and reliability of the collected data.

### ***Role of the Researcher***

The researcher, as the data collector in this study, is the person who conducted the in-depth interviews, as they are one of the crucial methods for gathering information. After the data have been collected and transcribed according to an established protocol, the researcher conducts a thematic analysis until a meaningful, coherent, and dependable end-product can be produced. In contrast, the work personifies rigor and intensity in that it demonstrates its trustworthiness, transferability, reliability, credibility, and confirmability. Value added of the study. Importance (or otherwise) of findings or contribution to knowledge.

### **Results and Discussion**

The survey results reflected the experiences and opinions of participants in academic policymaking and governance. This discloses what was being said, the topics and ideas about which specific key messages and issues were in play within a discussion, and points to what

could be regarded as implicit theory about leadership that 'makes sense' in an academic context. Furthermore, the conclusions in the final report by offering best practices (practical implications) and further developing institutional policy. This dialogue has created a framework through which this intelligence will inform future behaviors in a fair and considerate manner, with respect to university stakeholders, and provide inclusive support.

#### **Question Number 1. Please tell me about yourself, your civil status, the number of children you have, your permanent address, and your educational background. Can you describe your current role on campus?**

The study revealed that, of the 14 respondents in this category, there are seven married and seven singles in each area. The married respondent usually has two or three children. Those individuals were mainly from the mainland and had daily commutes to work, while single participants did not. With this, the participants are coming from different municipalities across the region. Furthermore, they obtain their academic degree in prestigious university in the city, were most of them holding a doctorate degree in Management as well as master's degree. The current participants come from various high-profile universities in the province, where they interact with a wide range of students, faculty, and staff on how to make a more inclusive workplace. Their two main current focuses are student-related issues and mental health awareness, as well as being the focal person behind cultural appreciation events. This one-of-a-kind initiative has dramatically increased student attention and resources. The members believe there is power in their numbers, and they strived to support their fellow students as they help shape the institutional culture. Our collaborators are dedicated to fostering a community and creating spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and growth.

#### **Question Number 2. What are the academic participants' experiences with their organization regarding work-life balance?**

## **2.1 Narrate your experiences and practices—burdens, struggles, and relationships—in handling your subordinates.**

Balancing work-life as an academic trainee: family, societal expectations, and post-graduate education. The endless interplay between what organizations demand and the preservation of their personal health and well-being has dramatically impacted how they lead, interact with both peers and supervised, mentor, and support.

### ***Burdens and Struggles***

The heavy workload and the high level of responsibility are two things to think about. A climate of non-stop pressure can be generated by striving to cope with multiple responsibilities, help teachers and staff, and ensure student success. The expectations may increase dramatically at times of heavy demand, such as the start of school or accreditation reviews, to the point where participants feel overburdened all the time. Participants increasingly found it difficult to realize a healthy work-life balance, as personal life was often disrupted by work. It got to a point where participants found spending evenings and weekends knocking out the urgent issues.

### ***Relationships with Subordinates***

It has not always been easy, but building great relationships with the team has always been a top priority. While the participant sought to be approachable, they wanted to establish an open space in which colleagues feel at liberty to share their feelings and concerns. Nonetheless, there were times when the need to fill institutional needs was quite assertive on set, as disclosed from candid conversations. As the years passed, it became increasingly clear that connecting meant risking by being honest and vulnerable. They spoke frankly to each other, and that is what cemented their relationship, discussing openly what they went through on-screen there and then. The participant was told, 'We are all in this together, whether alone or as a group, when viewing the team clear their hurdles.

### ***Work and Life Advice***

In order to manage such pressures and to increase my work-life balance, participants purposefully imposed a few rules on:

### ***Regular check-ins***

Central to the way the participant led was the one-to-one meetings initiated by academic partners with their group members. What these conversations did was provide them with a space to discuss workloads, help, and be candid about it." It has also been important to build a culture where team members feel valued and listened.

### ***Modelling Self-care***

The participant relationship evolved around the academic are and go-around, starting with one-on-one meetings between team members. These discussions had created a space for them to evaluate their workloads, assist one another, and provide a forum for honest communication. Establishing trust has meant creating an environment where staff members feel respected and listened to.

### ***Setting Boundaries***

The participants discovered how radical it was to impose a precise time boundary on work. The person earned more personal time by informing coworkers of the committed time plan and motivating others in pursuit. This helps create a healthier working environment, and it also helps us stay focused and fully engaged throughout the day .

This suggests that the participants experience with work-life balance highlight the importance of supportive leadership, appreciation for personal well-being, boundary setting, understanding collective challenges, and professional development (Valmores, 2021). Through attention to these quality improvement areas, institutions can foster an environment that is more supportive of academic members, ultimately enhancing their performance and the well-being of the academic community (Groner, 2018).

## 2.2 What were your experiences setting aside your organization's pursuits towards personal pursuits?

### **Recognizing the Need for Change**

The participants are punctuated with the institution culture, and the institutions has a trajectory than my unjustified pressure roll over the position under the 'institutional projects before others. Participants described an adverse impact on the relationship of the quality of life. The finding prompted in different manner, and it became evident that ignoring so much of a player's life was not only unsustainable — it was making worse if not being prevented.

### **Scheduling Personal Time**

Participants scheduled their own "personal time" on their calendars for juggling work and weekends with their families, or whatever they needed in terms of self-care. Calling these times appointments that could not be changed made participants regard them less as distractions from life or self-indulgences, and more like a necessity of life.

### **Learning to Say No**

The participants have learned most from learning how to say no to doing more and taking on more work, which has been by far the hardest. Respondents expressed that this might pose challenges to being effective as leaders. The participants may find a way to take some time for themselves and focus on what mattered, if they had drawn crystal clear lines — and they are willing to share that.

### **Rediscovering Passions**

In other words, people are free to follow their passions even if that comes at the cost of doing organizational work. The people resumed their outdoor lives, for the proximal were the sanctuary and inspiration of the people. That history was an inspiration not just to those who were part of the signal people who acted, but also to others in our work professionally.

### **Strengthening Relationships**

For example, building strong interpersonal relationships works by developing better communication skills to be a good listener, having a genuine interest in your co-faculty and being reliable to build trust. Other tactics are to work together, say thank you, help each other, having team building events thereby developing a climate of intrigue. The institution you Listen carefully to what your coworkers are saying, ask questions, and don't interrupt to demonstrate respect and establish trust." Participants also maintain clear communication and avoids trash talking to maintain professional relationships' following through and trust-building fulfill commitments and promises. Moreover, say thank you and show appreciation for the work of your teammates constantly.

### **Embracing Flexibility**

The participants can switch plans on a dime and be cool with it and receptive to new ideas, experimental and unafraid to change your ways. Further, flexibility to your life with these effect routines to make you healthier, less prone to injury, and increase your range of motion. They keep in mind the moment and out of thought to stay grounded.

### **Reflecting on Growth**

Reflecting on growth' is taking a break to assess the participants progress, learn from it and then proceed with intention. This practice is creating self-awareness, resilience among faculty and staff if they are still emotional intelligence enabling at work for institutions successes, where participants need to grow and what lies ahead. Furthermore, participants can do this through simply means such as journaling or meditation, and by asking guiding questions like, "What did I learn?" or "What should I have done better? This bargain worked well and resulted in a medium beneficial to the leaders of both academy movements, as well as the institutions.

This suggests that promoting personal interests and respecting individual boundaries is crucial, as it facilitates the setting of regulations or rules for working life that are balanced against personal/family life, while also provid-

ing career development opportunities. Additionally, valuing interpersonal relationships is crucial (Andrade, 2021). Through the development and enforcement of policies that achieve these values, institutions can facilitate a more diversified (Berk & Gundogmus, 2018) and successful leadership market; one that advantages everyone (Brown et. al, 2021), portals to the data and towards the academic community, respectively as well. (Anderson et. al, 2014).

### **2.3 What were the benefits of holding or having this key position on campus?**

#### ***Real-life notes on the plus of running ahead in college:***

The honor of being an important member of the institution brought numerous benefits - most notably, but not limited to, and it has a direct and positive impact on the institution & community.

#### ***Influence and Impact***

The participants thought they had a say in institutions' policies and programs. An institution cast off by increasingly student demand value for money on business-led programs, drafted interdisciplinary projects at the interface of the arts and sciences. Furthermore, empowering students through involvement and curriculum can foster personal expression and creativity.

#### ***Professional Growth and Development***

For instance, when faculty members could not agree on changes to a curriculum, participants drew on what they had learned about conflict resolution at a leadership workshop, adopting new strategies for successful dialogue that resulted in solutions based on cooperation.

#### ***Networking and Collaboration***

Residents & others collaborate for professional exchange. The teammates also a co-host a regional convention of the Future Conference on Educational Technology together. It is the faculty and students who are the ultimate beneficiaries of such resources and corresponding joint efforts, which have developed out of

strengthened ties and enhanced understanding between us because of this event.

#### ***Enhanced Visibility and Recognition***

This was potentially damaging to our reputation, since participants had represented for the college and been strong advocates for it at a national conference where other colleges congratulated on innovative program. Besides developing a professional reputation, that exposure attracted prospective benefactors who ultimately enabled the participants to enhance the student experience and expand our curriculum.

#### ***Empowering a culture to be positive***

One of the principles of leadership philosophy has been building a positive culture at the university. For example, the institution launched a mentorship program that teams up new hires with more senior faculty members. This is creating peer-to-peer support networks to share information. Moreover, school-wide morale rose, keeping faculty retention high and the culture becoming more homogeneous.

#### ***Opportunities for Mentorship***

The participants then had the privilege of coaching emerging participants. Guiding their first-year faculty member through their first presentation at an academic conference was a particularly memorable experience. I was fueled day by day, feeling more and measuring the compliments. Aside from their own development, this mentorship also enhanced our working relationship and contributed to nurturing a sense of supportiveness and growth sensitivity within our department.

#### ***Direct Contribution to Student Success***

Playing an active role in the success of our students is a significant part of that job. The student helped design a comprehensive support system — ranging from academic advising to tutoring to wellness support — after noticing that many students were struggling to adjust to life on campus. The positive feedback from students who received more support during their academic development was

enriching and showed that we truly have an impact on the "real world.

### ***Personal Fulfillment and Satisfaction***

The attendees are personally satisfied with being involved in commencement, as seeing students achieve one of their dreams is a good reminder for them to make the career choice they did. When this position can contribute to the institution and its members' growth and improvement, it is motivating beyond belief.

This suggests that one of the incentives for being in a key position at the institution is to have leadership potential invested in them (Lin et.al,2021), development of new projects, collaborations (Malakoutikhah et. al, 2021), and keeping track of student success (Olawale et al, 2017). In doing so, the learning from the institution would create a more efficient and nurturing academic environment, which further enriches participants while addressing broader community issues, contributing to sound development. (Oyewobi et. al, 2019).

### **Question Number 3: How do these participants cope with the challenges as academic participants?**

#### **3.1 How do participants employ or strike a healthy balance between organizational pursuits and personal pursuits?**

#### ***Coping Strategies for Academic Participants***

The demands in the workplace are fast-paced and time-bound, creating pressure. Because of this, participants need to create coping strategies to manage stress and maintain the mental health of faculty and staff in the office to avoid burnout.

#### ***Establishing Clear Priorities***

Schedule certain time blocks on your daily or weekly schedule for the most important tasks and divide complicated or big tasks into smaller, achievable steps so they feel less overwhelming participants - do not multi-task, as it may lead to poor quality work. Do one thing at a time. Tackle the hardest, least enjoyable task early in the day to build momentum and prevent procrastination. Moreover, off notifications, close any excess tabs and be mindful of

constant distractions to help you stay focused during the time set aside for work and alternate with short breaks to prevent feeling burned out or distracted. Additionally, priorities can shift as well; therefore, you should keep up with your list (and adapt) to ensure that you are still working on what is most important and if you have a team, share the progress of projects and your priorities too to ensure everything is in sync.

#### ***Effective Time Management***

Time management is a learned skill, and participants can get better at with the right kind of help: to manage your time well by treating life like work (and vice versa). Effective time management is about planning and prioritization, using tools such as calendars, planners, to-do lists etc., and following good habits including minimizing distraction and not over-committing. Participants strategies include breaking large projects into smaller chunks, employing time blocking and knowing when to say "no" so people can reduce stress and get more things done. Be certain that you are aware of the work, as well as the due dates so that participants can segregate personal and professional lives.

#### ***Setting Boundaries***

In an office or organization, the participant is clear about setting aside boundaries between personal and professional work to maintain mental wellness. This approach is cascaded among the members of the organization so that everyone is aware of their individual roles while respecting each other's time.

#### ***Delegation and Empowerment***

The participants are delegating the assigning of duties and responsibilities to team members, and empowerment is the further step of giving them the power and independence to make decisions regarding those tasks. Delegation is about assigning work, empowerment is nurturing the self-confidence, knowledge and authority that will enable employees to own an answer. A leader is free to assign the delegate with strong oversight, but for empowerment, the leader provides with context and

then allows the employee to decide about "how" and "when".

### ***Fostering a Supportive Culture***

In an office, a leader must demonstrate support for each member to gain the trust and confidence of those people around them. Because of this system, the leader can receive the support they also need. For example, if a faculty member needs to focus on their studies to complete their graduate education, the leader might reduce their teaching load or make other simple considerations.

### ***Practicing Self-Care***

To maintain harmony within an organization, the institution might design a program that brings all faculty members and staff together for outdoor activities, such as Zumba dancing. This allows everyone to feel relaxation while also enhancing relationships among one another and developing agility.

### ***Seeking Professional Development***

If your aim is to seek professional development, develop a Professional Development Plan by self-assessing skills in terms of what you want to improve or achieve career-/ guidance-wise. Then do something about this - whether it's through studies, workshops, mentorship or tough projects. Furthermore, they also need to evaluate how your existing skills were developed and how much room for improvement you have. articulate both short-term and long-term professional goals, (to) gain new skills, improve communication or advance to a leadership position. In addition, brainstorm the actual steps and tasks that you will employ to attain your goal and design your timeline setting a realistic timetable for completion of the individual steps.

### ***Regular Reflection and Adjustment***

Adapting based on how the participants think about things and it is important to being successful (Riaz et al., 2017). If and when participants pause to assess our experiences, we can pinpoint places where change is required. Adjustments can result in better results both personally and professionally (Pathak, 2017). For example, changing your work habits after

thinking about productivity problems can help you get more done. Start by developing an organized strategy which involves scheduled periods of reflection and alteration. You could set aside a time (once a week, perhaps?) to reflect on how things have gone and what's worked or didn't work, and to think through any adjustments you want to make for the upcoming week. This is a great form of accountability and keeps you focused on where you are headed! Reflection and adjustment are powerful tools for your personal growth and productivity. Taking time to reflect on your experiences and make changes when needed sets the stage for ongoing development and better results (Pawoko et al.).

### ***3.2 How do these participants prioritize managing the campus while maintaining a healthy work-life balance?***

Each leader in an institution can create and design programs to maintain work-life balance while managing heavy tasks.

### ***Setting Clear Goals and Objectives***

Establishing business goals and objectives is crucial to the success of the higher education institution. The participants provide a road map to understand and mitigate risk, secure faculty and improve team performance and execute and design program aligned to the goal and objective of the institution. The participants ensure that that these requirements aligned to the organizations indicators as part of the monitoring and evaluation.

### ***Creating a Structured Schedule***

Participants develop a time schedule framework to guide them in all their activities and future, ensuring it always remains visible and monitored by the secretary. This framework is also divided into specific areas for easier organization and includes constant notifications to keep them updated on upcoming activities.

### ***Building a Reliable Support Team***

Like the way that a barangay would take turns in performing jobs for their local festivities, participant should have each of their faculty members take command in tasks, based on their area of expertise to help create a group that can support and grant power as needed to run your annual cultural festival and or other events, such as, giving one particular team member the ability to plan out significant events. This does not only lightens the load but also emphasizes teamwork and a sense of community.

### ***Encouraging Open Communication***

Filipinos place a high value on relationships because conversation is highly valued in their culture. The participant conducted meeting schedules regularly to invite faculty and staff to talk about their challenges and successes. It reduces stress and builds community by problem-solving together. The institution demonstrated its support by redistributing workloads as a team whenever one of the teams reported feeling overworked.

### ***Implementing Flexible Work Arrangements***

Because these situations are so friendly, the participant is considerate. For example, the institution faced a tragic disaster like earthquake and other phenomena where the faculty and staff need to stay at home- this flexibility fosters a strong, loyal team that is willing to go the extra mile by valuing our personal lives and enhancing job satisfaction.

### ***Modeling Work-Life Balance***

The participants know the importance of modeling a healthy work-life balance. The participant expresses some strategies, including taking time off for volunteer work or attending on-going family gatherings. Furthermore, it develops a culture that prioritizes personal and professional well-being.

### ***Engaging in Continuous Reflection***

The participant is consistently reflecting on how they dedicate time and energy into self-analysis, whether through tools such as a journal or feedback, by reviewing previous experiences to determine what went well – where

things didn't work so well – and ways to improve. To cultivate a lifestyle of continuous reflection, you'll want to allocate time and space for the practice, do your best to eliminate distractions in where you spend that time, as well as solicit input from others for fresh perspective.

This implies that emphasizing the need for establishing a stable support system and encouraging communication emphasizes the role of cooperative environments where staff could share responsibilities with others to reduce stress and provide mutual help ( Khan et al., 2018). Flexible scheduling is in and of itself a concrete way that agencies make themselves open to considering diverse life demands. It should hence introduce policies, which have some flexibility options (like freedom of working hours) in practice and it will further add to job satisfaction. Furthermore, work-life balance, participating in an on-going reflection suggests the mindset of professional development for personal well-being), which can lead to a culture that values highly productive professionals with balanced integrity and satisfied human beings (Owens et al. al., 2018)

### **3.3 What leadership philosophies can be applied to oversee the entire institution's operation?**

#### ***Philosophies of Leadership for Managing Campuses***

The participants can either apply any of the leadership philosophies that may influence in their decision-making process and develop a culture specifically applied for in academic institution.

#### ***Servant Leadership***

It is this notion of servant leadership that should see the faculty, staff and students coming first. This philosophy resonates with the Philippines' kapwa (shared identity) and bayanihan (community) spirit. The player must first ascertain the needs of the team and only then provide it with what they need to succeed. To make sure that faculty members felt heard and supported during an extraordinarily difficult academic year, for example, the participant

started conducting regular feedback roundtables to hear their grievances.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Strong leaders take charge of situations, by communicating a shared vision of what the group intends to accomplish. There's obviously a huge passion for the work in these leaders, and the group what worked with them seemed to feed off that energy. Transformational leaders concentrate on making members of the group support each other and give them the support, guidance, and inspiration they need to work hard, achieve good performance, and are loyal towards the group. The objectives of transformational leadership are to foster growth, loyalty, and confidence in a group's members.

### **Collaborative Leadership**

While evolving technology is changing how leaders engage with the workplace and teams work across both physical and digital environments, so too is collaborative leadership now business critical. It allows team participants to make a meaningful contribution toward a common goal, and not least it reinforces the essence of that book—team leadership: Aligning direction, building trust, sustaining commitment. This type of leadership often includes some aspects of systems change and change management, allowing teams to rally around a shared vision and act with purpose and fortitude.

### **Adaptive leadership**

By eliminating what is unnecessary, adaptive leadership reduces business problems to essential simplicity, allowing leaders to distinguish and concentrate on the important while clearing away that which one can live without. Adaptive leadership is a framework for leading through complex, rapidly changing environments by bringing the group to solve problems and innovate rather than being dependent on a single authority figure. The answer is a leader who has vision, can visualize change in the big picture, and inspire their team to take risks feel free to experiment and develop collaboration.

### **Ethical Leadership**

Ethical leadership Ethical leaders are driven not so much by what is written in the books but what is right. Ethical leaders are exemplars who display integrity, role model behavior that fosters trust, accountability and positive behaviors. This attitude creates a winning culture, results in victories and ensures decisions are made with everyone (not just the organization) in mind. Moreover, the participants responded with their duties and responsibilities according to the ethical standards of the organization.

### **Inclusive Leadership**

The institution has an equal opportunity in relation to hiring decisions based on the institution needs and the best qualified candidates available and does not discriminate in its employment practices based on any other category protected by law. This is especially meaningful to a multi-cultural society such as the Philippines.

### **Visionary Leadership**

Inspirational leadership is a style that motivates and encourages others in pursuing a distant, futuristic objective with its innovation and strategic vision (Davison, 2014). A true visionary sets a clear vision and allows the team to determine the "how," thus leading them to feel ownership, psychological empowerment, and engagement. With its focus on ambition, agile discourse and making art on the safe edge of danger this is an optimistic approach that lets ideas breathe function above form. (Iftikhar, 2020).

## **4. What insights can be drawn from the participants in aid of policies?**

### **4.1 With these experiences, what lessons have you learned, including those associated with the institution's top management, in crafting the policy?**

### **Importance of Inclusivity in Policymaking**

Inclusivity ensures that a variety of voices, including those of staff members and other students or faculty members, are heard prevents the university from only hearing one side

of its history. Telling policy make have a better chance of being adopted and implemented when it represents the interests and experiences of an entire community more fully. Engaging students in dialogue during the drafting stages of a new academic integrity policy, for instance, ensured that their concerns were addressed and fostered a feeling of ownership.

### **Data-Driven Decision Making**

One factor that might influence these policies is real data and evidence. Only through a broad approach to quantitative and qualitative knowledge can the dialogue between these diverse data sources provide knowledge not only of what is (the present) but also of what should be (the future). Information on student achievement and perception can be used to make decisions about academic programs and support services. Retained students were measured at this institution, and from that group, several focused academic support programs emerged, which benefited student success.

### **Flexibility and Adaptability**

The interest to adjust policies to a shifting world is necessary. What academics found is that policies must be "fit for purpose" and able to respond quickly, as was the case with the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, communication in designing policies with redundancy enables prompt decision-making. An occasional assessment was included in the distant learning policy, allowing us to modify what we liked based on the ideas of faculty and students.

### **Effective Communication**

The policy cycle is a process that requires clear and explicit communication at every step. Transparency and trust are gained by ensuring that those who believe they have a say in the policymaking process understand the rationale behind these policies. Regular updates and an opportunity to be open can help us all clarify what policy intent is, as well as allowing us to voice our concerns. For instance, confusion, as well as a lack of faculty support, emerged after sharing information sessions following the implementation of a new workload policy.

### **Collaboration with Top Management**

Senior management backing is the key to policy success. Engaging leadership in policy decision-making guarantees their accordance with the organization's objectives. Management can have less resistance to change when good relationships with it have been built by managers as new policies are being introduced. For instance, involving the university president in developing a diversity and inclusion policy ensured that it had the necessary institutional support.

### **Feedback Mechanisms**

The development of solid feedback mechanisms make it possible to iterate policy generation and improvement. This could involve implementation of questionnaires, focus groups, and ongoing measurement. Establishing mechanisms for continuous input that will facilitate learning about areas requiring improvement and shaping of policy to address lived experiences. For instance, stakeholder feedback early in the transition to a new faculty evaluation system identified areas for enhancement and integrated change throughout the process.

### **Cultural Sensitivity and Relevance**

To be efficient and locally relevant, these measures should be culturally adapted and defined by the university. Also, the local social norms will influence how well a policy is received and implemented. In this way we used to include culturalists into law, making process so that these have also a cultural character. For example, integrating national culture into student engagement activities may be helpful to produce the feeling of belonging for heterogeneous students.

### **Conclusion**

The tension between work and life, identified by participants importance to running a campus were discussed in this study. In addition, there was some evidence from semi-structured interviews about the role of transferring knowledge and evidence-based policy making - being open to new knowledge or at least

adapting one's system. Following the core findings of the study, example again, the concern for cultural sensitivity underscores that policies need to be adapted to indigenous as well as other beliefs and practices in order that they are more widely accepted and effective. Secondly, for the institutions within they work (main object of study) it is interesting to bring out how self-care and wellness have a great importance not only in the life of an individual but also why is important to construct more healthy organizational culture.

Furthermore, train the trainer' trainees as role models for work-life balance, enabling their own teams to 'focus on themselves first', leading to a better academic culture. Furthermore, further research on the complex interconnections between family and job engagement and its leadership effect in the academic context can be explored as a platform for future discussions of work-life-leader balance in academe, which compels education stakeholders to initiate policies that contribute to the development of participants' well-being, both individually and within their community. As Institutions such as this one change, they may consider these results when developing strategies for future changes to remain responsive to the shifting needs of their stakeholders and promote a healthy academic culture.

Additionally, the data analysis results in this study regarding academic participants, including their work-life balance experiences and perceptions of institutional handling, are mainly consistent with Spillover Theory and Identity Process Theory. These two theoretical underpinnings provide a strong tool for analyzing the results and explaining how, at some point, personal and professional interests intersect in academic rendering. This is the effect of spillover – happiness at home leads to productivity in the office. Students are treasured, motivated and in an academic environment. Further identity process theory describes participants' self-categorization and affirmation as moderators for how they react to threats and effectively regulate their leadership. And furthermore, it enables us to construct a parallel theoretical account of who our academic informants are and what is up for

them Giving both an answer to policy imperatives in terms of individual welfare and organizational effectiveness And also a rich suite of commentary theoretical concepts that attempt at the same time to explain what might be happening here.

## **Recommendation**

Some recommendations are drawn from the results of this study

### ***Implement Work-Life Balance Policies***

Firms also must create a supportive work environment by prompting employees to take breaks, honor set working hours, and avail themselves of mental health resources including, and management should model the way. Trade some synchronous meetings for asynchronous communication, allowing employees to have greater agency in how they manage their time. Implement and enforce a well-defined schedule, don't tolerate off-hours communication. Provide resources like mental health services, gym memberships or wellness programs.

### ***Promote a Culture of Self-Care***

If possible, provide employees with flexible work options, such as flex schedules or hybrid models, to help them better balance both their personal needs and work. Promote the use of leave and let employees know that taking vacation time is normative (It's vital for well-being). Offer mental health support such counseling services and mental and physical wellness

### ***Enhance communication and inclusivity in policymaking***

To increase dialogue and participation in policy development, prioritize citizen-driven, two-way conversation, through a range of mediums that reflect the full spectrum of voices and perspectives. Key actions include early involvement, transparency of process and the ability to tailor the communications approach for different audiences. Use a combination of digital tools (social media, email) and old-school approaches (mail, phone calls) to reach a wide range of people.

### **Utilize Data-Driven Decision Making**

Assess the effectiveness of work-life balance initiatives in promoting productivity and employee contentment through surveys or focus groups, as appropriate. These institutions might address the interests of academic stakeholders more effectively if they were directed to policy reform on a quantitative analysis model. They verified an effort check and still measure it.

### **Promote Leadership Skills Training**

Deliver custom training modules and workshops on time management, communication techniques and leadership. The professional development opportunities lend trainees themselves the ability to cope with their work and balance well between personal- and work-related activities; waiving this form of empowerment is beneficial for the individual employee and for the learning institution.

**Foster a Positive Organizational Culture**  
 Foster's values of working together, being open and respectful are promoted through teamwork exercises and strong communication. For extraordinary, the exertion and result of our academics is only as fair as it sounds, for we, regardless of all accompanied motives or otherwise, like everyone else too, at some point need to be allowed to deliver/feel appreciated in a working corporate body. Such a shift can raise workforce spirit in the firm.

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