

AKEPT

AKADEMI KEPIMPINAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI

HIGHER
EDUCATION
LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY



KEMENTERIAN PENGAJIAN TINGGI

PUTRA 
Business School
Nurturing Human Leaders

Leadership Case Studies of ASEAN Higher Learning Institutions

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FOREWORD

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim
Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi
Wabarakatuh.

The objectives of AKEPT are to identify, compile, profile, develop leaders with the required competency to bring impact to higher learning institutions and elevate the standing globally. In addition to that, the enhancement of leadership quality has to be holistically addressed not just among academic but also to cater to administrators' professionalism and to ensure competent leaders and administrators are produced and sustained.

In order to achieve these objectives, various talent and leadership development programmes have been offered by AKEPT. However, the ever-evolving leadership style and skills require a continuous update and revision on the pedagogical materials. Case studies is one of the approaches that can capture leadership in form of a journey. It will take the learners to experience the leadership process of time and experience, belief and will, trial after failure of proven good education higher education leaders. At the same time, it will explore the lifetime experience of a leader through the leadership competency skills set developed by AKEPT.

PRAKATA

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim
Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi
Wabarakatuh.

Objektif AKEPT ialah untuk mengenalpasti dan membentuk pemimpin yang berkeelayakan supaya dapat membawa impak kepada institusi pendidikan tinggi dan meningkatkan reputasi di persada antarabangsa. Selain itu, peningkatan kepimpinan berkualiti harus berbentuk holistik bukan sahaja di kalangan para akademik tetapi merangkumi profesionalisme pentadbir untuk memastikan pemimpin dan pentadbir yang berwibawa dilahirkan.

Untuk mencapai objektif tersebut, pelbagai program pembangunan kepimpinan dan kemahiran ditawarkan oleh AKEPT. Namun, gaya dan kemahiran kepimpinan yang sentiasa berubah dan memerlukan pengemaskinian dan penambahbaikan berterusan ke atas bahan pembelajaran. Kajian kes merupakan salah satu kaedah yang boleh menggambarkan kepimpinan dalam bentuk sebuah perjalanan. Ia akan membawa peserta atau pembaca menelusuri proses kepimpinan yang melibatkan waktu dan pengalaman, keyakinan dan kemahuan, dugaan selepas kegagalan dikalangan para pemimpin pengajian tinggi. Pada masa yang sama ia akan meneroka pengalaman seumur hidup seseorang pemimpin itu melalui set kompetensi kemahiran dan kepimpinan yang dibangunkan oleh AKEPT.

For that reason, I congratulate this collaborative work of AKEPT and Putra Business School for taking the initiative to compile a collection of higher education leadership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries. It is hoped that every future leader will read and discuss where they can draw lessons on leadership and be inspired to become a truly compassionate, knowledgeable and successful leader to humankind.

Thank you.

Professor Dr. Nordin bin Yahaya
Director
Higher Education Leadership Academy
(AKEPT)

Oleh itu, saya ingin mengucapkan tahniah kepada AKEPT dan Putra Business School kerana mengambil inisiatif mengumpul koleksi kajian kes ke atas kepimpinan pendidikan tinggi dari negara-negara ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). Saya berharap pemimpin masa hadapan akan membaca kes-kes ini dan mendapat pelajaran daripadanya serta memperoleh inspirasi untuk menjadi insan yang benar-benar penyayang, berilmu dan pemimpin yang berjaya kepada umat manusia.

Terima kasih.

*Professor Dr. Nordin bin Yahaya
Pengarah
Akademi Kepimpinan Pendidikan Tinggi
(AKEPT)*

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INTRODUCTION: LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY MODEL AND THE LEADERSHIP CASE STUDIES

By: Ismie Roha Mohamed Jais, Yazrina Yahya & Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff

Leadership is a crucial success factor of any organisation and the secret ingredients that make up leadership is about experiences and real success and failure stories about leaders. Leaders motivate the people to a higher level of performance through their strong human relations. Great leaders have great discipline, help the team to reach decisions, move the team to the right direction, keeping the team morale remains high and motivated to work well. Great leaders want to inspire others to follow the same path. These are important characters of great leaders. Realizing the importance of these traits, it is crucial for the need to enhance leadership quality and it has to be holistically addressed not just among academic but also to cater to administrators' professionalism and to ensure competent leaders and administrators are produced and sustained. In materialising these various efforts are established via training, publications, forums, seminars, conferences and the use of case studies.

Case studies have been used in a broad range of education and training courses. The use of case study research has been featured in many disciplines and professional studies such as psychology, anthropology, sociology and political science to education, clinical sciences, social work, engineering and administration. While doing case research, the case that is being studied can be an individual, organization, event or action happening at a particular location. The leadership case studies described in this publication, are obtained from interviews with various leaders in ASEAN higher learning institutions in the region. The leaders are chosen based on their experience leading their institutions and based on their wisdom in dealing with crisis during their tenure as the leader. In carrying out the interview, the generic leadership competency model constructed at The Higher Education Leadership Academy (AKEPT) is used as the foundation to identify the competencies of the leaders and to recognize additional traits in the leaders.

The establishment of AKEPT as the training arm of the Ministry of Higher Education is to nurture future leaders of higher education institutions in Malaysia. Its roles among others are to institutionalise a comprehensive competency-values based leadership and talent management, to design and execute development programmes based on AKEPT Leadership Competency model and to establish knowledge sharing platform and thinking house for holistic leadership enhancement. Therefore, the training given to the respective leaders are based on the AKEPT Leadership Competency model. This framework is used as the guideline in the case studies of the ASEAN leaders described in this case studies publication.

AKEPT Leadership Competency model is established via thorough analysis and input from various stakeholders. It is used to evaluate the leader's skills and also to identify in which area that needs improvement after a profiling process is being carried out on a leader. The model comprises of components as stated below:

Cluster	Competency
Personal Effectiveness	Values & Ethics
	Organisational Commitment
	Self Confidence
Cognition	Visioning & Strategic Direction
	Conceptual / Creative Thinking
	Business Acumen
Leading Others	Teamwork & Team Leadership
	Leveraging Diversity
	Change Leadership
Impact & Influence	Impact & Influence
	Relationship Building / Networking
	Tact & Courtesy
Achievement & Action	Achievement / Orientation Drive
	Initiative/ Proactive Behaviour
	Stakeholder Focus

Each of these competency skills has a proficiency level ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 refers to minimum individual contribution and 5 refers to optimum contribution to the organisation. The five levels are shown as below:

Proficiency Level Definitions				
Proficiency Level 1	Proficiency Level 2	Proficiency Level 3	Proficiency Level 4	Proficiency Level 5
Individual Contributor	Supervising Day-to-Day Tasks	Managing Function	Integrating Diverse Functions	Leading Whole Organisation

The detailed explanation for each leadership competency cluster, and skill are outlined below. For each cluster, there are levels of proficiency required however this is not described in this section.

Personal Effectiveness

Personal effectiveness refers to an individual's maturity in relation to others and to work, enabling control over his/her performance effectiveness when dealing with immediate environmental pressures and difficulties. The personal effectiveness looks into the following:

- *Values & Ethics* – Fostering and supporting the principles and values of the University and the Public Service as a whole.
- *Organisational Commitment* – The individual's ability and willingness to align his/her own behaviour with the needs, priorities, and goals of the organisation, to act in ways that promote organisational goals or meet organisational needs.
- *Self Confidence* – Person's belief in his or her own capability to accomplish a task. This includes the person's expressing confidence in dealing with increasingly challenging circumstances, in reaching decisions or forming opinions, and in handling failures constructively.

Cognition

Cognition refers to the individual's working to come to an understanding of a situation, task, problem, opportunity, or body of knowledge. Cognition looks into the following:

- *Visioning & Strategic Decision* – Developing and inspiring commitment to a vision of success; supporting, promoting and ensuring alignment with the University's vision and values.
- *Conceptual / Creative Thinking* – Questioning conventional approaches, exploring alternatives and responding to challenges with innovative solutions or services, using intuition, experimentation and fresh perspectives.
- *Business Acumen* – Understanding the business implications of opportunities and decisions and implementing successful business strategies that improve the functioning of the organisation. It requires an awareness of issues, processes and outcomes as they impact the organisation's and stakeholders' strategic direction.

Leading Others

Leading others is a specialized subset of the Impact and Influence competencies, expressing the intention to have specific impact on subordinates. Leading others looks into the following:

- *Teamwork & Team Leadership* – Working co-operatively with others, being a part of a team, and assuming the role of leader of a team, working together effectively with interdependent goals and common values and norms to foster a collaborative environment and drive teams in the same direction.
- *Leveraging Diversity* – Fostering an inclusive workspace where diversity and individual differences are valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the organisation.
- *Change Leadership* – Managing, leading and enabling the process of change and transition while helping others deal with their effects.

Impact & Influence

Impact and influence refer to the individual's underlying concern with his/her effect on others, which is influenced by consideration of the good of the organisation or of others. Impact and influence look into the following:

- *Impact & Influence* – Gaining support from and convincing others to advance the objectives of the University.
- *Relationship Building / Networking* – Building and actively maintaining working relationships and/or networks of contacts to further the University's goals.
- *Tact & Courtesy* – Understanding other people, hearing accurately and understanding unspoken, partly expressed thoughts, feelings and concerns of others, and keeping one's emotions under control and restraining negative actions when faced with opposition or hostility from others or when working under stress.

Achievement & Action

Achievement and action refer to a bias towards action, directed more to task accomplishment than to impact on other people. It looks into the following:

- *Achievement Orientation/Drive* – Focusing personal efforts on achieving results consistent with the University's objectives.

- *Initiative / Proactive Behaviour* – Identifying and dealing with issues proactively and persistently; seizing opportunities that arise and/or preventing problems/ threats that he/she anticipated, from happening.
- *Stakeholder Focus* – Identifying and responding to current and future stakeholder needs: providing service excellence to internal and external stakeholders.

These clusters have been identified to become the foundation for teaching and training materials of all learning centres under AKEPT, and it is used as the foundation to establish the courses required to enhance the skills of leaders identified that is in the talent pool. This is to ensure that future leaders of higher learning institutions in Malaysia will acquire all the skills needed for them to lead their organisation to greater heights and promotes Malaysia as the educational hub in the region.

The model is also used to investigate the ASEAN higher institution leaders identified in the case studies to find similarities and also the strength of the ASEAN leaders. This will help to establish the characters of ASEAN leaders and helps to provide details for designing specific training tailored for ASEAN higher learning institutions leader. For the described case studies, the mapping of the competency of each leader is elaborated in the Teaching Notes for Leadership Case Studies of ASEAN Higher Learning Institutions. The efforts taken to establish the case studies and the mapping using the AKEPT Competency-Values Model will help to identify the character of ASEAN leaders and what is needed to enhance the ASEAN leaders in the future in order to bring ASEAN higher learning institutions to the next level.

A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN UNIVERSITI ISLAM SULTAN SHARIF ALI, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

By: Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff¹

AN UNUSUAL APPOINTMENT

26th June 2014

Dr. Mohammed Hussain was performing *Umrah*² in Mecca, Saudi Arabia when he received a call from Brunei. Last month, he was seconded as a full-time Senior Lecturer to the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Centre for Islamic Studies (SOASCIS), University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD) and he thought this call was probably related to his new job assignment. He almost dropped his phone when the caller informed him that he needed to immediately report in duty to University Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) as the new Deputy Rector, the No. 2 position of the University. The appointment came directly from His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, which was unusual since normally the appointment would come from the Minister of Education. In addition, there was no period of appointment like the usual. When he was told that there would be new appointments of Rector and Assistant Rector of the university, he knew that this was a big change in the university management. He managed to request permission to finish performing his *Umrah* first before coming back to Brunei. After that fateful call, he asked himself, "*This is indeed a huge responsibility for a university leader. Am I up for the task?*"

UNIVERSITY AGENDA VERSUS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Public universities in Brunei Darussalam

In Brunei Darussalam, there were 4 public universities who were given authorisation to award the students degree qualifications accredited by the Brunei Darussalam National Accreditation Council (BDNAC). University of Brunei Darussalam was the first university set up in the country. It was established in 1985 and had since become the largest university in the country in terms of student enrollment and curriculum offered. In 2007, Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA) was the second university established but the first national Islamic university in Brunei Darussalam. University of Technology Brunei or formerly known as Institut Teknologi Brunei (ITB) was an engineering and technology university specialized in engineering, business and computing. ITB was upgraded to a university in 2008. In early 2016, the name of the university was changed from Institut Teknologi Brunei into University of Technology Brunei. Seri Begawan Religious Teachers University College was introduced in August 2007 by Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah to become the fourth university in Brunei Darussalam.

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² The non-mandatory lesser pilgrimage made by Muslims to Mecca, which may be performed at any time of the year

Profile of Dr Haji Awang Mohammed Hussain bin Pehin Penyurat Haji Ahmad³

Dr Mohammed Hussain, a native of Brunei, was born in Kampong Bunut in 1970. He received his religious education at the Pengiran Anak Puteri Masna Religious School (1981-1986); memorization of the noble Qur'an at Ma'had Tahfiz Qur'an Wal Qira'at, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (1990-1993); and studied Arabic at the Shukbah al-Lughah al-Arabiyyah, Islamic University of Medina, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1994-1996). He graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Hadith & Islamic Sciences from the Faculty of Hadith, Islamic University of Medina, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1996-2000); Master Degree in Hadith from the University of Jordan, Amman (2000-2002) and a PhD in Arabic & Islamic Studies from the University of Sydney, Australia (2005-2009). Dr Mohammed Hussain joined the Government of His Majesty Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam as a Tutor, at Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Institute of Islamic Studies (IPISHOAS), Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) (Jan 2003); He was appointed as a Lecturer at the Department of Usuluddin, IPISHOAS, UBD (February 2003); then transferred to Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA) as a lecturer at the Faculty of Usuluddin (Apr 2008); He was later promoted as Senior Lecturer at the same institution (July 2011); subsequently seconded as a full-time Senior Lecturer to the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Centre for Islamic Studies (SOASCIS) (May 2014). In the area of administration, he was entrusted to hold several key positions at UNISSA, including as Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Usuluddin (2009-2010), Dean of the Faculty of Usuluddin (2010-2012), and Acting Assistant Rector (2012-2013). In the field of academia, he devoted his services through teaching assignments, conducting lectures and tutorials for the courses offered at the Faculty of Usuluddin, supervision of postgraduate candidates (MA & PhD) and actively presented papers in seminars and conferences, at the local, national, regional, and international level, both locally and overseas. He had been invited as a guest speaker for seminars, symposia and conferences both within and outside the country. In addition, he was appointed as a panel of judges for competitions at the university as well as national level, such as the National Al-Qur'an Reading Competition for Adults, the National Al-Qur'an Memorizing Competition, and Public Speaking Competition. In contributing and sharing knowledge to the community, Dr Mohammed Hussain was frequently invited to deliver lectures and talks, as well as involved as moderator and chairman of seminars, workshop facilitator, and as panellist for forums at the ministries, departments, agencies both public and private sectors, educational institutions, as well as mosques. In addition, he was regularly invited by RTB as speaker, commentator and translator in religious programs both on radio and TV.

Inside Royal Brunei plane, July 2014

The captain had made an announcement that the plane will be touching down at Brunei International Airport in half an hour time. Even though he was excited to be back in his country, Dr. Mohammed Hussain still remember the call that he received last month. Being appointed into a management position is not a strange thing for him. When he graduated with a Ph.D. in 2009, he was immediately appointed as the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Usuluddin, UBD and a year later promoted to become the Dean of the

³ <https://www.geni.com/people/Dr-Mohammed-Hussain/6000000000412820652>

Faculty of Usuluddin, UBD for three years. In 2012, he became the Acting Assistant Rector to UNISSA for 14 months before being seconded to UBD as a senior lecturer.

He attributed this rather unique situation to his former UBD Vice Chancellor, Datuk Professor Saidon. Professor Saidon knew that the country was lacking local academia talent to fulfil the need of the universities in Brunei especially in the Islamic studies. Therefore, the government decided to send 10 local lecturers to pursue higher degree programs in Jordan. Dr. Mohammed Hussain was not in these first 10 candidates but in the end, the government decided to send 13 candidates including himself to pursue their higher degree programs. Professor Saidon also did not want all these candidates to just focusing their Islamic Studies in the Middle East countries. In fact, he encouraged all of them to look for opportunity to study in Western universities. Dr. Mohammed Hussain then decided to pursue his Ph.D. study in University of Sydney, Australia. He was always grateful to his Vice Chancellor because throughout his life he has managed to experience various ways of learning in Malaysia, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Australia. He was also happy to know that at this moment, most of these 13 candidates held various management positions in their respective universities.

When he thought about this new appointment as Deputy Rector of UNISSA, Dr. Mohammed Hussain knew that the University had yet to achieve any management stability since the university was first established in 2007. The first Rector was Allahyarham⁴ Pengiran Dr. Muhammad who was holding the portfolio of Deputy Minister of Education at the same time. His appointment lasted for two years before Dr. Haji Yusof bin Awang Damitas became the second Rector for the university. But he only lasted a year before being replaced by Dr. Haji Sarbini bin Haji Watahir. However, his term as the third Rector did not lasted long as well. The position of Rector then remained vacant for more than a year until 26th June 2014 when Dr. Haji Norarfan bin Haji Zainal was appointed as the fourth Rector, together with Dr. Mohammed Hussain as Deputy Rector and Dr Arman bin Haji Arshad as Assistant Rector. He felt that maybe the reason His Majesty Sultan decided not to limit their appointments as the University top management so that they could focus on fulfilling the vision and mission of the University.

However, Dr. Mohammed Hussain understood that by becoming one of the university administrators, there would be lots of sacrifices he had to make. He knew that there would be little time available for him to extend his Ph.D. research, or any other research in that matter. He remembered when he was about to finish his Ph.D., his supervisor made him to promise that he will continue his Ph.D. research even after he graduated. He was doing a study on a prominent Muslim Scholar in the 18th Century, Shaykh 'Abd as-Samad al-Falimbani and in the end he managed to collect close to 20 manuscripts attributed to this scholar where majority of them were never published before. So there were lots of opportunities to continue and expand his research on these manuscripts. Apart from missed opportunity to do research, there would be little engagements with

⁴ Deceased (for Muslim male)

the students in term of teaching and supervision since most of his time will be occupied in attending meetings and university events. In the end, his own career progression as an academic would be taking a back seat. On the other hand, to become a full time Professor, number of publications and students' supervisions were still important criteria for such promotion. Just a couple of months ago he was seconded as a full-time Senior Lecturer to the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Centre for Islamic Studies (SOASCIS) and he thought that this was the opportunity for him to start establish himself as a proper academician. In the end it did not lasts long and he was back in the administrative position.

When Dr. Mohammed Hussain was appointed as the Acting Rector in UNISSA for 14 months, he knew what were issues needed to be addressed in UNISSA. For example, he knew that UNISSA only had one centre to handle university research and post graduate studies, which put a heavy burden to its director. Another issue was that the university did not have a dedicated office to handle internationalisation and industrial linkages. The issue of not having enough academics was also top concern and many academic administrative positions had to be handled by the operating staff. There were only slightly more than 100 staff working in the university when the actual staff strength required was probably double that figure. In fact, the small pool of talents had forced the Human Resource department to play a dual role within the university by handling Registrar matters as well. However, he understood that during that time the government were on a tight budgetary policy due to uncertainty in oil prices, which was the main contribution to the country's economy. In addition, there was also a need to create a new academic program and research centre dedicated to *Halalan Toyayiban*⁵ which was an important national agenda of becoming *Halal* hub in the region.

He realised now that with this new appointment, he would have a bigger role in determining the future of young generation in the country especially in fulfilling the aspiration of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam in achieving Wawasan 2035⁶.

His thought was interrupted when a stewardess politely reminded him to straighten the chair and buckle the seat belt as the plane is about to land soon.

TO ACCEPT OR NOT TO ACCEPT?

July 2014, outside UNISSA's Rector Office

Dr. Mohammed Hussain was waiting to be called up to meet his long-time friend who became the new Rector of UNISSA. He contemplated whether he will make a right decision or not. If he decided to accept the offer, he imagined that he would be in this

⁵ Allowed and permissible for consumption with relation to Shariah law as long as they are safe and not harmful

⁶ Wawasan Brunei 2035 (Vision Brunei 2035) is a plan to reduce Brunei's dependence on oil and gas sectors, diversify its economy, and develop public service sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, recreation, financial sector and tourism.

position for a minimum of three years. He knew that the University needed to revamp its

Strategic Plan and they definitely need more than 3 years to steer the University towards its objectives especially when they were also planning to relocate to a new campus in Temburong District soon. If he remained in the administration, he can fully focus on helping the University from the beginning without the possibility of someone else coming in between to change the existing plan and start a new and entirely different plan, which what would normally happen when there was a change in the top management. On the other hand, he probably had to forget his own personal development in term of research, supervision and teaching. Nobody is going to promote him to become a full Professor based on his administration experience alone.

“Dr. Mohammed Hussain, you may enter the office now,” secretary of the new Rector invited him.

APPENDIX 1

UNIVERSITI ISLAM SULTAN SHARIF ALI, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM⁷

Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali - better known as UNISSA - is a "pure Islamic University" of international standard that offers a variety of programs across disciplines based on *Al-Quran* and *al-Sunnah*. Established in 2007, it attests to the commitment of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam in upholding Islam through education, in this blessed land of Brunei Darussalam and towards the development of the *ummah* in general. As the second state university, UNISSA strives to produce Muslim scholars and intellectuals who contribute to the development of the *ummah* and the state, in support of the efforts of Brunei Darussalam towards becoming a *Zikir* nation with continuous blessings from Allah. The increase in enrollment of more than 1,300 local and international students in UNISSA shows that UNISSA is becoming a top choice for students who wish to continue their studies in various fields of study which has Islam as its core. In an effort to improve its academic quality, UNISSA continuously strives to ensure that its programs and courses meet international standards and the current needs. As such, UNISSA works closely with international universities, particularly those which offer Islamic studies. In addition, UNISSA will attain international recognition through these strategic, bilateral relations with the universities which themselves have gained international recognition. In terms of academic staff quality, international experts and academics from 14 countries composed 45% of the academic staff of UNISSA. The recent introduction of *Skim Perkhidmatan Tenaga Akademik* (SPTA) or Academic Staff Scheme of Service for Higher Education Institutions will encourage international experts and academics to serve in UNISSA, in addition to stimulating high quality of teaching and research of local academics. At present, UNISSA is situated at a temporary campus in the city center. In the next few years, UNISSA will have its permanent campus in Temburong District with an area of 400 hectares (988.400 acres).

⁷ <http://www.unissa.edu.bn/about-us/corporate-profile/rectors-message/>

LEADING AN AGRICULTURE BASED UNIVERSITY IN THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA: A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, CAMBODIA

By: Raja Nerina Raja Yusof⁸ and Haslinda Hashim⁹

“HAPPY ANNIVERSARY”

It was already late afternoon in the Vice Rector’s office at Royal University of Agriculture (RUA). Nobody was seen there except a few staffs who were working quietly on their laptops to complete the last part of their tasks. They were expected to leave the office soon. Professor Mom Seng was at her desk, smiling at the congratulation wishes that she received via the LinkedIn website. She peered through her glasses, reading through the list of people wishing for her work anniversary.

“It’s been 23 years!”, she uttered softly.

These last few years were special to her since she was approaching the third decade in her career. Her mind raced back to the first day she entered RUA in 1996. Having graduated from the same university two years earlier, she found herself working with RUA as a faculty member in her area of expertise, Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine. Even after pursuing her Masters and Doctoral degree in Germany, Professor Mom Seng returned to Cambodia to serve her country. She was so fond of Cambodia that the thought of working in other countries was never her consideration. Armed with her latest qualifications, she proceeded to climb the administrative ladder. Each position provided her with greater exposure and experience in the management of an education institution. Apparently, her post graduate qualifications opened her to many opportunities in her career.

Looking back at her journey, Professor Mom Seng could not avoid feeling grateful for all the experiences gained throughout her career. Granted, there were trying times in between, but she knew then that the experience and exposure have made her who she was at that time. Being among the few women academicians who hold major positions in the university, Professor Mom Seng learnt through the ropes to fulfil her responsibilities amidst the challenges faced. It was already an achievement for her to reach the position of Vice-Rector (Administrative and Human Resource and ICT) that she was currently holding, and she only wished that she would be able to contribute as much as she could for the rest of her remaining working years in RUA. More importantly, she was proud to serve in her homeland, Cambodia.

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Royal University of Agriculture, Cambodia

Born and bred in Cambodia, Prof Mom Seng is proud of her country, Cambodia. It is located at the southern part of Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia. The country is bordered by Vietnam in the east, Thailand in the northwest and Laos in the northeast (refer to Figure 1).



Figure 1: Map of Cambodia (Source: Lonely Planet, 2019)

Among many other renowned universities in Cambodia, Royal University of Agriculture (RUA) was the leading public agricultural university in the country (see Figure 2 for RUA's logo). Founded in 1964, the university's vision was to be the premier agricultural university in Cambodia recognised for world-class excellence in education, research and extension. The vision was translated to its mission that was to provide excellent and relevant educational opportunities in agriculture and allied fields through quality instruction, research and extension programs, responding to national and global realities to produce globally competitive individuals, support economic development and promote environmental sustainability.



Figure 2: Logo of the Royal University of Agriculture

Historically, RUA was founded as the Royal University of Agronomy Science in 1964. It was closed temporarily from 1975-1979 during the Khmer Rouge Regime but was reopened in 1980 as the Institute of Agricultural Education, offering short courses in agriculture. In 1985, it was renamed as Chamkar Daung Institute of Agricultural Technology and received support from the Soviet Union. The Institute started offering Bachelor degrees which were instructed in the Russian language. However, the Soviet support ended in 1990, and the programs continued in Khmer. In 1994, the Institute was renamed as Royal University of Agriculture and was later declared as a public institution in 1999. Within a decade, RUA has expanded its programs including postgraduate studies. The university started to offer Master of Science programs in 2002 and PhD programs in 2006.

The Royal University of Agriculture consisted of ten faculties and ten centres (refer to Figure 3 in Appendix A). It also had a separate division for the Foundation Year program and the Graduate School. Four main support offices in RUA, which were Administration and Personnel Office, Accounting and Finance Office, Social Office and Planning and International Cooperation Office, ensured the smooth operations and administration of the whole university. In terms of academic support, the Academic Affairs Division and Research and Extension Division were established for the role. With its main focus on agriculture, RUA received support from three ministries; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Economy and Finance and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Love for Research

Professor Mom Seng loved research. Her passion continued even after her promotions into the faculty and university level positions. To her, research was a platform for collaborations and sharing of knowledge which was crucial for an academician to engage in actively.

After returning from Germany in 2006, RUA appointed her as the Head of Planning and International Cooperation Office. Amidst the hectic schedule doing administrative work, Professor Mom Seng still wanted to stay in touch with research. At that time, she saw that research was not a priority in her university, especially among academicians holding posts. Hence, to foster a research culture at RUA, she started one research development forum which had then evolved into a national conference, known as the National Conference on Agriculture and Rural Development. Until 2019, the conference was still running in alternate years, hosted by different universities throughout Cambodia.

Young Lady with Responsibility

When promoted as the Head of Planning and International Cooperation Office at the age of 34, Professor Mom Seng was initially taken aback by the appointment. She had just graduated from Goettingen University in Germany with a doctorate in Agriculture Science and was expecting to return to RUA and continue teaching and research. However, the university had other plans for her, and that was the beginning of her administrative role. Despite her eagerness to contribute to the university aside from teaching and conducting research, Professor Mom Seng had to deal with the very diverse challenges, many of which came from the office itself. One of them was perceptions from the university community that she was too young for the particular position. With many senior staffs in the office, Professor Mom Seng needed to prove her professionalism in carrying out her role. She did it well that she was appointed five years later, by the ministry, as the Vice-Rector for Planning and International Cooperation in 2011. The announcement was made on March 8, coinciding with the International Women's Day. Based on her past experience, Professor Mom Seng expected to face the same perception from the university community and this was true enough as the negative perceptions appeared more intense that it actually shattered her confidence. Barely reaching 40 years old at that time she was the Vice-Rector, Professor Mom Seng herself felt that the position could have been given to another person. She mentioned,

I feel myself very young for that position, and even the other colleagues here as well see that I'm young for that position.

However, as her sign of respect to an appointment that came from the ministry, she agreed to take up the role of Vice Rector for Planning and International Cooperation. This required her to embrace the challenge and ignore the talks about her being too young and being a lady in charge of a very important administrative function.

Acting and immersing herself into the role of Vice-Rector was very challenging for Professor Mom Seng. She realised that age and maturity played a crucial role to be a good leader, and at that point of time she was not even ready to introduce herself as a Vice Rector when attending external functions. However, challenging times went away and as age and experience accumulate, Professor Mom Seng learnt to deal with challenges as they come by. In the end, she was grateful for being entrusted with the

important post that gave invaluable experience in managing her university affairs related to her portfolio.

Support and System

After Professor Mom Seng was appointed as the Head of Planning and International Cooperation Office in 2006, she subsequently held positions as Acting Dean twice in 2008-2011 for the Graduate School of RUA and 2013-2014 for the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. Apart from that, after being the Vice-Rector for Planning and International Cooperation in 2011, she was later appointed as the Vice-Rector for Finance, and subsequently the Vice-Rector for Administrative, Human Resource and ICT.

From her vast management experience in various portfolios, Professor Mom Seng first realised the importance of good human resources while managing the Planning and International Cooperation Office. That office interacted with many external parties, hence opportunities to collaborate were immense. An opportunity to collaborate on the research development forum (now the National Conference on Agriculture and Rural Development) came about at one point in time. Unfortunately, it was not taken up by the support staff. In the end, Professor Mom Seng had to manage it herself to ensure efficient execution of the program. It was definitely not easy as she had her own core duties to attend to. Nevertheless, it was a worthwhile effort as she learnt important lessons from that. She identified that most of the issues with the support staff were their lack of experience, creativity and being proactive in implementing any projects. Having lack of structure and a proper system would also affect effectiveness.

Another important aspect in management discovered by Professor Mom Seng was the need for basic knowledge in the area one is assigned to. Having limited experience in Finance at the time she was appointed as Vice-Rector for Finance in 2017, Professor Mom Seng found the position gave her one of the greatest challenges in her career. At that time, the division was given the mandate to reform the financial system for the whole university. Given a short period, Professor Mom Seng and her staff were tasked to create new processes for a smoother and efficient financial system. Having no background in finance and accounting, Professor Mom Seng found the job extremely complex and stressful, especially when their tasks were under the radar of the RUA top management and the Cambodian ministry itself. The task of creating a modernised structure and system for the Finance function was a huge responsibility which needed time to be implemented. Nevertheless, the management wanted it in place urgently, hence, putting the division under fire for any delays. On this, Professor Mom Seng reiterated,

But here, it was about the system...[it] is not fully in place. Once I take it...we have to create...several steps that we have to follow, for example, before we do ours, we have to think about the budget, university budget and the government budget.

From her statement, Professor Mom Seng was implying that once a responsibility was accepted, the person has to follow through and plan the task well before executing it.

More often than not, information needed to be obtained first before informed decisions were made.

That experience was one that Professor Mom Seng would not be able to forget and it really tested her abilities in leadership. Similarly, during her role as Vice-Rector for Administrative, Human Resource and ICT, Professor Mom Seng gained valuable experience related to Human Resource management. At that time, she emphasised the need for a systematic process for human resources functions such as hiring, annual performance appraisal and promotion exercises. Her vast experience in different functional roles at the faculty and university levels had taught her that subjective evaluation or indicators could create dissatisfaction among staff. She also knew that proper key performance indicators (KPIs) were needed to make the processes more transparent. She shared,

I'm trying to change the working style starting from the reflection based on their performance...what is the current workload and their performance.

Apparently, during her tenure as the Vice-Rector for Administrative, Human Resource and ICT, her university was in dire need to develop guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOP) for more objective decision making. SOPs played a significant role because they ensure standard practice regardless of who was making the decision, and being the person in-charge, she was answerable to all queries related to SOPs under her portfolio.

A Style of Her Own

Having studied and lived in Germany for nearly six years, Professor Mom Seng had acquired the communication style of the local Germans. Contradicting to what was expected of as a Cambodian, in RUA, she was known to be a direct person and having a fast approach to handling tasks. She was told that some staff found it hard to adapt to her communication and leadership style, to which she understood because Cambodians, very similar to other Asian cultures, prefer a less direct approach of communication. Even though she gradually adapted her communication style, at times, Professor Mom Seng utilised an alternative way of communication. For example, whenever she had an idea that required support from staff, she chose to propose them through another person who was tasked to promote the idea. She found that way to be more productive since she was also able to focus more on her main task which was to establish structure and systems in the office. At the same time, the “middle” person would feel appreciated for being trusted to make proposals to the department, hence promoting staff involvement in the decision makings.

In addition, any agendas proposed by the office were brought to meetings so that staff's opinions and suggestions were taken into consideration. Professor Mom Seng believed that that approach would motivate staff to be more committed to implement them later on. In the Asian culture, collectivism was highly appreciated, where group decision making and teamwork were more valued than individual decision making. In addition, past experience also taught her that for visibility of any activities or projects done by her

division, it was very important to inform external stakeholders of their effort. While the intention was not to highlight achievements, it was done more for the purpose of avoiding misunderstandings and misinformation about the progress of the division's work and functions. This helped to keep harmony in the department and the organization as a whole.

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

"Thank you for meeting us, Prof! We really appreciate the opportunity you gave us to interview you for our ASEAN Higher Education Leaders case study project."

After saying them goodbyes, Professor Mom Seng sat down at her chair and threw her sight to the trees outside her wide-opened windows, thinking about her conversation with the Malaysian academicians. Talking to them reminded her about all her past leadership experiences in RUA and how different it was between Cambodia and other ASEAN countries particularly in terms of infrastructure and facilities in higher education institutions. However, despite other working places that might be more attractive, she would not dream to work elsewhere other than her home country. As she mentioned to the interviewers, she would not know what to do if she were to retire early, because the university was her life and academics was her passion. She pledged that as long as she was physically and mentally healthy, her journey in academics was to continue as her contribution to the society.

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Appendix A

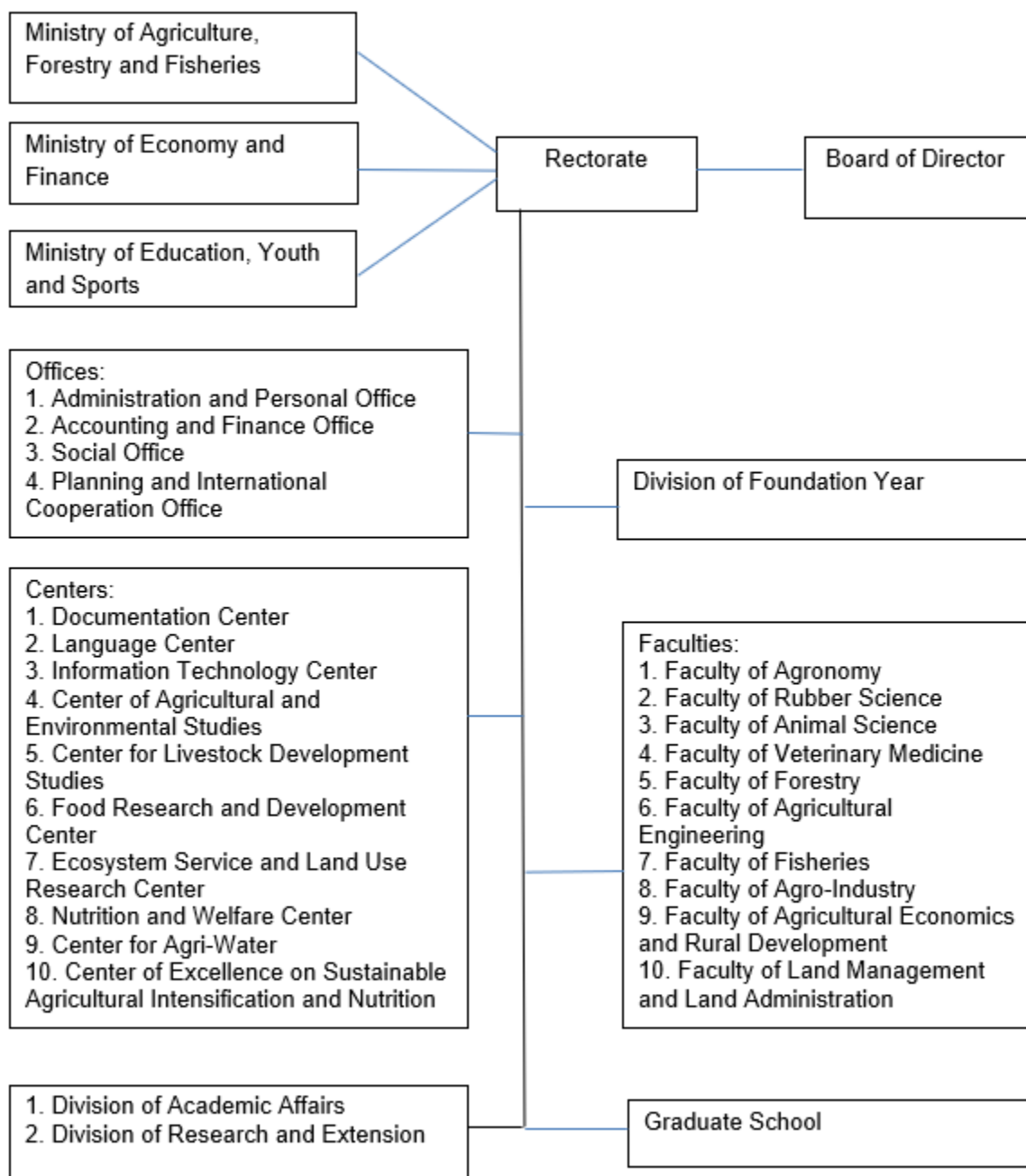


Figure 3: Organizational Structure of the Royal University of Agriculture

A JOURNEY FROM RESEARCH UNIVERSITY TO ENTREPRENEURIAL UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP AT INSTITUT TEKNOLOGI BANDUNG, INDONESIA

By: Azmawani¹⁰ Abd Rahman and Siti Rahayu Hussin¹¹

THE NEW RECTOR'S ASPIRATION

When Professor. Dr Ir. Kadarsah Suryadi was appointed as the new Rector of Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), the whole university community could not wait to listen to his inaugural speech as everyone knew that the new Rector would have his own plan for the university. As expected, upon taking over the Rector's office, Kadarsah announced two important missions for the university. First, ITB must remain to be a research university. Being a renowned university in the region, research and publications was nothing new among ITB's academia. Nevertheless, Kadarsah wanted a greater emphasis on publications so that they could contribute to the local society and community as a whole. Second, ITB must have the characteristics of an entrepreneur who would make a distinct contribution to the local, national, and international community as well as industry. To make this happen, the output from ITB must be acknowledged at an international level to ensure their nation would be well - respected by the world. In attaining these missions, in January 2015, Kadarsah made a bold move when he officially declared that ITB was moving from a research-based university to an Entrepreneurial university.

Entrepreneurial university is a third-generation university, in which it is a research university which conducts innovation and commercialisation and gives economics value to industry and community. Higher learning institutions need to transform from being a research university to an entrepreneurial university to support research innovation and product commercialisation.

"As a Rector, I must give clear a direction to my people. To achieve this direction, there are key components needed in the journey of being an entrepreneurial university. The key components are three key performance indicators namely excellence in teaching and learning, excellence in research, and excellence in innovation and entrepreneurship."

NOT AN ORDINARY JOURNEY OF SUCCESS

ITB's new aspiration to become an entrepreneurial university was consistent to its vision to be an outstanding, distinguished, independent, and internationally recognised

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university that led changes toward welfare improvement of the Indonesian nation and the world. Adhering to the set of core values beyond excellence, with the mission to innovate, share, and apply science, technology, art and humanity and to produce excellent human resources for a better Indonesia and the world, had enabled ITB to navigate into unfamiliar territories and grow at a measured and determined pace. On this, Kadarsah was quoted saying “It is however not without any challenges”.

As someone who had broad experience as a researcher and academic leader, Kadarsah understood very well the challenges in driving transformation. According to him, at the initial stage, ITB faced many challenges which included pressures due to the required changes in governance and infrastructure and tensions and resistance to change from some of the staffs. Additionally, the university also faced challenges in organising academic staffs in terms of activities and incentives, to balance their dedication to teaching, research and performing the required activities to comply with the entrepreneurial university model.

“As a Rector, I myself am also subjected to challenges. University leader who traditionally dealt primarily with the internal environment now has the added task of managing relationships with a wide range of entities such as private sectors, public sectors, as well as the communities”.

In addressing challenges, Kadarsah strongly believed that the leader’s role was primary. The leader’s ability to communicate relevant ideas, motivate team members, and be an inspiring role model throughout the change transformation could make or break its success. The leader also bridged the gap between the organisation and its desired outcome.

Acknowledging these needs, the participation of the staff at all levels was assured at ITB. Senior management at different levels was effectively galvanised as early as the goal-setting stage, and weekly meetings were conducted to ensure important goals and key messages were cascaded down to all levels of staffs at ITB. By doing this, all staffs felt that their existence was appreciated by the university, hence, everyone ought to move together to achieve their common goals.

With the broader mission in shifting of paradigm and role of a university, Kadarsah was inspired to make ITB a university that gave a significant contribution to the society and at the same time an internationally reputable university, which was not only capable of solving the local problems but also being globally recognized for the methodology used. Under Kadarsah’s leadership, ITB demonstrated a systematic approach to transform and embrace changes and incorporate new and better ways of doing things. Strategies were crafted to support the realisation of an entrepreneurial university model. The strength of human resources, leadership and governance, infrastructure and funding acted as important pillars to support the strategies. In this regard, Kadarsah asserted that there were some key developments attempted under his leadership to strengthen the ITB position as a world-class Entrepreneurial University. The key developments included:

Research topics among academicians were multidisciplinary and expanded to ensure it was capable of addressing industry needs in responding to the current market.

Expansion of the research roadmap which included the establishment of various centres such as Research Centres, and the Centre of Excellence in Science and Technology. Centre of Excellence in Science and Technology focused on Indonesia's strategic sector and addressed the needs of the nation while strengthening the competitiveness of the nation from an economic perspective. The priority areas of the Centre of Excellence were the Broadband Wireless Access, Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, Sustainable Transportation Technology, Defence and Security Technology, Earth Quake Mitigation Science and Technology, and Carbon Capture Storage and Carbon Capture, Utility and Storage.

Promoting entrepreneurial activity, fostering entrepreneurship and the values of an entrepreneur within the university community. This was achieved through various structured programs and activities such as competitions, business coaching program, entrepreneurship talk, seminar and exhibition that accommodated enthusiastic students and alumni.

Offering a physical structure, infrastructure and services to start-up a business. Lembaga Pengembangan Inovasi dan Kewirausahaan was established and entrusted to play a significant role in identifying tenants through programs such as a call for a tenant and business plan contest. Programs were also held upon specific recommendations. Among these programs was incubation projects which offered great benefits to the society. The incubation process started from the prototype, access to funding and market as well as development of the business network, to the stage where tenants could produce their products at a larger scale. Mentoring and monitoring were conducted even after the product reached the community and industry until the ultimate objectives were achieved, one of which was to get a reputable investor.

Collaboration with the local community, local and international business entities, government agencies and ministries, and globally recognized academicians were becoming more intense in quality and quantity.

All the above-mentioned key developments helped ITB to move forward in becoming an entrepreneurial university.

LEADING TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

In leading the transformation towards becoming an entrepreneurial university, Kadarsah realised that leadership style might influence the way people reacted to the changes or improvement needed in the transformation process. Describing his leadership style, Prof. Dr Kadarsah first believed in providing a clear direction for everybody in his organisation. Being the Rector, he continued to highlight the importance of three main performances for all staff throughout the organisation, namely, excellence in teaching and learning, research and innovation and entrepreneurship. His motto: "Let ordinary people make extraordinary achievements"

implied that everyone was capable to make their own contributions to the university. As he was inspired to bring ITB to the next level, Kadarsah was described by his staff, Dr Edwan, as a “humble and determined” person. According to Kadarsah, the main leadership approaches included the following:

Clear vision.

Kadarsah pointed out that for any organisation to thrive, all persons needed to have a very clear direction and vision in order to work together successfully as an organisation. First and foremost, in leading ITB forward, Kadarsah believed that the existing organisational culture and practices in ITB must not only be retained but also strengthened. Hence, ITB’s vision was broken down to specific goals for all aspects of research, teaching and learning, consultations, community service, industry linkages and physical and technological development. For the purpose of measuring performances in attaining the above goals, Kadarsah had set key performance indicators as the indicators of ITB’s progress toward becoming an entrepreneurial university. These KPIs were enforced to provide a focus for strategic and operational improvement at ITB. He also believed that these KPIs created an analytical basis for decision making at the top management and help the whole university to focus attention on what mattered most.

Open communication.

Kadarsah felt that it was crucial to communicate openly with his people. Open communication also meant that he disseminated information horizontally and vertically, especially to all staffs in every faculty, units, departments and across all levels.

Capacity to listen.

The next important aspect of his leadership is the capacity to listen to all from across disciplines and levels. Kadarsah placed utmost importance in listening to everybody just about everything. He was always ready to listen to feedback, complaints, suggestions or any comments from his staff at the top management or lecturers at the faculty, students, alumni, parents and industry players. He was particularly interested to also listen to the locals and communities at large.

Develop a strategic plan.

Kadarsah laid down a strategic plan for the university, and directions were set forth clearly for all units and staffs to achieve together. With a total of around 1,500 staff and 24,000 students in ITB, Kadarsah would not be able to lead ITB unless he had a strategic plan for this organisation based on ITB’s vision.

Self-review.

Other aspects of his leadership included evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of his staffs, overall systems, and operations. The evaluation of its strengths allowed ITB to match their strengths with the opportunities outside, and by knowing their weaknesses, ITB would be able to keep on improving its planning, management and operations.

Emphasis on customers' needs.

More importantly, Kadarsah, again and again, emphasised the need to fulfil what their main customers wanted. According to Kadarsah, the main customers for ITB were the internal customers (students & parents) and external customers which consisted of community/industry players. As at today, 92.5% of its programs were given national grade A status and 39 programs secured international accreditations. Undeniably, this became the attractions of ITB among its current and potential customers.

His role as the Rector also meant that Kadarsah had to take care of the welfare of his entire university. Managing the university meant managing the people and human resources in the university. As human resource management was very important to him, Kadarsah was committed in taking care of his staffs' welfare. Hence, he placed a great emphasis in leading his people and harnessing their human potential to contribute to the success of the university. He strove to provide facilities to make people happy and motivated. Kadarsah also emphasised on the need to make people feel comfortable with the university, its environment and all of its people and culture. Knowing that his staffs would be happy if they felt useful for the university, regular training were given to current employees as well as new employees to enhance their competency in carrying out their tasks and duties.

In the end, running an entrepreneurial university also required process management. Kadarsah viewed the processes involved in running the university included upstream and downstream processes. Both processes needed to be managed so that internally, all resources in ITB would work together and externally, all works carried out by ITB's people would contribute to the local community and nation at large.

The next step was to have a control mechanism to make sure that the university was heading towards its vision. Continuous improvement had been the culture in ITB for a long time and Kadarsah wanted to make sure that this culture continued to be practised. Meetings were conducted on regular basis; be them yearly, quarterly, monthly and weekly. Subsequently, reports were prepared to enable discussions on performances and improvements of the university.

Lastly, as the Rector, Kadarsah carried out monitoring system and measured results and performances of the whole university. From time to time, an analysis was carried out to determine the trends of current students and industry's needs. Indicators for performance were also determined to keep ITB on the right track. At the same time, ITB also benchmarked itself against local and international standards in terms of academic and non-academic performances. The university also measured its impact on the graduates that they produced including its alumni aside from its impact on the community, industry projects and the like.

IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES

“The most important strategy was to create an entrepreneurial mindset and contribute to the nation by providing new employment to the community”.

From the beginning, Kadarsah was very concerned about the overall direction of the university. To him, ITB needed to excel not only academically but more importantly to serve the nation and contribute to the development of the community. Hence, he placed a great emphasis on the need to change the attitude of “racing for papers only” or the chase for “international ranking” in serving the community and solving local problems.

Once the vision was clear throughout the organisation, Kadarsah’s task was to implement ITB’s strategic plan at the ground level. Academic staffs were encouraged to find opportunities for international collaborative work, networking with industry and community, joint supervision across disciplines and with outsiders, and to provide support for students and staff exchange programs. Kadarsah mentioned several strategies that he has laid down at ITB as stated below:

The emphasis on serving the nation first.

Kadarsah kept on emphasising the need to serve the nation. Not only that staff must bring in income for the university, employees at ITB must also find ways to create jobs for the community. Projects and programs conducted by ITB must utilize the expertise of its people for the benefits of the society at large.

Creating the best ecosystem.

According to Kadarsah, another important strategy was to create a conducive atmosphere for research, publication, consultation, and community service. That required an increase in the operational budget. The government of Indonesia only provided 40% of the total budget for ITB. Hence, the allocation of financial resources at ITB required smart fund management and acquisition. As the Rector, Kadarsah strove to provide motivation and incentives for his people in this matter by encouraging academicians to seek outside funding instead of waiting for funding. Staffs were directed to lobby research proposals to government agencies and related industries based on the expertise and current needs of local communities. Many research and consultation proposals were successfully presented and accepted by government agencies and industry players because ITB managed to match their capabilities with the requirements of the nation that they served.

Holding annual joint events with partners and potential collaborators.

In line with this effort, the next strategy was to implement annual events to attract government grants and private collaborative works. ITB conducted regular events with partners and potential collaborators among the local community, international companies, and industry players throughout Indonesia. Through these events, ITB developed strong networking with the society and that enhanced ITB’s reputation as a capable university. Under Kadarsah’s leadership, ITB managed to secure more internationally reputable projects such as those related to Nanoscience and Carbon

Capture methods. Kadarsah encouraged his staff to conduct impactful technologically-related internal projects to solve local problems.

Last but not least, Kadarsah believed in open communication. He conducted regular meetings and discussions such as the pre-executive meetings every Monday with the top management strategic unit; executive meetings together with the deans every Tuesday; and many other formal and informal discussions with staffs at all levels. All the strategies that he mentioned were being cascaded down to all levels in ITB to generate overall support and effective implementation throughout the university.

ACHIEVING A PAVED ROAD OF EXCELLENCE

In less than five years, some outputs were very visible. ITB showed steady performance in the QS world university ranking. ITB made substantial improvement in the QS World University ranking, which was a significant jump from 461 in the year 2015 to 331 in the year 2019. This had made ITB as the second-best university in Indonesia. According to the Ministry of Research Technology and Higher Education ranking criteria, ITB was ranked as number one or the best university in the country consecutively in the years 2018 and 2019. Due to its significant achievements, Kadarsah was selected as the best university leader in the country in 2018. On entrepreneurship, ITB as an entrepreneurial university model, demonstrated superior results with an increasing number of patents, prototypes, and creative work. Meanwhile, with the involvements of several ITB graduates and alumni, the university also secured various long-term investments from well-known and reputable investors. On the university's incubation programs, Kadarsah was reported saying:

“Under the Division of Entrepreneurship Development of Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, tenants under the incubation programs managed to secure a significant amount of investment through direct investment as well as joint ventures. As of 2018, a total of 77 tenants were registered under the incubation program. Five of which have secured the investors. Meanwhile, on average, 7% of ITB (according to ITB tracer study in 2018) graduates become entrepreneurs, exceeding the target of 4% and close to the international entrepreneurial university benchmark of 8%”.

In line the university's aspiration to serve the community and the nation, cooperation with various parties to implement the results of research and creative work to address the nation, and reorient the focus of research were intensified. Kadarsah mentioned that many research innovation output at ITB was being used in the industry, particularly those that could be adopted for the benefits of the community. For example, some products in oil and gas industry in the enhanced oil recovery (EOR) and chemical catalyst fields that were being used as substitutions to support the energy consumption had been produced for local and export markets. Others were product innovations in future transportation, health instrument products and biomedical as well as ICT Innovations to support smart city concept that would be the backbone of Indonesia future industry. Another example was the entrepreneurship culture exemplified amongst students where it could be seen through their spirit towards participating in innovation or business competition aiming to address various community and national

problems. At the same time, students at ITB were actively involved in several competitions at both national and international levels. For example, Design Competition for Innovative Wood Joint System, Airlangga International Student Competitions (AISC) and International Student Summit (ISS) 2016, and 'Big Ideas' Competition for Asia Urban Issues using Data Innovation. Several ITB students won these competitions at the national and international levels.

Looking to the future, Kadarsah knew that ITB had the potential to become among the best universities in Asia and the world. With the current culture and the strategic plans laid ahead for ITB, Kadarsah was poised to continue his enthusiasm in bringing about more success in the future.

"In the future, ITB will continue to be a pioneer and frontline in addressing the problems at the local and national levels to improve the well-being and competitiveness of the nation. Our work will be recognized and respected by the international community. We will continue to produce graduates who are internationally competitive, prestigious with pioneering spirit and integrity".

ENHANCING NUOL'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE: A MISSION IMPOSSIBLE? A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LAOS

By: Ida Md Yasin¹² and Devika Nadarajah¹³

PRIDE OF THE NATION

2nd May 2019, 11:00am

Prof. Dr. Somsy Gnophanxay was deep in thought in his room. The weather was pleasant this late morning. He had just returned from a meeting with the Ministry of Education. Prof. Dr. Somsy is attached with the National University of Laos (NUOL) and is currently serving as the Acting President. During his meeting with the ministry, Prof. Dr. Somsy was informed of the ministry's directive and aspiration for NUOL to be at par with other universities worldwide. He was tasked to come up with a strategic plan that would see this achieved in the coming years. The years ahead will be busy for NUOL. Prof. Dr. Somsy thought to himself that handling such a monumental task is not something new and it must be done well for Laos and her people. He had served in the academic all his life and believes in the importance of education in advancing his country. He called his secretary and requested to arrange for an urgent meeting with his sub-ordinates in the evening.

THE NATION



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Laos is a socialist country and the only landlocked country in Southeast Asia having borders with Myanmar, China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand. Laos was under the French occupancy and subsequently gained independence in 1955 with a constitutional monarchy. Laos underwent civil war from 1956 to 1975 and came under the communist rule till 1991. In the past, Laos was considered to be one of the poorest countries in the world but today, Laos is recognised as one of the fast-growing economies in East Asia and the Pacific with annual GDP growth of 7%¹⁴.

The national development priorities of the Government of Laos are to lift the country from poverty, implement economic reform and finally increase in ranks among developed nations by 2020. The Government recognised that improving education development is fundamental to poverty eradication. Education is the key to develop the human resources in the country. Since 1975, the focus was improving primary education and over the years moved on to secondary and finally tertiary.

During the early years, more than 10,000 students were sent for higher education abroad due to lack of capability within the country. However, since 1991, more students were graduated in Laos and the number of students studying abroad gradually declined. Nevertheless, according to recent statistics, more than 50% of companies face recruitment issues as local graduates lack qualifications, skills and knowledge, noting that overseas graduates performed far better in all aspects.

THE UNIVERSITY¹⁵



NUOL is the very first comprehensive or full-fledged university in Laos. NUOL was established in 1995 through the integration of the existing 10 higher education institutions which were previously operating under various ministries. The institutions are The Pedagogical University of Vientiane, Polytechnic University, Medical Science University, Nabong College of Irrigation, Institute of Architecture, Institute of Transportation, College of Electricity and Electronics and the Centre for Transportation of Veunkham Agro-Forestry. The colleges and institutions came together under NUOL and underwent a series of transformation to become faculties and institutes. Today,

¹⁴ Bounheng Siharath (2007) *"The Higher Education in Lao PDR and Roles of International Cooperation for Its University Development - National University of Laos"* Associate Professor/Deputy Director, Office of Planning and International Relations, National University of Laos

¹⁵ Excerpt from a report published by National University of Laos

NUOL comprises of 13 faculties, 2 institutes (e.g. Confucius Institute for research on Confucianism), 3 centers, one library, one hospital and 11 offices.

Like all public universities, the purpose of NUOL is to serve the development needs of Laos in an efficient and equitable manner. This overarching mission is further divided into several missions namely to create and provide training to meet the country's human resource development needs; to conduct and promote research; to disseminate research for the benefit of the society; and last but not least, to preserve and expand the arts. In addition to that, NUOL is very responsive to her country's development needs and also takes a leading role in shaping the higher education landscape in Laos. NUOL takes it upon themselves to develop the future leaders in education as the top positions in the other four public universities mainly comes from NUOL. Apart from that, NUOL also plays an active role in consultancy works to support the national development agenda. The consultancy works various across policy developments to environmental impact analysis, such as the Mekong River Basin Report and other forestry projects.

The student body in NUOL consists of 22,752 locals and 454 internationals. There are 150 students enrolled in the higher diploma programme, 20,694 students enrolled in various degree programmes, 1,881 students enrolled in various Masters programmes and 27 students enrolled in PhD programmes. Almost 80% of students are self-paying with 20% quota for scholarships.

Prof. Dr. Somsy is proud of the development of NUOL over the years. He believes that NUOL has understood well the policies from the Ministry of Education and translated them into strategies for NUOL. Nevertheless, he believes that NUOL still can accomplish more in terms of internationalisation with respect to access, quality and competitiveness. Through various strategic initiative projects some of the weaknesses to be addressed are weak management capacity, low qualifications of academic staff and weak international links.

The management of NUOL have been working towards addressing the most pressing matters, one at a time. Yet, time is of essence. In 2014, Lao PDR's gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education was at 17.1%, which is well below other neighbouring countries such as Vietnam and Thailand. The Government of Laos had envisioned an expansion of 25% in university enrolment. In order to meet this target, the academic staff must be well qualified yet in 2015, only 6.7% academics had a doctoral degree, 38.5% master degree while the remaining 54.8% had a bachelor's degree. Financing is another concern. Laos ranks one of the lowest in Southeast Asia in education spending and ranks 122 out of 129 on all countries worldwide. Students pay very low tuition fees while quota students do not pay any tuition fees.

Leadership of NUOL requires a myriad of competencies ranging from social intelligence, emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, courage and decision-making skills. The task ahead for NUOL is to satisfy her nation. NUOL is also expected at some stage to take on the international arena. NUOL was very fortunate to have Prof. Dr. Somsy at the helm.

THE LEADER

Prof. Dr. Somsy Gnophanxay has been part of the institution since 1980 in various capacities. From 1980 to 2009, he was the Head of Department and moved up to becoming the Dean in the Forestry Faculty. From 2009 till 2015, he was the Vice President of NUOL and from 2015 to present, he is the Acting President of NUOL. Prof Somsy is a person who is able to work well with various stakeholders – staff, students, ministry officials, etc. Prof. Dr. Somsy also preferred a very horizontal organisation structure and one of his first initiatives as Acting President was to realign the organisation structure to be more horizontal. This to a large extent, empowered his staff to work independently. He carefully examined the ministry's policies and expectations and translated them into actions for his staff to implement. When he saw a need to extra support, he sought the help of external agencies to craft out a plan. Prof Somsy was a man with a vision, the internal and external networking and the patience to articulate the details for a successful implementation.

Having his postgraduate education in Russia, he is proficient in Russian language. As the world changed, the focus on English became more important and he ensured that he mastered the English language. He considers communication with the outside world as imperative to his role. This works as a benefit to NUOL since the President can represent and communicate effectively with the outside world.

The appointments to various academic positions in Laos are done by the Ministry of Education and Sports based on the nominations of the outcome of the elections by staff of the respective universities. Elections for appointment of positions are carried out once in every five years with yearly evaluations. The process involves evaluation committees, interviews and finally analysis. Prof. Dr. Somsy was nominated and elected by his staff and this goes to show that Prof Somsy is a well-respected leader and his staffs have confidence in his leadership to bring NUOL to greater heights.

THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

Prof. Dr. Somsy Gnophanxay welcomed and thanked his team for attending the meeting. He briefed them on his visit to the ministry and the ministry's expectations of NUOL. *"We need to move forward, recruit qualified staff, diversify our programmes and bring NUOL to international standards as far as teaching, research, collaboration and consultancy are concerned. We will have to do all of this in the face of serious budget cuts too,"* remarked Prof Somsy with a twinkle in his eye. *"The Ministry wishes NUOL and other universities to be more autonomous in managing and sustaining the institutions."*

Associate Professor Dr. Bounheng Siharath expressed his concerns, *"Prof, we will need to strengthen our team in NUOL and we also need to understand these new policies clearly before we can translate them into educational programmes."*

Prof Somsy smiled affectionately at his deputy, *"Your concerns are valid and must be taken into consideration during our strategic planning phase. I know we can do this. We, as a team, will need to have a strategy and plan on how we are going to meet these objectives"*. Prof Somsy

ended the meeting. He gazed out of the window and reflected deeply on his leadership style and approach. That too he believed is an important factor in garnering support and delivering results. Apart from his leadership competencies, teamwork will be a critical success factor as well. In order for NUOL to achieve the objectives, organisational commitment from all stakeholders will be a key driver.

LEADING THE UNIVERSITY TRANSFORMATION WITH INTEGRITY: A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA, MALAYSIA

By: Saadiatul Ibrahim¹⁶ and Amer Hamzah Jantan¹⁷

BACKGROUND

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), a leading research university in Malaysia, is located in Serdang, next to Malaysia's administrative capital city; Putrajaya. As a world-renowned centre of learning and research, UPM has attracted students and staff from all around the world, making it a well-respected global entity. UPM was established in 1931 as the School of Agriculture, Malaya, and in 1947 it was upgraded to a college named the Malayan Agricultural College. It was later promoted to a university in 1971 and was known as Universiti Pertanian Malaysia. In 1997, rebranding was necessary, and it was renamed to Universiti Putra Malaysia.

As of 31 December 2018, UPM comprised 16 faculties, ten institutes, a graduate school, an academy and ten residential colleges. UPM is proud to have received several awards, recognitions and accreditations. UPM is MS ISO certified and given Self-Accreditation Status. UPM is also one of five universities given the Research University (RU) status by the Government of Malaysia in 2006. Besides, UPM is also among the five universities granted autonomy by the Higher Education Ministry to encourage more incredible innovation in the education sector.

In June 2019, UPM was ranked 159th in the QS World University ranking for 2020. This achievement made UPM the second-best university in Malaysia. The university is also ranked first among the young universities in Malaysia and ranked 12th among the young universities in the world (among universities less than 50 years old).

INTEGRITY

On 29 June 2019, The Malay Mail newspaper highlighted the statement by Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz, the former Minister of Industrial Trade and Industry: "*No point hitting university KPIs if lecturers' steal' PhD students' work*". This news was followed by a response in the New Straits Times on 1 July 2019, "*Education Ministry to investigate plagiarism claim*". These were general statements referring to all universities.

Following these headlines, UPM's Corporate Strategy and Communications Office released a statement titled "*UPM does not compromise on academic integrity*" on 2 July 2019. The Malay Mail then reported the statement on 3 July 2019 with the title:

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"*Answering Rafidah Aziz, UPM insists academic integrity is paramount*". In her 100th-day speech as the 8th Vice-Chancellor (VC) of UPM, she highlighted integrity as one of the core values of UPM. She introduced a core value termed as 'Ihsan'. She has been championing 'Ihsan' ever since.

The VC inspired every individual in the institution, including staff, students and alumni to embrace sincerity and integrity in all aspects of their life. Integrity is the cornerstone of character and is fundamental for effective leadership at UPM. Without integrity, the leader can never promote the university's trust and credibility; both are necessary for successful leadership. Although all leaders ultimately face ethical problems, they are challenged frequently by world leaders. Due to the magnitude and profundity of ethical challenges they face, leaders need a specific set of skills to uphold their integrity and create strong values for the organisational leaders.

Integrity is demonstrated in two layers. One is the relationship that exists with the university's external stakeholders and internal stakeholders' relationships. The external relationship includes those activities through which the university was represented to the outside world. It involved negotiations with suppliers, customers, interactions with government officials, relationships with other educational institutions, and so on. The internal relationship is that involved individuals or groups within the university.

Ihsan in broad term means every act or undertaking that is good and executed correctly, skillfully, efficiently and effectively, to achieve perfection, superior quality and excellence. Beginning in 2016, the word '*Ihsan*' which partly includes integrity, was communicated in almost every statement from the VC. '*Ihsan*' is the core theme for all annual VC speeches since then. In the latest statement by the Corporate Strategy and Communications Office of UPM concerning academic integrity, the office highlighted the list of actions taken by the university to prevent this issue from arising. UPM has a complaint channel for all staff, students, and the general public to access such as the U-Response system and mail or e-mail which can be directed to the VC or any relevant university officer.

Challenges to become the best

UPM aspired to be a top university with integrity. It has been more than three years since the eighth VC sent her message on integrity during various events and occasions. In the past few years, UPM received multiple awards, recognition and achievements. Innovation is translated in terms of products and processes. UPM climbed the university ranking ladder quite impressively. Based on the QS World University Ranking, UPM was ranked 376th in 2015. UPM was then ranked 331st in 2016, 270th in 2017, 229th in 2018, and 202 in 2019. For 2020, UPM is ranked 159th. UPM is also categorised in the top young universities in the world. In 2016, it was ranked 38th in the world ranking; 17th in 2017; 15th in 2018; and 13th in 2019. For 2020 UPM is ranked 12th among the young universities. A Young University is defined as a university under 50 years old.

Things do not always come smoothly. Though achievements, recognitions and reputation achieved by UPM are expected after all the hard work, the various obstacles faced were quite challenging. When asked about the challenges faced by the VC, in a recent interview on 21 June 2019, the eighth VC stated:

'... Besides financial constraints faced by the university, managing staff and students are other challenges. I remember when iGIMS¹⁸ was introduced, I received a lot of complaints by the lecturers. However, after it was implemented and adopted for a couple of years, they could see the significance of the application. Other universities came to learn from UPM...'

iGIMS was developed and adopted when the eighth VC was the Dean of School of Graduate Studies (SGS), UPM. She was the Dean of SGS from 2001 to 2008. When she is in the Vice-Chancellor position, a similar situation occurred.

'... there was once; I received a poison pen letter written by one of the academics criticising my initiatives and action. I kept calm and continued business as usual, and eventually, after looking at the progress the university has achieved from my action, he appeared from his disguise. He apologised and admitted his mistake in writing the poison pen letter. I accepted his apology, and he has now become a strong supporter of the university...'

Changes are seen in many aspects of university operations. For instance, the administrative process of graduate students. UPM introduced several procedures that will ensure a high percentage of its postgraduate students to be able to graduate on time.

'...students are progressing well with various initiatives taken to help them graduate on time, to publish in reputable journals.... but still, complaints are received, especially from the supervisors. It is quite hard to change the peoples' mindset because change will affect the way they do their work. They are complacent in their comfort zones. Will we be able to improve if we continue with the same state of mind? Nevertheless, other universities did follow our initiatives. This showed that our action does impact our students' progress.'

Open Door Policy

In its effort to become a world top-ranked university, UPM strived hard to instil a sense of belonging, a sense of 'give and take' among its staff and students. Wakaf was introduced by the sixth VC of UPM, the late Professor Ir. Dato' Dr Radin Umar Radin Sohadi. The eighth VC championed it further by establishing a centre named WAZAN (Centre for Management of Waqaf, Zakat and Endowment) in UPM on 1 October 2016. Wazan¹⁹ provides opportunities for everyone to apply the concept of 'give and take'.

¹⁸ iGIMS stands for Internet Graduate Information Management System. It is an application used by the School of Graduate Studies, UPM.

¹⁹ The Centre for Management of Waqf, Zakat and Endowment (WAZAN), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) officially established on October 1, 2016. WAZAN is the abbreviation for Waqf, Zakat and Endowment. In Arabic, WAZAN means a balance sheet or weighing instrument which is also called as Mizan. The meaning of WAZAN also leads to five main principles namely Ihsan, Hikmah, Fair, Balance and Excellence in the world and in the hereafter.

The VC also practices the 'open door' concept. Anybody in the university would be able to visit and meet with her. The VC is open to any suggestions, criticisms and opinions and welcomes them to the Vice Chancellor's office. In the same interview session on June, 21st 2019, the VC pointed:

'Remember the guy who wrote the poison pen letter I mentioned earlier? He later told me that he was influenced by a group of people and believed what they said about me because I was a stranger to him but then when he gets to know me better, he realised that what was said were wrong, and my door is always open...'

The VC then accentuated:

"...they heard that my door is always open, that front door is always open. I come early in the office; you can just walk in. That will be on an individual basis, but of course, if you come as an institution you will need to make an appointment as I do have to attend to meetings and other events..."

Leading a university

Whoever wishes to position themselves as the top person in any university will have to have a few key attributes. The eighth UPM VC emphasised:

"Those young leaders who will be taking over the position will have to have a good track record on the key performance indicators in all aspects - research, Teaching & Learning and consultancies/professional services. A potential leader needs to master the basic knowledge about the area of your expertise. You will need to have a good research publication track record; you should have done some administrative work so that you would have learned the various processes in the university."

Adding to that, the eighth VC revealed:

'Of course, you cannot leave teaching behind. You will need to supervise students, help them to graduate, undergraduates and postgraduates. Networking is also important. You must know who....'

The VC then concluded:

'The young leader will need to know about the various aspects of a university's administrative processes: teaching, supervising, researching, publishing and networking.'

Transforming the People

In leading any institution, there should be certain traits possessed by the leader. The ability to influence and bring people together to a common vision is critical to lead an institution. In leading UPM, similar scenarios do exist. In the same interview session, the eighth VC explained:

"...I see myself as a good listener; I listen to people. It is not just doing things on my own. I do listen to people. Not necessarily to follow what they say but I'm willing to listen to peoples' ideas, suggestions and people sometimes have problems..."

The VC further expressed,

"...do not look at their weakness, but if they tell their weakness, think of how to assist them and how to look at other weaknesses in them I do not look at that as a bad thing. I try to see their good points, and I try to help them and assist..."

When asked on how to transform people in the organisation, the VC articulated:

"...it depends on the scenario... some will bring up institutional problems... it can also be a personal problem. For instance, there is this situation, a former student sending text seeking help from me. For sure I will not be able to solve it immediately, but I channelled her to a psychiatrist. After a while, she came back, thanking me for helping her and transforming her into a better person. This is not the only scenario. I have many other similar scenarios which I approached accordingly. Things like this, I will not just listen, but I will try to help them by giving them guidance and solutions...."

The VC then added,

"But when it comes to giving suggestions...there are many suggestions, people come suggesting this and that and pursue this and that.... if you think this is a good idea then okay, let us take this good idea, and work on that. I always say to our staff I am looking for champions. I want many champions in this university because the VC cannot do it alone; the DVC cannot do it alone; the management also cannot do it alone. We need everybody to be involved, everybody to work together, everybody contributing with sincerity..."

When probed with the quality needed by a leader, the VC calmly suggests,

"...integrity and always smile... it should come from the inside. You just cannot fake it. When you smile, you are approachable, and you will indirectly bring happiness to others. You will be able to reduce stress. You will be happy and energetic in doing things..."

Expressing further,

"...make time for people, looking at myself as an example, I try as much as possible to make time for my people, though I have so much on my plate, I will make myself available, avoid giving excuses, it will not bring you to any solution. Throughout my experiences, since I joined UPM, I have been asked to do many things by my superiors.... I have never given any excuse not to do things being asked... make things easy... You have to take responsibility, be ethical and professional..."

WAY FORWARD

A leader who does not have a strong commitment to personal morals and university standards lacks integrity and can destroy the university much faster than a leader who promotes a poor strategy. Thus, the VC embraced a strong commitment to personal moral and university standards to transform her people towards the achievement of the university. In leading any institution, there should be certain traits possessed by the leader such as the ability to influence and transforming people to embrace integrity.

BELIEVE YOU CAN AND YOU ARE HALFWAY THERE: A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN MANDALAY TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, MYANMAR

By: Dahlia Zawawi²⁰ and Tee Keng Kok²¹

THE ONGOING CYCLE

Professor Phyoe Wai Htun had just arrived at his office at the Mandalay Technological University (MTU). Established in 1991, MTU was a public higher education institution located in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay. He imagined he had a very busy day ahead today. The official announcement for the upcoming international conference was already out. For Professor Phyoe, that had meant the race was already starting. This was the second time they were organising a conference at the international level. The moment he became the Head of International Relations Office, making sure that the MTU relevant conferences were a success became one of his main tasks.

He sighed. He had only a handful number of staff. There were so many people to see and convince. He needed sponsors and financial support. Could he make this work? Was he up to this challenge, again? Oh well, he believed he could. Of all the things that he had thought about, there was always one thing that he was very sure of. *“What I enjoy the most is that I can contribute to the university, to the country. For me that is the source of my inspiration to do my job.”*

THE BEGINNING OF MTU

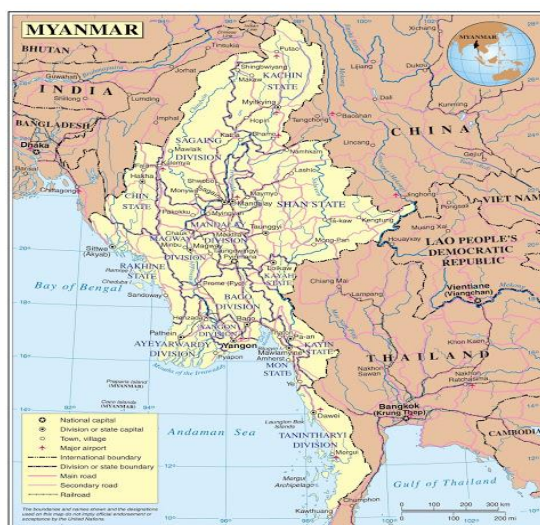


Figure 1: The Map of Myanmar²²

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²² Source: <https://www.loc.gov/maps/?dates=1990/1999&q=Burma&st=slideshow>

The current MTU was situated on a 704.70-acre campus in the east of Yankin Hill and Mandalay canal. Initially, the university was established as an Institute of Technology under the Ministry of Education (MOE) on October 1, 1991. A few years later, on January 1, 1997, the Ministry of Education handed Mandalay Institute of Technology over to the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) after it was established. By July 1, 1998, Mandalay Institute of Technology was renamed as the Mandalay Technological University (MTU). Twenty-eight years passed by and ever since then, the university strived towards continuous development to meet the requirement of the Science and Technology cluster.

The university was one of the senior engineering universities in Myanmar and offered undergraduate, and postgraduate programs in engineering disciplines to students. The number of undergraduate intakes annually was maintained around 200 to 250 students. Additional to that amount were the progressing number of the postgraduate students. As such MTU stood as the second most popular technical university in Myanmar, after Yangon Technological University (YTU). The university's main offerings were six-year bachelor's and two-year master's degree programs. The motto of MTU was *Integrated Learning to Knowledge, Skills & Attitude*. Hence, the focus of MTU remained to be on the area of science and technology. In line with its motto, the university envisaged itself to become a highly prestigious technological centre of excellence in engineering education and research for the good of society, humanity and the environment.

Departmentalization of the University

Generally, the MTU was structured into four main departments: i) reactor; ii) engineering; iii) supporting, and iv) management. The International Relations were part of the Reactor's office. Since it was a technology university, the main focus was highlighted towards the engineering-based disciplines. Among the expert areas related to engineering include the Architecture, Biotechnology, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical Power Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Energy Research, Computer Engineering & Information Technology, Mechanical Engineering, Mechatronic Engineering, Metallurgy Engineering, and Mining Engineering. In addition, under the supporting departments were the Engineering Mathematics, Engineering Chemistry, Engineering Physics, English, Myanmar, Workshop and Library units. All the engineering departments and several of the supporting departments normally provided the Bachelor, Master and PhD degrees to the candidates. Finally, there were the management departments consisted of units like Administration, Finance, Student Affair, Maintenance, Human Resource, and Quality Assurance to help assure effectiveness and efficiency in the day-to-day activities of the university. All these departments are either headed by a Director or a Head of Department.

Higher Education in Myanmar

Myanmar is the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia and is situated geographically at the strategic location between the economic hubs of China, India and ASEAN countries. The education industry was unique to the country. In total,

Myanmar had 171 higher education universities, and all these universities remained highly centralised and state-run. The Ministry of Education controlled more than 50 universities and the remaining ones fell under the control of the 12 other ministries including Ministry of Health, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development. Different disciplines were split between different universities, such as medical, technical, agricultural, educational, and economic schools. Each corresponding ministry would then be responsible for running these universities.

Departments ²³	Number of Staff
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENTS	
Architecture	4
Biotechnology	52
Chemical Engineering	22
Civil Engineering	31
Electrical Power Engineering	27
Electronic Engineering	32
Energy Research	7
Computer Engineering & Information Technology	32
Mechanical Engineering	28
Mechatronic Engineering	21
Metallurgy Engineering	4
Mining Engineering	3
SUPPORTING DEPARTMENTS	
Engineering Mathematics	9
Engineering Chemistry	13
Engineering Physics	11
English	13
Myanmar	6
Workshop	6
Library	Not specified
MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENTS	
Administration	15
Finance	17
Student Affair	15
Maintenance	23
Human Resource	2
Quality Assurance	2

Table 1: Number of Staff within Departments

Moreover, Myanmar was guided by its National Development Plan. In order to accelerate economic growth, to achieve equitable and balanced development, and to reduce socioeconomic development gap between rural and urban areas, the Plan came

²³ Source: Mandalay Technological University (2020, April 2) Retrieved from <http://www.mtu.edu.mm/>

**Data as of 2 April 2020

with three national development programs including the built of 24 Special Development Zones. The government introduced these development zones to facilitate balanced socioeconomic development in all states and divisions. Due to that, the government promoted education, health, and infrastructure advancement within zones established in all states and divisions. The general rule was to have each of these zones consisting of at least one liberal arts and science university, one technical university, and one computer science university.

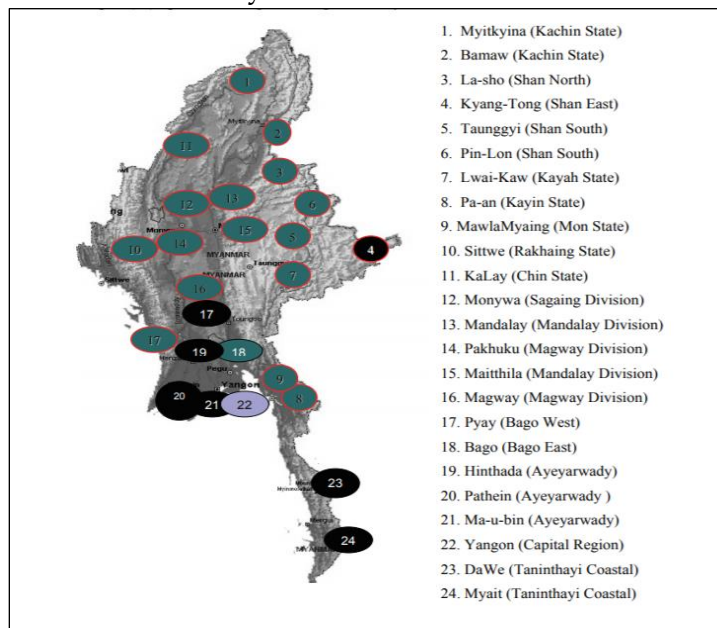


Figure 2: Special Development Regions in Myanmar²⁴

Leadership for Results

The Department of Biotechnology was established under the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) in 1998 to serve three major functions; teaching, research and community service. Initially, the department only existed as a branch of the Chemical Engineering Department under YTU. The academics supporting this department came from a number of experts such as chemical engineers, veterinary surgeons, agriculturists, microbiologists, chemists, zoologists and botanists.

On 16 August 2001, the department was promoted as a Faculty of YTU, steered by the Department of Technical Promotion and Coordination (DTPC). The department was then transferred from YTU to MTU originally under the Department of Advanced Science and Technology (DAST) in September 2006.

Approximately ten years ago, which was in 2009, Professor Dr Phyoe Wai Htun was transferred to work in MTU from YTU. Upon joining, he was parked as the member of the Department of Biotechnology. Professor Phyoe obtained his PhD in Biotechnology specialising in animal biotechnology. He then continued his Post-Doctoral Research at Delhi University. His research areas focused on Fermentation Technology and Plant

²⁴ Source: Zaw, K. (2008). Challenges, Prospects and Strategies for CLMV: The Case of Myanmar. Yangon Institute of Economic, Myanmar.

Protection. He was already serving MTU for ten years when Professor Phyoe was appointed as the Head of International Relations in 2017.



Professor Phyoe as the Head of International Relations Office

The International Relations office was a small team consisting of only four people, including him. But they were expected to achieve big results. His main responsibility was to expand internationalisation for MTU. Because the university condition in Myanmar was centralised under the government, staff were always in the position for transfer on a yearly basis. Therefore, he found it hard to have a long-term plan. There was always the fear of losing his people due to the transfer. In addition, because the government also controlled promotions, both the academic and supporting staff could move to better positions even though they were not contributing to MTU. He could seek their help, but whether or not he received it was another matter.

As time went by, the task of his unit seemed to be expanding. In the general term, internationalisation of higher education tended to promote efforts in integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education. Some of the activities would cover commercialising research and education; handling international initiatives in order to generate revenue; and building an international reputation. Many other established higher learning institutions all over the world employed strategies such as the recruitment of international students; students, staff and scholars exchange programs; and research and education partnerships between institutions regionally and internationally.

Over the two years of his appointment, Professor Phyoe had started initiating international conferences on behalf of MTU. It began when he was tasked to do the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for MTU. The office must improve international collaborations and bring foreign experts to the university. He saw that having an international conference was the easiest way to open avenues for collaborations. However, often organising conferences incurred cost. The Ministry could not provide enough financial support necessary for that purpose as there were

just too many universities to sponsor. On top of that, being in a centralised system had prevented MTU from generating its revenue from their student's intakes. Because of that, Professor Phyoe encouraged his staff to be creative and innovative in finding solutions to the barriers that the office faced. He knew that there was no such thing as free lunch. The investment was a risk that he had to take in order to help MTU move forward and be globally recognised. *"Begin by taking baby steps,"* he reminded his people.

The first international conference was full of challenges. The team had to work vigorously in building relationships with the university's stakeholders. The financial injection from the Ministry was not enough. The team moved together to convince the regional government, alumni, international association, and businesses for support in any way the entities see fit to ensure that the conference was successful. Coming from a science background, marketing and negotiation were not Professor Phyoe's forte. To improve himself, he viewed others' ways of building a good network. He also learned from his mistakes. Professor Phyoe was not a person who easily gave up or intimidated by the difficulties of the tasks given to him. His closest mentor was the Rector himself. When in doubt, he would seek his Rector's advice. Professor Dr Sint Soe was a man with vision. Tapping on the Rector's experience would obviously allow Professor Phyoe to adopt knowledge practical to his job.

Apart from the alumni, he knew the importance of getting industrial support as well. Networking was, of course, easier said than done. However, Professor Phyoe believed in lifelong learning. He was determined to shift his position from not knowing to knowing. He learned from experience; he searched for good reading materials to develop skills relevant to leadership and business. Many times, he improved himself by trial and error method. He might not have a business background, but he was a good scientist. As a scientist, it was natural for him to come up with a good plan and strategy to entice the industrial players to take part and invest in the conference. And it worked! The first international conference under the International Relations office received praises from many of his colleagues.

After two years, the ball started rolling again. The office was ready to embark into the subsequent international conferences. *"One problem with achieving goals was having the next ones inflated for you."* MTU had higher expectations already. They wanted more international participants to visit the university and be part of the conference. He knew he must make sure the goals set were clear and achievable. *"People would be demotivated if they saw the goals to be impossible."* Since MTU was in Mandalay, the chances for more foreign academics attending were higher. Mandalay was in a strategic position to become a rising Asian city and was the economic centre of Upper Myanmar. In addition to that, Mandalay had the best educational facilities and institutions, after Yangon. It was not that hard to get foreigners to visit the city. The challenge was more on the return of investment these international academics get when they attended the conference – more things needed to be done in trying to keep up to those expectations.

Professor Phyoe used all his means of getting his job done. He decided that he should utilised the MOUs that MTU had with other universities and entities. He began designing different strategies to approach these different groups. He understood that every institution had its needs. Because of that, he urged his team to understand the diverse needs of various institutions before they could begin offering something of interest. It took a while for them to design their approach and proposals specific to the needs. However, since the university was a public university, that meant there was already strong support from the Ministry and the regional department. Such advantage was used to gain trust from the alumni and industrial players. Of course, at times, they failed. Professor Phyoe remained positive for the sake of his staff. Every time they stepped on the wrong foot, he would have a meeting with his small team to discuss and deliberate about the issues and come up with a contingency plan. Every time a goal was met, they celebrated the achievement as well no matter how small it was.

Finding His Own Way

Being in the management position had taught him a lot. Knowledge was essential. Skills were required. This was not about his technical skills at all. Surprisingly, his position made him more humane and wanted to learn more on acquiring human skills. If he was focusing on getting his academic promotion, he doubted that he would view the human skills to be critical in his area at all. He did not even know that he had it in him. Being the Head of International Relations had changed him. There was this passion and the excitement to do something new. And then there was the satisfaction of being able to contribute to the university.

LOOKING FOR MORE

It was windy outside. The time was almost 5pm. Professor Phyoe was ready to call it a day. His mind had been wandering to the problem he had earlier concerning red tapes²⁵. He had almost lost a possible investment from an established firm due to the complex process required by the university. He was unhappy with all these bureaucracies. Why make things so complicated? He vowed to help support the efforts made in getting the system improved. There must be a way. Universities must be given the freedom that they so deserved. He must work to become a better leader. That was his promise.

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²⁵ excessive bureaucracy or adherence to official rules and formalities

CHANGE IS INEVITABLE, *BE THE CHANGE*: A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY (DLSU), THE PHILIPPINES

By: Tee Keng Kok²⁶ & Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff²⁷

PROLOGUE

Looking out of the rooftop, Professor Dr Raymond Girard R. Tan, the Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) of De La Salle University, cannot help but to admire the student apartment blocks belonging to the university. That was when he reminiscence the development of the university when it started off as a school. The development gave him some hope that changes were possible. Raymond came up the rooftop of *Henry Sy Sr.* Hall where people usually take some fresh air but he never thought he would need after a seemingly “normal” meeting. He recalled the moments in the meeting room when he was questioned, “where do I place the equipment?”, “young man, changes take time”, “we have been doing this for the last 20 years...” Raymond was faced with many questions when he tried to introduce changes in the university. He understood transformation took time and would encounter resistance for introducing some initiatives that would benefit the university in the long run. It was during times like this that he questioned his decisions whether the academic freedom he had lost when he had chosen to take up leadership position was worth the sacrifice.

THE RESEARCH CULTURE IN THE UNIVERSITY

De La Salle University (DLSU) was established in 1911 as De La Salle College. It carried the mission of educating young Filipinos and developing them to be the nation’s leaders. It started off as an all-boys missionary school. The university was part of the country’s machinery to build the nation after the war in 1946. For that, engineers were required. However, transformation happened about four decades ago when De La Salle College was proclaimed as a university in 1975. It was during the same year that the institution opened to women. From a typically teaching university, the Chancellor began to emphasize on research in the 1980s. Being private, tuition fee generation was vital in ensuring financial sustainability. However, unlike most private institutions, one of the vision-missions of DLSU is to be a “leading learner-centered *research* university”.

In recent years (based on DLSU Consolidated Reports 2013-2015), more faculty members have shown interest in pursuing research. The Chancellor reiterated the number of Filipinos acknowledging the importance of knowledge generation and were pursuing scholarly exercise were incremental. Among the evidences were the increased

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post-graduate students, writing workshops, research centers, and institutes. Between 2010 and 2018, research output increased five folds. The Chancellor acknowledged the achievement of DLSU in research and attributed the office of Vice Chancellor or Research and Innovation. Besides faculty members, both public and private sectors began to recognize DLSU's role in research. Sources of funding came from government agencies (such as the Department of Science and Technology, Commission on Higher Education), private foundations (for example, the OML Center for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management Foundation, Inc) and overseas development agencies (such as United States Agency for International Development).

Prof Dr Raymond Tan

Being an alumnus, Raymond felt obligated to contribute to the university. Therefore, after obtaining his PhD, he joined DLSU in 1997 as an academic. Raymond never thought he would hold any leadership role in the university but having the passion in research, he rose to being among the top researchers in the university. He broke the university's record at that time when he was conferred professorship at the age of 35. Raymond believed that a university thriving in a dynamic environment should focus in research. He emphasized that the university held a vital responsibility to generate and disseminate new knowledge instead of transferring static knowledge to future generation. On top of that, Raymond also saw universities playing a significant role in contributing to industry and government. Being a prolific researcher himself, he believed knowledge creation should be grounded by the systematic process. It only with robust research and findings, universities were in the most strategic position to guide industry and government to make informed decisions and crafting policies. Raymond was motivated by the underlying need to address fundamental national as well as international issues and challenges such as poverty eradication as well as to mitigate climate change. In order to achieve that, he believed there was a need for a mindset change to developing human capital. Therefore, he trusted universities to be the agents of change. According to him, in order to change, "be the change". That was the philosophy that guided him throughout his tenure as the Vice Chancellor of Research and Innovation VC (R&I).

He was recommended by his predecessor and appointed as the Vice Chancellor of Research and Innovation in 2013 at the age of 40. When he was approached to take up this responsibility, he was reluctant at first because of the uncertainties as well as losing the academic freedom he much yearned. However, after some deep thoughts and getting ready to embrace the inevitable change, he decided to take up the challenge. Although it was a difficult decision to make, the rationale was simple, "if I was expected to face change, what better way to live the change that I orchestrated"? Instead of being unhappy and complaining about policies introduced by someone else, Raymond took a deliberate stance to architect policies when given the chance. In other words, instead of being at the mercy of preconceived notions, he decided to put faith in his own hands. He was thinking of the education landscape in the Philippines. Although there were many education reforms made, he constantly asked himself, "what role does a private university have? How do universities stay attractive and be

relevant to the industry? How do lecturers survive in the face of technology? And how can a university ride on the tide of technology advancement?"

Prior to that, Raymond was the Director of Research of the university. The office of Vice Chancellor of Research (VCR) was created in 2007. Since then, it went through a series of restructuring, revamping, and downgrading exercises until 2011 when the new Chancellor reinstated the research office's status to the original Vice Chancellor level. When Raymond was appointed as the new VCR in 2013, "innovation" was added to this portfolio. His office was known as the office of Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) ever since. As he was cleared that the achievement of a great research university was to have in place capable academics, appropriate incentives, and policies, he took two immediate steps: (1) He ran diagnostics to ascertain the research climate of DLSU. Based on the data from 2008-2012 gathered, he benchmarked them against some major universities in the region; (2) As an educator, lifelong learning was in his blood. With his wide network, he began to visit and learn from his counterparts from other regional universities. Although he acknowledged DLSU was good at certain things, he discovered they were not as strong in certain areas as they would hope. Having that intelligence, he decided to turn the university's research culture around.

The position of VC (R&I) came with the bird's eye view of the university. He saw the potential of research and innovation (R&I) in generating revenue for the university. However, he was aware that R&I were costly endeavors compounded by the fact that the conversion rate to success was low. That did not stop him, however. Guided by his sentiments, he decided to move the technology incubator out of the university as an autonomous unit after it suffered losses for the past 15 years. With that, the incubator made its own decisions. The move also escalated the synergy between research and industry, especially, how science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) can play a significant role in developing the industry. In the mist of Industry 4.0, he believed technology can support smart farming practices and robotics and they in turn could help increase yield for farmers and improve medical outreach respectively. Not only research was able to play a significant role in the industry but in the long-run, will also realize the nation's agenda. On a micro level, research was able to elevate the reputation of the university and for practical reasons. Raymond shared an instance when institutions abroad were reluctant to offer scholarships to their students to further their postgraduate studies simply because DLSU was simply not well-known enough.

Transformation Challenges

When it comes to transformation, Raymond was not spared from the resistance to change. According to him, that was one of the greatest challenges encountered during his time in DLSU. Many academics came with the mantra that they were teachers and their main duty was to teach. Although research was part of the university's mission, it took decades for it to sink in. The research culture was not built in then. "It was not considered as core business, research was treated as a distraction instead", Raymond confessed. Research was deemed as an add-on. Although the management of faculty members was not his portfolio, that did not deter him. He had to find creative ways to stimulate change.

What kept Raymond up at nights were the incongruent speed between research and research support. The speed of development to support research did not seem to match the rate of research progress. He recalled the time when a team of motivated researchers succeeded in getting a multi-million grant but to discover there was no space to house the equipment and research team. That happened each time when a research grant came along. As he was constrained by the campus space, he had to compete with other users (for example lecture space) in the university which involved opportunity costs. While time was required to sort out the research space, project delivery was delayed and that affected the reputation of both the researchers as well as the university. So, his challenge was beyond securing research grants. Caught in the catch-22 situation, Raymond shared, "How do you deal with disappointed faculty members who have done all the hard work in securing the funds while keeping them motivated at the same time?" The other challenge was to set-up units to support research activities. Many of the support systems were not in place. The research ethics unit which ensured research was conducted ethically was cited as an example. All research publications as well as research grant application needed this unit's endorsement to move to the next step. The challenge was not only infrastructure but getting qualified talents to take up the responsibility.

Formula to Successful Transformation

Raymond, like any leaders, was not spared from the physical and psychological toll. However, he had no major regrets. Although he sacrificed his academic freedom, he was conscious the lost was temporary. He came to term that his position was a finite appointment. However, what kept Raymond going was the gratification of success. He was motivated by achievements. When the previous policies worked, he was confident the policies he introduced during his tenure would one day solve many problems. He considered himself lucky to have most of the proposal approved at the university level despite criticism and questioning. He attributed his success to the skills to persuade convincingly putting in the hours into researching but most importantly, how his ideas met the university's objectives. He kept conveying to his thesis students,

You may forget your thesis once you get your degree but learning how to persuade people is a career skill that will lasts for a life time. It is basically jumping into the other person's head and anticipate what he or she is looking for and answering the questions.

The skill of stakeholder persuasion was the one of the most important skills that Raymond had sharpened in his six years in the position. However, being a young Vice Chancellor added the resistance. He claimed the resistance were overcome by his strong research credentials, nevertheless. Raymond's talent was even recognized at the national level when he was elected the youngest fellow in the Philippines National Academy of Sciences. Therefore, he spoke with credibility.

Therefore, in order for transformation to happen, he had to resort to using either the stick or the carrot. He chose the latter, however. As such, he believed in rewarding rather than punishing people to cultivate change.

R&I was a consideration in the academic promotion exercise at various levels from applying for a tenured to a professorial position. R&I were significant components for those seeking career progression. That was also the time the hard-core academics felt they were given recognition. They were given the option to choose “research track”. With the 2-year appointment as “research fellow”, their teaching load could be reduced to as low as 25% to make way for research. According to Raymond, *a fellow could choose not to teach and attend as many conferences in a particular semester. The academic freedom allows them to do whatever they enjoyed (research related). To these academics, research gave them the reason to exist!*

He had faith that the positive vibes of these group of lecturers would be contagious. However, if an academic was unable to fulfil his or her research obligations, he or she was given the chance to opt out of the research track. So, it was not about hiring or firing, rather whether a person was able to fulfil the research function. As a non-profit private university, DLSU also provided sabbatical leave for its academic staff. Staff who served for more than four and seven years were entitled to a three and a half month or a one-year sabbatical leave respectively. Raymond stressed that “the goal was to recharge the intellectual state of the faculty members so that they come back with better research ideas and better teaching”.

Convinced by the proverb, “hitting the rod while it is still hot”, Raymond went on to build the academic’s research capability by organizing more research and writing workshops and deliberately recruited research-qualified faculty. Besides that, he also made internal research funds available from seed to matching grants. However, the spirit of providing the research grants was also for capacity building with the hope that the senior researchers would act as mentors to junior researchers. He also increased the amount of financial incentives and recalibrated it according to the quality of indexed publications.

Apart from that, he believed hard work, having the appropriate skills, meeting the right people along the way, being strategic and having foresight, willingness to do extra work, collaboration, helpful, reliable, and willingness to share ideas were contributors to his success. Self-management was also a priority. Although he was occupied most of the time firefighting, he recommended efficient use of time. He made a conscious effort to keep himself fit so that he would be able to focus on work rather than fall sick and dedicating time to focus on recovery. Some of the activities he enjoyed were cycling and weightlifting. There was no need to complete the exercise regime. He would opt for even half the session whenever he was pressed for time. When it comes to food, Raymond was notorious among his colleagues for insisting to have healthy portions of vegetables for lunch!

EPILOGUE

Being the third generation Lasallian, one of Raymond’s hope as the Vice Chancellor of Research and Innovation, was for the alumnus to understand and to look back at how research efforts of the university was able to make an impact in the industry. He had hoped that the alumnus would support research as much as they embraced the annual

inter-varsity sports leagues. He wished that that the energy and rivalry against competing university for sports equated for research so that they would be proud of their alma matter. Raymond wished that,

the alumnus would think of research even if they do not fully understand, as being a form of healthy competition just like how they continue to cheer for their sports team. The psychology should be no different for research where the alumnus would cheer for research excellence of the university that granted them the degree.

However, Raymond's legacy was beyond the meeting room. He dreamt that his children would be better off than him and his grandchildren better off than his children. Having that at the back of his mind, as a leader, Raymond was thinking what he could do to achieve all that while facing immediate stumbling blocks within the four walls of the meeting room. What leadership styles could Raymond possess to drive de La Salle University (DLSU) from a teaching university to a leading private university in research and innovation?

A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN NANYANG BUSINESS SCHOOL, NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, SINGAPORE

By: Devika Nadarajah²⁸ and Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff²⁹

AN IRRESISTABLE REQUEST

1st August 2019, 4.00pm

It was raining heavily outside and Associate Professor Low Kin Yew was looking through his office window. The campus was wet at all places but people were still moving around. Some were in their cars while others were walking fast, trying to reach their destinations the soonest possible. Suddenly, Dr. Low's mind was brought back to the first day he was appointed as the Associate Dean for College of Business seven years ago. The interim dean at that time nominated him for the position. He knew there must be a reason but he dared not to ask as it was a new challenge that he was looking forward to. At that time, his intention was only to contribute to the campus, but little did he know that in less than a year, he would be tasked to create and launch a new undergraduate programme for Nanyang Technological University.

Since the initial request came from the industry and the university was keen to intensify industry collaboration, he was left with no choice but to accept dutifully. There were many questions that needed to be answered, but the first one on his mind was, 'where do I begin'?

LET'S DO THIS

Enterprise Singapore

Enterprise Singapore is one of the Singapore's government agencies that champions enterprise development. Their objective is to work with committed companies to build capabilities, innovate and internationalise. They also support the growth of Singapore as a hub for global trading and startups. In 2018, they supported 76,000 Singapore enterprises to upgrade productivity, innovate and transform. They also supported 7,000 capability upgrading projects and involved in \$10.2 billion committed value-add³⁰.

Brief profile of Associate Professor Dr. Low Kin Yew

Associate Professor Dr. Low Kin Yew has been with Nanyang Business School since 1994 and is now holding the position of the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Academic) at the College of Business in the School. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Accountancy from National University of Singapore and Ph.D. degree from the University of Illinois

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³⁰ <https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/about-us/year-in-review-2018>

at Urbana-Champaign. Prior to joining the university, he worked for five years in the Singapore and Sydney offices of one of the Big 4 accounting firms. Despite his strong auditing background, Dr. Low has always been passionate in research, particularly in the areas of judgment and decision making in accounting and auditing. His articles have been published in various top journals including *The Accounting Review* and the *Accounting Horizons*³¹. Hence, it was not a surprise when he won the American Accounting Association's 2003 Outstanding Auditing Dissertation Award.

1st August 2013

It was in the early morning of 1st August 2013 when Dr. Low was alerted to meet the dean in his office. Upon entering the office, he was invited to sit on one of the available chairs. Prof. Ravi Kumar, the dean, then started to explain the reason why he was summoned to the office. He said, *"Thank you for coming at a short notice. I need to brief you on a project that we are going to embark. You probably have heard of Enterprise Singapore? Good. As you know, this government agency is tasked to bring foreign businesses into Singapore. So there is one particular unit under Enterprise Singapore who is in charge of the commodity sector. They brought in a lot of commodity players into Singapore such as Shell, Petronas and Exxon among others. Obviously, they will require manpower. In the beginning, they will bring their own staff here but this is not sustainable in the long run. Soon, they are going to start looking for local talents. Therefore, Enterprise Singapore came to NTU and they approached the College of Engineering, requesting them to come up with an academic program which can produce local talents for the commodity industry in Singapore. However, they also wanted these future engineers to also have a strong knowledge in business. College of Engineering has approached our school to collaborate in designing this new program. Immediately, you came to mind. I believe you are the right man for the job and you should help them. Please get in touch with their Associate Dean. Thank you, Dr. Low."*

After the meeting with the dean, Dr. Low went back to his room and started to write on his notepad. He immediately knew that this program would be unlike the existing programs. Most likely he had to come up with a program with two majors; Engineering and Business. He was sure that this program had great potential because commodity sector had huge impact in Singapore. Besides, these commodity companies offered good career opportunities to NTU students. He felt that this would be an important program that could directly contribute to his country.

Feeling confident with his new task, Dr. Low decided to write down a list of issues that he needed to address first. The first item he wrote down was 'industry needs'. Relating his past experience, Dr. Low recalled the time when there was an IT bubble that went burst in 2000, causing many universities to experience declining number of students registering for information technology, which led them to fall short of IT students. He needed to ensure that this new program would not suffer the same fate.

Next, he wrote 'students' quality required by the industries' followed by 'type of trainings needed by the students'. He then added 'available courses' and 'new courses'

³¹ http://research.ntu.edu.sg/expertise/academicprofile/Pages/StaffProfile.aspx?ST_EMAILID=ALOWKY

inside the list. He expanded the list by jotting down ‘resources needed’, ‘teaching staff’, ‘endowments’, ‘stakeholders’, ‘corporate partners’, ‘similar programs offered by other universities’ and ‘support by the government’.

When he wrote down ‘teaching staff’ he knew that both Schools currently did not have teachers who were experts in maritime trading and commodity. He also knew that these corporate players would make great contributions to this program in many ways. They could provide their expertise in advising the right content for the program as well as providing manpower for teaching. In addition, they could also contribute in the form of endowment to support the new program. What he needed to do then was to start engaging them and build up the networking. One of the key stakeholders that the university had to deal seriously would be the students’ parents and this was important for one reason; most of the parents today were more educated, had a say in the choice of their children’s education and they are more likely to ask questions related to their children’s program. Additionally, they were very concerned about NTU’s graduate employability. They really wanted to know the career prospects as well as the starting salary for their children if they decided to take up the program of their choice. This was a stark contrast to parents of the previous generations who were not as educated and as such, did not make decisions regarding the programs to enroll. Generally, they would not question much as they believed that the university would provide the best for their children.

On the role of Enterprise Singapore, Dr. Low also heard that the agency had earlier worked with Singapore Management University (SMU) on a similar program. That gave him confidence that the new program he was working on would be successful. Thus, he should not wait long. He then referred to the list again. He needed one item that would function to support the program and ensure its excellence. The term ‘centre of excellence’ triggered his mind, and he quickly jotted it down as his last item on the list.

It suddenly dawned on him that undergraduate engineering programs run for four years while undergraduate business programs run for three years only. Since this program would be administered by his school, he needed to figure out how much business content would be needed in the entire program. He suddenly remembered the person he should refer; the Associate Dean of the College of Engineering. By then, Dr. Low was even more confident and clear of his direction.

AN EXPERIENCE WORTH TREASURED

1st August 2019, 5.30pm

The rain has stopped. As he was tidying up his desk before going home, he saw the graduation picture of the first batch of students who graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering with a Second Major in Business. More than 40 students have graduated from this program with 95% employability. Many of them have joined these big corporate players in the industry. Their transition to the industry was a smooth process since they had interned with these companies during their studies in NTU. This year marked his seventh years as Associate Dean. He smiled to himself, reminiscing what he

went through for the past few years. He felt proud to be part of the key persons in Nanyang Business School, particularly for the program he created. He always becomes sentimental when he thought of NTU, not because of its world recognition and reputation, but for giving him valuable experience and opportunities to prove his capabilities in producing a new program. At NTU, Dr. Low experienced a lot, but the memory of creating his program from scratch remained his most treasured challenge.

APPENDIX 1

NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, SINGAPORE

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 33,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Colleges of Engineering, Business, Science, Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, and its Graduate College. NTU's Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine was established jointly with Imperial College London. NTU's campus is listed among the Top 15 most beautiful university campuses in the world. It has 57 Green Mark-certified (equivalent to LEED-certified) building projects comprising more than 230 buildings, of which 95% are certified Green Mark Platinum. Besides its 200-ha (500-acre) lush green, residential campus in the western part of Singapore, NTU also has a second campus in the heart of Novena, Singapore's medical district.

In 2019, NTU was placed 11th globally in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings. It was also ranked the world's best young university (under 50 years old) by QS for the sixth consecutive year in 2019. In addition, NTU was named the world's fastest rising young university by Times Higher Education in 2015. In engineering and technology, NTU is ranked 6th worldwide in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2019. Mirroring this success is the College of Science, whose young chemistry department is ranked 13th among universities in the Nature Index 2019. Boosted by research at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, NTU is also strengthening its foothold in areas such as biomedicine and life sciences. The well-established Nanyang Business School is regularly featured among the leading business schools in Asia, with its MBA programme consistently rated top in Singapore since 2004 by The Economist.

Learning Innovation at NTU

In higher education, NTU is driving new pedagogies so that millennials can learn more effectively in this digital age. Part of NTU's education strategy is the flipped classroom model of learning. The centrepiece of this new way of learning is The Hive, a ground breaking learning facility that has been described by CNN as having redefined the traditional classroom. Innovative education initiatives also include signature programmes such as Renaissance Engineering Program, CN Yang Scholars Program and NTU-University Scholars Program. Designed for high-achieving students, these programs offer a multidisciplinary curriculum, guidance by top faculty, interdisciplinary and intensive research opportunities, overseas exposure as well as dialogues with world-class scientists and industry leaders.

Known for research excellence and technological innovation, NTU leads the top Asian universities in normalised research citation impact (Clarivate Analytics' InCites 2018). In the 2019 Nature Index, NTU is placed 34th among the world's universities and first in Singapore. NTU hosts two national research centres of excellence – the Earth Observatory of Singapore (EOS) and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering (SCELSE) – that are tackling important questions in environmental sustainability and public health. NTU is also home to a number of world-class institutes. The National Institute of Education trains all teachers in Singapore, which is known for having one of the best education systems in the world. Other key institutes at NTU include the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, the Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute and the Energy Research Institute @ NTU.

NTU collaborations

NTU actively pursues partnerships with top universities and runs joint and dual PhD degree programs with well-established universities. Some of its key partners in academia and research include Imperial College London, Technical University of Munich and University of California, Berkeley. The university also works closely with the biggest industry players in making its research relevant to society. In the past few years alone, NTU has struck a record number of tie-ups with big players such as Alibaba, Rolls-Royce, SenseTime, Delta Electronics, ST Engineering, SMRT, SingTel and Surbana Jurong. A cosmopolitan international university, NTU has more than 100 nationalities on its campus. With more than 300 academic partners, international exchange students are a common sight on the sprawling campus.

Believing in the benefits of global exposure and immersion for its students, NTU aims to have at least 8 in 10 undergraduates go overseas at least once during the course of their studies. This can be through student exchanges, summer programmes, field trips, research attachments, internships and industrial attachments, competitions, conferences and many more.

(Excerpt from <https://www.ntu.edu.sg/AboutNTU/CorporateInfo/Pages/Intro.aspx>)

THE FIRST INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED BUSINESS SCHOOL IN THAILAND: A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN SASIN GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY, THAILAND

By: Siti Rahayu Hussin³² and Ida Md.Yasin³³

INTRODUCTION

Thailand, being one of the great nations in Southeast Asia is well-known for its long history and unique culture. While these are the country's main attractions, Thailand aims high in bringing its education to international level and receive world recognition. Among the many institutions in the country, this noble vision had been entrusted to Sasin School of Management.

Back in 2004, Professor Ian Fenwick and his team at Sasin School of Management were put in charge of a very big task to lead Sasin to become the first university in Thailand to earn international accreditation. For six years, Professor Fenwick and his team worked very hard to fulfil the requirements of becoming one of the top business schools in the world. After much hard work and documentations by the team, in 2010, Sasin School of Management became the first business school in Thailand to obtain two international accreditations - AACSB and EQUIS. From 2017 to 2019, Professor Ian Fenwick served as Sasin's Interim Deputy Director, External, and from June 1, 2019, he was appointed Director of Sasin School of Management (of Chulalongkorn University). Apparently, Professor Ian Fenwick succeeded Mr. Paron Israsena Na Ayudhya, Interim Director, whose two-year term ended on 31 May 2019. With his appointment, Professor Fenwick aimed to bring Sasin to the next level on the world's education map.

Sasin School of Management

Chulalongkorn University, in partnership with the Kellogg School of Management and the Wharton School in the U.S, established the Sasin Graduate Institute of Business Administration in 1982. The founding Director of Sasin was Professor Toemsakdi Krishnamra, who served as director from 1982-2014. Sasin Graduate Institute of Business Administration was then popularly known as Sasin School of Management. The name "Sasin" was graciously bestowed by HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej on December 5, 1987. Originated from Pali and Sanskrit, "Sasin" means "king of the rabbits"; a reference to HM the King being born in the year of the rabbit, and Professor Toemsakdi being born in the year of the rabbit, and 1987 (when the name was bestowed) being a year of the rabbit!

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Being the first business school in Thailand to earn international accreditation from two prestigious international accreditation institutions i.e. AACSB and EQUIS, Sasin School of Management then started to attract world's attention. In line with the global recognition it received, the school offered a number of graduate and postgraduate programs, including the Flexible MBA (so-named as it could be taken on a fulltime or part-time or turbo basis, allowing completion in 12-36 months, with participants being able to change their speed almost as they wish), Dual MBA and Master of Engineering, Executive MBA, Ph.D., and a range of Executive Education programs.

Located on the Chulalongkorn University campus in Bangkok, Thailand, Sasin Graduate Institute of Business Administration (Sasin) pioneered the use of visiting professors complemented by full-time faculty members and other experts in Southeast Asia. Sasin offers a robust combination of degree and non-degree programs. The MBA Program, the Executive MBA Program, and other programs which are part of the Sasin Chula Engineering Dual Degree Program, are all offered at the Bangkok campus.

The man behind Sasin, Professor Ian Fenwick is no stranger to the institute. He started his career in Chulalongkorn University way back in 1988, leading an Institutional Linkage Program (funded by CIDA, Canada's aid program) between York University (Toronto) and Chulalongkorn University. He subsequently became a visiting professor at Sasin, before moving on to be a full-time faculty member and later, an advisor to Sasin.

With a strong background in marketing, and a decade of experience in digital marketing working for corporations in Canada and the U.S., Dr Fenwick led the initiative to earn international distinction by applying for AACSB and EQUIS accreditations for Sasin.

AACSB accreditation is the hallmark of excellence in management education. It represents the highest standard of achievement for business schools worldwide. Institutions that earn accreditation confirm their commitment to quality and continuous improvement through a rigorous and comprehensive peer review. Accreditation follows a rigorous process, which assesses all aspects of a School's operations and activities including research, teaching and their contribution to the wider business community.

On the other hand, EQUIS is recognized as one of the top gauges of standards in management education in Europe and beyond, and is awarded by the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD). EQUIS accreditation demonstrates not only that the School's activities are of a very high quality, but also that the School has a very strong international dimension. The EQUIS award is made after an assessment of the entire School, including its taught programs, executive education provision, innovation, marketing and interaction with the business world. Sasin became the first school in Thailand to receive AACSB accreditation in early 2010 and the first to

receive EQUIS EFMD accreditation at the end of 2010. It is believed to be the only school to receive both accreditations in a single year.

The Faculty Members

The founding Director of Sasin, Professor Toemsakdi Krishnamra, served as director (dean) from 1982-2014. He also served as President of the Association of Asia-Pacific Business Schools in 2009.

Being a reputable institution in Thailand, Sasin pioneered the practice of blending courses taught by visiting professors from top management schools around the world, with its own full-time faculty, complemented by business leaders and other experts in Southeast Asia. All Sasin faculty and research fellows graduated from top schools and bring global insights and experience to the classrooms. Sasin's full-time faculty members hold doctoral degrees from internationally recognized universities such as Carnegie Mellon University, University of Cambridge, Imperial College, Kellogg School of Management (Northwestern University), London Business School, University of Oxford, University of Southern California, University of Michigan and many others.

A combination of world's expertise has made Sasin one of the unique universities where the international environment translates into better cooperation and innovation. Professor Fenwick recalled that his early years at Sasin were already coloured with international perspectives. "Everyone had some sort of multicultural perspective. So, the environment at Sasin was already international, but we tried to make it even more so."

Icon of Sasin

Professor Ian Fenwick has recently been named Director of Sasin School of Management (Chulalongkorn University), succeeding Mr. Paron Israsena Na Ayudhya, whose two-year term ended on 31 May 2019. Professor Fenwick is the fourth Director in Sasin's history, following Founding Director Toemsakdi Krishnamra (1982-2014), Professor Dipak C. Jain (2014-2017), and Mr. Paron Israsena Na Ayudhya (2017-2019).

Professor Fenwick first came to Thailand as a visiting professor from the Schulich School of Business, York University (Toronto, Canada) in 1988 to work with various universities in the Kingdom, particularly on developing courses in entrepreneurship. In 1992, he began teaching marketing strategy as a visiting professor at Sasin and became a full-time faculty member in 2001, teaching the core (required) marketing management and marketing strategy courses. He has also held a number of administrative posts at Sasin, including Sasin's Interim Deputy Director, External since 2017. Having been in Thailand as early as 1988, Professor Fenwick quickly embraced the different culture of Thailand. At Sasin, Professor Fenwick maintains his enthusiasm for working with faculty members from all over the world.

Great Contributions

Professor Fenwick's vast experiences in several multinational companies contributed to his development as a marketer and a leader. His years in the industry were mainly in marketing and Professor Fenwick has developed an entrepreneurial mindset and marketing orientation. Being the main driver of Sasin's pursuit of international accreditation, Prof Fenwick believes that clear vision and open communication are crucial in bringing together every member of the organization to achieve their objectives. During his tenure as Deputy Director of Sasin, Professor Fenwick emphasised the importance of listening to everyone and collaborating with each other regardless of one's position or background in the organisation. Describing his leadership style as "servant leadership", Professor Fenwick focuses on the growth and well-being of Sasin's community and the nation in general. This was reflected in his commitment to not only achieve international accreditation for Sasin, but also to translate the culture of quality throughout the school. Students and faculty alike were directly and indirectly trained to practice high quality standards in all aspects of teaching and learning and in the whole education ecosystem at Sasin.

CHAMPIONING THE JOURNEY TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION

Professor Fenwick realized that if Sasin were to reach the highest level on par with other top business schools in the world, he would need to explore the relation of management principles to Sasin's goals. Using the concept of servant leadership, Professor Fenwick was instrumental in making changes to the curriculum, student activities, and teaching and learning methods at Sasin. Although Sasin School of Management started off with visiting professors who were not in the university except for a few months in a year, Professor Fenwick managed to get all of them to fully commit to help develop the school's ecosystem. Shortly after joining Sasin as a full-time faculty member, Professor Fenwick came to the conclusion that everyone was a contributor - a culture that was reinforced by the founder of Sasin: "When we started, many of us were only at Sasin for certain weeks and months in a year. Hence, we were not very well versed in the many daily happenings in and out of the office. However, somehow, instead of this limiting our perspectives, all of us, had the same vision. Using our diverse experience in other parts of the world and in various industries, we managed to pull together a clear vision and effective mission statement for the school. These have been our roadmap towards becoming who we are today."

As explained by Professor Fenwick, it was his team's desire to "become the top business school in Thailand which was in line with the country's aspiration to put Thailand on the world's map of education." By mid-2009, Sasin School of Management was already seeing a lot of improvement in teaching and learning, the number of international students, linkages with international universities and industries and many more aspects of the school's operations to meet the requirements of AACSB and EQUIS.

A Different Mindset

Changing an organization requires a change of its people's mindset. In his case, Professor Fenwick believes that having an entrepreneurial mindset is important to

achieve the highest quality and to maintain standards at Sasin. Sasin's success in becoming the first internationally accredited business school in Thailand has given the school networking opportunities, formed directly and indirectly through collaborative programs at student, as well as staff levels.

For example, Sasin alumni have life-time opportunities to connect with their fellow classmates, engage with Sasin faculty, meet visiting industry leaders, and make a lasting contribution to the community. Alumni activities cover a wide range of interests and formats, but each offers the chance to build and strengthen the bonds on which successful business are forged. Faculty members from Sasin travel all around the world engaging in lectures, training, research and many more. These are made possible due to the reputation that was built by being one of the top business schools in the world. Following the standards set forth by AACSB and EQUIS, Sasin continued to leverage its human resources from all over the world. Students, staff and other stakeholders come from various backgrounds, providing Sasin with vast expertise in many areas.

Students at Sasin came from various backgrounds, originating from countries all over the world with diverse family and work histories. Many Sasin students are from unusual backgrounds especially those coming from a non-business background as well as from countries far from Thailand. Although Sasin is a business school offering MBA programs, past students have included artists, a pastry chef, a jewellery designer, and an industrial engineer. Professor Fenwick noted the importance of this diversity. "So, the idea is to bring in these students from very different backgrounds and different perspectives to enhance the classroom experience. The accreditation agencies want us to have more students from adjacent countries. Typically, we will get one or two Malaysian students, and we probably get somebody from Singapore, somebody from Hong Kong. And of course, more recently we've started to get Chinese students. So, we probably have two or three Chinese students. And we're trying to recruit some students from Myanmar and other countries".

Innovative Teaching and Learning Approach

As Sasin has received international recognition, Professor Fenwick believes that graduates from Sasin should be able to fulfil the needs of employers in the global market. Hence, Sasin's programs, curriculum, and student activities are all tailored towards inculcating and enhancing competencies that are required in the working environment of global companies. Over the years, several changes have been introduced to the programs at Sasin together with new approaches in teaching and learning at the school. One of the curriculum innovations, led by Interim Director Paron, is the inclusion of unstructured problems into students' coursework in which students are required to solve unstructured problems faced by real companies, which require critical thinking and analytical skills.

Today, Sasin calls this learning approach "action learning labs" which allows the students to think of real business problems, define the right problem, and craft a solution for it. At this point, Sasin will support students to implement their proposed solutions with their limited capacity. The learning environment in Sasin is such that

classes are organized in smaller groups with a lot of discussions and presentations throughout the courses. Students are trained to be critical and analytical by making decisions and taking actions. For example, students were given unstructured problems or case studies within one week after their course registration, and they had to do group discussions and presentations about the problems and the implications on the business.

Other important approaches in teaching and learning at Sasin are business plan and case competitions. To promote students' participation, they are encouraged to join national and international business competitions, especially start-up competitions. For this, new venture (start-up) action learning labs were created for students in order to support those who want to start their own business. The ultimate goal of this learning approach is to get the students to create their own business plan which becomes their action learning project.

Another option in action learning labs is an emphasis on sustainability. Using its faculty's strengths and experiences, Sasin emphasizes sustainability through an entrepreneurial mindset. The Sustainability Action Learning labs involve students working in groups and doing sustainability audits or assessments and giving advice on sustainability to the organization; be them a business organization or an NGO.

Organizational Commitment

The challenges that await Sasin in the future are not different from what other universities in Thailand and in Southeast Asia are facing. Sasin is an example of a successful organization with sufficient resources and excellent track record, giving it some advantages. But can Sasin sustain these advantages in the future? Can Sasin continue to use the same principle of honouring multicultural differences and yet manage them differently in order to move things forward?"

Overall, the journey towards accreditation has helped Sasin cope with the many changes in the educational marketplace. The way things were done in Sasin and Chulalongkorn University, covers all aspects of strategically managing students, staff, administration, and other resources. These changes and continuous effort have accelerated the development of Chulalongkorn University in general; both in the visibility and reputation of the university, as well as the performance of students and academic staff. According to the QS World University Rankings 2020 released by the global higher education analyst QS Quacquarelli Symonds, Chulalongkorn University is Thailand's best university for the seventh consecutive year. The university has kept its top position in the country on the QS Rankings since 2014 while maintaining its place in the top 50 universities in Asia. The first university of Thailand has improved its overall world ranking to 247th from 271st last year. The QS ranking criteria included: academic performance (40%), faculty/student ratio (20%), citations per faculty (20%), employer reputation (10%), international faculty index (5%) and international students index (5%).

WHAT'S NEXT?

Due to Sasin's attraction as one of the top business schools in Asia, Professor Fenwick is accustomed to meeting and working with people from different background. During the past decade, the school has increased not only in student enrolment but also in business school rankings. One of his first major successes was putting Sasin among the world's top business schools by invoking an important leadership trait: teamwork by leveraging diversity.

Professor Fenwick's vast experience in managing people and organizations in many countries has made him one of the great leaders who recognize opportunities and do what it takes to lead a team and bring them towards excellence. These great leaders are strategic and inspiring, and let their values guide their actions. During our interview with Professor Fenwick, he smiled to himself as he realized he had spent almost half an hour reminiscing over his success in helping Sasin obtain their first international accreditation way back in 2010. His appointment as the Director of Sasin School of Management in June 2019 means that he has a big load on his shoulders. Moreover, being a leader in another country can be a real challenge. But Professor Fenwick surely knows his directions. In many ways, the future of Sasin will be determined by Professor Fenwick as the Director. So, the question that everybody longed for the is "What's next Doc?".

A CASE STUDY ON LEADERSHIP IN TON DUC THANG UNIVERSITY (TDTU), VIETNAM

By: Haslinda Hashim³⁴ and Raja Nerina Raja Yusof³⁵

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TON DUC THANG UNIVERSITY (TDTU)

TDTU was established in 1997, initially named as Ton Duc Thang Private University of Technology and governed by the Ho Chi Minh City Labor Confederation. The main objective of the then private university was to develop and train human resources for the city's functional labour force. In 2003 in line with the change in lifestyle, the private university was changed to Ton Duc Thang Semi-Public university, directly under the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee. Then five and a half years later, Ton Duc Thang Semi-Public University was changed again to Ton Duc Thang University (TDTU) this time governed by the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor.

In 2015, the TDTU was given a special operational mechanism status (2015-2017) by the Prime Minister of Vietnam which allowed TDTU to mobilize and use its own resources without using state budget capital³⁶. This was done so TDTU could develop into a quality research-oriented university in the region and in the world as well as ensure that participants from the policy beneficiaries and poor households have opportunities to access the higher education programs. The autonomy status gave the university room for independent and timely decision making relating to expansion and income generation³⁷.

TDTU main campus can be found at Nguyen Huu Tho, Tan Phong Ward, District 7, Ho Chi Minh City (refer Figure 1). In addition to this, 4 more satellite campuses can be found located in Nha Trang, Bao Loc, Ca Mau and Long Xuyen respectively (refer Figure 2). TDTU so is equipped with 17 faculties and offered 40 Bachelor's programs, 18 Master's programs, 25 Doctoral programs and 21 joint-training programs in various disciplines ranging from Sciences, Engineering to Business and Arts with over 23,000 students.

TDTU as a public university has come far from where it began. In August 2019 TDTU was placed at the no. 1 spot for university in Vietnam and recently in 2020³⁸ was successfully ranked among the world's top 200 according to the Times Higher Education (THE) ranking. The transformation of TDTU was under the leadership of its

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³⁶ TDTU website <https://www.tdtu.edu.vn/en/about/establishment-history-and-goals> accessed 1 May 2020

³⁷ Anh, L. T. K., & Hayden, M. (2017). The Road Ahead for the Higher Education Sector in Vietnam. *Journal of International and Comparative Education*, 6(1), 77-89.

³⁸ <https://tdtu.edu.vn/en/news/2020-04/vietnamese-university-named-among-the-top-200-in-the-world>

President who was instrumental in development and implementation of various progressive initiatives.

Figure 1: Map of Vietnam³⁹



Figure 2: 5 TDTU Campus Locations⁴⁰



³⁹ Source: WorldAtlas.com

⁴⁰ <https://www.tdtu.edu.vn/en/about-tdtu>

The President

Professor Le Vinh Danh was first appointed as the Vice President of TDTU in 1999 and subsequently in 2007 appointed by the government as the President until today. Professor Le Vinh Danh, an expert in Economics, had graduated his Bachelor's (1990) and Master's degree (1994) in Economics at the University of Ho Chi Minh City (HCMCU). He subsequently graduated from the University of Bangkok, Thailand in 1996 with a doctorate in economics. His research and publications are numerous as evidenced by publications from books and scientific articles as well as research and projects done at various countries such as the United States, Taiwan and Thailand. Besides his academic credentials, Professor Danh had received numerous awards for his services in higher education institutions at home as well as from overseas universities (for example the Excellent Professor in 2008, Labour Achievement Medal from the in 2010 and 2016, the Naval Commander Medal in 2017, Labor Medal from Laos in 2017). TDTU under the helm of Professor Danh for over 20 years had indeed gone through some important changes that brought the university to new heights. Some of the development and changes implemented are discussed below.

Managing and Leading Human Capital

TDTU recruited and trained employees carefully so that they would have a team of highly qualified, professional and responsible staff and lecturers. In building a world ranking university Professor Danh believed it is important that TDTU communities was instilled with positive values. Thus, at TDTU, everyone was expected to work on the basis of 3 principles which was *'Nothing is more important than being effective'*, *'Nothing is more valuable than treating others fairly'* and *'Nothing is more honourable than serving our country'*. The Mission *'Education, Research and Creativity for Sustainable Development of Humanity'* and Vision *'For Development of Humanity in a World of Peace and Happiness'* also serve as a guidance to the purpose of TDTU existence particularly to employees and students. On top of these, TDTU is unique as it has extra set of values communicated as foundation values for TDTU which included the philosophy of education, goal, and slogan. These shared values and foundations of existence was always communicated to the staff and students in any meetings or gatherings. In fact, TDTU slogan's *'Light from here shall illuminate the entire universe'* was a slogan that TDTU staff's and community was proud of. Upon entering the main administration building, one can clearly see the slogan being showcased on the walls.

Apart from fundamental values, TDTU community was also instilled positive values through words from famous people all over the world (e.g. reknown scholars, leaders or sports icon). Selected quotes from famous people were showcased on walls in strategic places at the university such as administration foyer and the Inspire (TDTU's library).

In the quest to push staffs towards excellence, creativity and innovation TDTU had built facilities to enable staffs to reach these goals. An example is the state-of-the-art laboratories such as the Robotics and Industrial Communication Network Laboratory. The Bone Densitometry Laboratory for example, was the first university-based specialised lab for intensive research in the medical field, and the most modern in

Vietnam. Apart from challenging staffs to achieve excellence, TDTU acknowledged staff's expertise by using their output in many of the modernisation and sustainability efforts at TDTU such as the rainwater for drinking (RFD) system at TDTU's multipurpose arena and the solar power system at the university's building. As goals and acknowledgement was put in place to encourage and push staffs to achieve excellence, TDTU also provided sources to be utilized by staffs in achieving their goals for example, The Foundation for Science and Technology Development Fund (FOSTECT) was established as a source of fund for researches who developed international patents and publications.

Building Research Excellence

Research publications and research outcomes were always viewed as crucial for TDTU. Professor Danh had always inculcated and espoused research culture, as stated in his speech at one of the university's staffs meeting *'We need to be excellent in our research publications and research output, not solely because of ranking more so because quality research outputs and knowledge TDTU can ensure 'light from here can illuminate the entire universe' as outlined in our education slogan and thus achieving our mission to contribute to the sustainability of human development'*. TDTU was ranked 1st among Vietnamese universities in the number of ISI publications with more than 60 science-technology research groups and two online research journals in English. TDTU was also the first university in Vietnam to be granted seven patents by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USTPO).

Investing in Landmark Facilities

Among the long-term goals set out for TDTU was investments in infrastructure to ensure modern and up-to-date infra throughout the period of 2007-2037 and beyond. Under Professor Danh, there were notable landmark university facilities and equipment built. This effort ensured the university's facilities and equipment was sufficient, professional and timely for the implementation of quality objectives in education and research at TDTU⁴¹. The main campus facilities were established with a sports complex in which various indoor games such as badminton, tennis, volleyball, basketball and many other activities can be played. Moreover, a swimming pool and a FIFA 2-star rated football stadium were also available. The international standard of the TDTU sports complex saw it hosted national and international sports events. Equipped 5-star dormitories were built, consisting of two 11-storey blocks which were designed to accommodate around 2,200 students while still in alignment with the overall architectural principles of the school.

The Inspire Library was considered an outstanding state of the art facility at TDTU under the leadership of Prof. Danh. Many international visiting professors expressed their feelings of amazement to the facilities and modern equipment at the library. The library was designed by TDTU faculties and students with Learning Commons as the model. The building consisted of 7 floors, each with its own décor colour and name and a basement for self-studying overnight. The library was designed with specific areas

⁴¹ Refer to TDTU the complete quality policy at <https://www.tdtu.edu.vn/en/about/mission-vision-quality-policy>

including the area for group study, self-learning, cinema, lounge, studio and specialised areas according to students' major at the university. To view more on the library, go to

<https://lib.tdtu.edu.vn/>. 360 video clips of the library can be viewed as well via <https://360.tdtu.edu.vn/library/>.

Acquiring International Accreditation and Certification

One of the ways TDTU was to be on the map and rise to the ranks, Professor Le Vinh Danh believed was for TDTU to acquire international accreditation and certification. Getting accredited was one way of showing stakeholders that the quality of TDTU education and research has met international standards, was benchmark with renowned universities in the world and surpassed many long-standing universities in the region.

Some of the accreditations and certifications received by TDTU were (the list below are not meant to be exhaustive):

- In 2015, TDTU became the first public university in Vietnam which had been awarded 3 stars out of 5 stars by QS World University Ratings
- In 2016, TDTU is ranked 2nd in Vietnam about international peer-reviewed publications indexed by Scopus (Elsevier, the Netherlands).
- In April 2016, the main campus of TDTU was recognised as an environmentally-friendly campus by Vietnam Federation of UNESCO Associations.
- In December 2016, TDTU joined the Top 200 best universities in the world in sustainability, ranked 156th, by Green Metric World University Ranking.
- In March 2017, Ton Duc Thang University was bestowed the certificate of ISO 9001:2015 in Quality Management, as a replacement for ISO 9001:2005 version
- In October 2018, the QS Higher Education Rankings (United Kingdom) ranked TDTU at 291-300 in Asia's top 500 universities (QS Asia University Rankings).
- In September 2018, was honoured to be the first public university in Vietnam to be officially ranked four stars out of 5 under the QS Stars standard
- In April 2019, Ton Duc Thang University (TDTU) was ranked 101 – 200 by Times Higher Education (THE) University Impact Rankings.
- In 2019 was ranked 901-1000th by Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU)
- Latest in 2020 was ranked among the top 200 university in the world (THE) ⁴²

Developing Competitive Programs Locally and Internationally

The undergraduate, as well as postgraduate programs and degrees of TDTU, had received accreditation and recognition by international organisations. To further enhance the university's reputation as a provider of excellent quality education whilst offering a prestigious environment with an international flavour, Professor Danh ensured that TDTU collaborated and communicated with Asia Top 60 and world TOP

⁴² TDTU website <https://tdtu.edu.vn/en/news/2020-04/vietnamese-university-named-among-the-top-200-in-the-world>

500 universities. Moreover, TDTU also developed a network of close connection with more than 500 professors and experts to the university, through engagement as a full-time lecturer, visiting lecturer and/or researcher. The collaboration was from various aspects, such as in education and research; learning of management model; accessing advanced academia and best practices; implementation of technology amongst many others. This consistent and continuous commitment was one of the quality policies of TDTU that was outlined by Prof Danh. Some of the notable efforts established by TDTU to create an international brand name was programs for international students, as below;

- The Language Program – Four weeks to One Semester

This program was created to provide opportunities for international students to meet and practise Vietnamese language with local people, experience Vietnamese culture and ‘go native’ through various activities held such as volunteer and culture exchange and classes.

- Academic Exchange Program – One semester to One year

This program was established for students who would like to intensively experience Vietnam. Students enrolled in this program was able to join classes in all fields offered at TDTU that was taught in English and transfer their credits to their home university.

- Summer Camp Program – Three weeks

The objective of this program was to provide international students with opportunities to explore Vietnamese culture and language via in-class lectures on Vietnamese culture and food, outdoor activities on street food savouring and culture exchange. Field trips to the Southern part of Vietnam was also part of the activity held.

- Specialized Program – Customized upon request

This program was customised to meet the demand of groups of international students (minimum of 15 students). TDTU had promoted this program as part of its commitment to suit the request and budget of international students.

EPILOGUE

The clock was pointing at 6.30pm, most of the university grounds are quiet since it was out of office hours. Professor Le Vin Dahn made his way out of his office, he felt that TDTU’s progress was on the right track. He would like to think that he did well leading TDTU’s transformation. He was prepared to go further to ensure TDTU will one day be known as an excellent research university and ranked among the top university in the world.

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Notes:

Leadership Case Studies of ASEAN Higher Learning Institutions

This book contains ten leadership case studies of ASEAN Higher Learning Institutions which demonstrated real life examples of leadership competency skills developed by AKEPT. These case studies are suitable to be used in training of future leaders of higher learning institutions. The contents of these case studies will help the readers to understand and manage the relevant situations and challenges affecting their higher learning institutions. It is accompanied by teaching notes published in the book titled 'Teaching Notes for Leadership Case Studies of ASEAN Higher Learning Institutions'.

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