

The background of the slide features a stylized, 3D-rendered illustration of four human figures holding hands in a circle. The figures are rendered in a light blue color with a slight shadow, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. They are set against a solid, vibrant blue background. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional.

PUSA 2015 Survey on Work Situation at PolyU

Final Report 31st December 2015*

*(based on 11th December 2015 forum report)

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BACKGROUND



- The survey was conducted during 9 – 17 April 2015 by email.
- 486 valid responses were received, in which 147 responses contained written comments. (Written comments will be handled from slides 29-36 below)
 - *413 responses directly from email.*
 - *Remaining responses either submitted directly to PUSA Officers in person, or completed in PUSA Office as witnessed by PUSA Chairman.*
- Respondents came from 64 departments / units (out of 69)

BACKGROUND: Remarks on the 14 Questions



- *3 of them are workload-related*
 - Questions 1-3
- *5 are related with feelings towards one's own department / unit*
 - Questions 4-7 and Question 10
- *3 are on University policies*
 - Questions 8-9 and Question 11
- *3 on Senior Management and impression on the University*
 - Questions 12-14
- *Responses are collected under a 5-point Likert scale:*
 - 'Strongly agree', 'somewhat agree', 'neutral', 'somewhat disagree', 'strongly disagree'
 - For all questions, the higher the mean score the less favorable the response

BACKGROUND: HARD DATA



- 486 respondents (13% out of 3621 FT staff)
- Of the 486 respondents, 233 of them (48%) are academics, representing 18.8% of the total number of academic staff. (25.8% teaching track; 22.3% research track)
- Of the 486 respondents, 252 (52%) are non-academics, representing 10.55% of the total number of non-academic staff.
- Male : Female = 4:6
- Years of service with PolyU
 - - > 15 years 28.3%
 - - 5 to 10 years 25.6%
 - - < 3 years 24.4%
 - - 3 to 5 years 12.6%
 - - 10 to 15 years 9.1%

OVERALL CAPTURES (I)



- (top 5 *favorable items* with ascending order of mean score [first bracket] and percentage choosing 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' [second bracket] among colleagues):
 - *One enjoys working in the dept / unit (2.39) (60.9%)*
 - *One is proud to be part of the university community (2.64) (47.7%)*
 - *One sees leaders of the department / unit are approachable and open to new ideas and suggestions (2.75) (49.0%)*
 - *One sees oneself being treated fairly among colleagues in the dept / unit (2.75) (47.1%)*
 - *One sees workload being reasonable (2.88) (47.5%)*

OVERALL CAPTURES (II)



- (top 5 unfavorable items with descending order of mean score [first bracket] and percentage choosing 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' [second bracket] among colleagues):
 - *One has to work overtime (3.56) (60.4%)*
 - *One sees annual performance appraisal not helpful towards career development in PolyU (3.43) (44.9%)*
 - *One regards the work as very stressful (3.40) (51.2%)*
 - *One sees Senior Management not transparent enough on important matters related to PolyU (3.37) (42.1%)*
 - *One does not have enough confidence in the work of our Senior Management (3.28) (40.5%)*

To know more



- First is to consider views of colleagues of different categories
- It is discovered that the opinions of the research track and teaching track of academic staff do not have significant difference
- What about academics and non-academics?

KEY FINDINGS

ACADEMIC vs. NON-ACADEMIC



- Comparing of the ordering of the top three favorable / unfavorable items between the academic and non-academic staff members
- A slight difference between the chosen items, but obviously quite understandable when referring to their different job nature, reflected as follows:

KEY FINDINGS

ACADEMIC vs. NON-ACADEMIC



- In ascending order of mean scores [in bracket at the end], top three **favorable items** rated by **academic staff**
 - *“I enjoy working in my department/unit ...”* (2.27)
 - *“I am proud to be a part of the PolyU community”* (2.55)
 - *“Leaders of my department / unit are approachable and open to new ideas and suggestions”* (2.63)

(relevant comments to be mentioned later)

- In ascending order of mean scores [in bracket at the end], top three **favorable items** rated by **non-academic staff**
 - *“I enjoy working in my department/unit ...”* (2.51)
 - *“I am proud to be a part of the PolyU community”* (2.73)
 - *“I am treated fairly among colleagues in my department/unit”* (2.85)

(relevant comments to be mentioned later)

KEY FINDINGS

ACADEMIC vs. NON-ACADEMIC



- In descending order of mean score [in bracket at the end], top three **unfavorable items** rated by **academic staff**
 - *“I have to work at the weekend ...”* (3.96)
 - *“My work is very stressful”* (3.52)
 - *“The annual performance appraisal is helpful ...”* (3.48)
(relevant comments to be mentioned later)
- In descending order of mean score [in bracket at the end], top three **unfavorable items** rated by **non-academic staff**
 - *“The annual performance appraisal is helpful ...”* (3.38)
 - *“My work is very stressful”* (3.31)
 - *“Senior Management of the university is transparent on important matters related to the university”* (3.31)
(relevant comments to be mentioned later)

Significant Findings on Years of Service



- On average, staff members with *less than 3 years* of service have *more favorable responses* than all other categories in *all aspects*.
- Except for the question on ‘work overtime’ (Question 1), the *differences* in mean scores between staff members who have served the university less than 3 years and those between 3-5 years are *significant* for *all questions* [the longer one serves, the more unfavorable the feeling]
- As for staff with 10 – 15 years of service, they are more affected by the following aspects:
 - *Work overtime (Q.2), Stressful workload (Q.3), Helpfulness of appraisal in career development (Q.9), Approachability of leaders (Q.10), University’s policy in education and research (Q.11)*

Significant Findings on Years of Service



- Colleagues with longer service with the university are *less confident* in the work of our Senior Management.
- More than half of respondents serving PolyU for more than 15 years *would not* regard PolyU Senior Management as transparent on important matters.
- The further breakdown details of data below (slides 14-17) can be referred to separate tables (slides 54-67) provided in the “**PUSA 2015 Survey Data Bank**” PDF file.

< 3 YEARS vs 3 – 5 YEARS Comparison (I)



- For those who have served here for < 3 Years, research track staff are giving **more favorable responses** than teaching track staff on the following items:
 - *My workload is reasonable (Q.1)*
 - *Work overtime (Q.2)*
 - *Fair treatment comparing with others (Q.5)*
 - *Appropriate compensation for what I am doing (Q.8)*
- For those who have served here for 3 – 5 Years, research track staff are giving **more favorable responses** than teaching track staff on the following items:
 - *My workload is reasonable (Q.1)*
 - *Fair treatment comparing with others (Q.5)*
 - *Effort to improve work-life balance (Q.7)*
 - *APA is helpful towards my career development here (Q.9)*
 - *Confidence in the work of Senior Management (Q.13)*

< 3 YEARS vs 3 – 5 YEARS Comparison (II)



- Research track colleagues serving here < 3 Years have **more favorable responses** than those of the same category but with 3 - 5 Years of service on the following:
 - *I enjoy working in my department / unit (Q.4)*
 - *Fair treatment comparing with others (Q.5)*
 - *Sufficient support for my career advancement (Q.6)*
 - *Appropriate compensation for what I am doing (Q.8)*
 - *Approachability of leadership (Q.10)*
 - *Transparency of Senior Management (Q.12)*

< 3 YEARS vs 3 – 5 YEARS Comparison (III)



- Teaching track colleagues serving here < 3 Years have **more favorable responses** than those of the same category but serving here for 3 - 5 Years on the following items:
 - *I enjoy working in my department (Q.4)*
 - *Fair treatment comparing with others (Q.5)*
 - *Effort to improve work-life balance (Q.7)*
 - *Appropriate compensation for what I am doing (Q.8)*
 - *APA is helpful towards my career development here (Q.9)*
 - *Approachability of leaders (Q.10)*
 - *University policy in line with current trends (Q.11)*
 - *Transparency of Senior Management (Q.12)*
 - *Confidence in the work of Senior Management (Q.13)*

< 3 YEARS vs 3 – 5 YEARS Comparison (IV)



- Non-academic colleagues serving here < 3 Years have **more favorable responses** than those of the same category but serving here for 3 - 5 Years on the following items:
 - *My work is stressful (Q.3)*
 - *I enjoy working in my department / unit (Q.4)*
 - *Fair treatment comparing with others (Q.5)*
 - *Sufficient support for career advancement (Q.6)*
 - *APA is helpful towards my career development here (Q.9)*
 - *Approachability of leaders (Q.10)*
 - *Confidence in the work of Senior Management (Q.13)*
 - *I am proud to be a part of PolyU Community (Q.14)*

To know more ...



Any trend of work situation can be captured?

Can there be chances to compare the data?

Are the answers of this year more favorable than those of the year before?

Could there be any causes leading to so, if so?

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY



Attention needed before comparing the two surveys

- *This survey was conducted in April 2015, **and by then***
 - One-off Special Salary Adjustment has materialized (April 2014)
 - Annual appraisal exercise has run for two rounds (12/13 and 13/14)
 - Promotion framework for non-academic staff was known but details not released
- *The first survey, completed in January 2014, **was against certain specific backgrounds***
 - The psychological impact on staff members as a response from the tragedy happened on campus in December 2013
 - The SSA mentioned above was known to come but details not released
 - AAE had run for the first round but merit-based salary adjustment details not yet released
- *This may shed lights when comparing the 2014 data with that of 2015*

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY (cont'd)



- Questions involved in both 2014 and 2015 surveys:
 - *My workload is reasonable.*
 - *My work is very stressful.*
 - *I enjoy working in my department / unit.*
 - *I am treated fairly among colleagues in my department / unit.*
 - *I feel appropriately compensated for the work I am doing.*

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY (cont'd)



- Mean responses are more favorable in this year's survey.
- Overall mean scores (2015 vs 2014)
 - *Workload (2.88 vs 3.09)*
 - *Stress (3.40 vs 3.54)*
 - *Enjoy working (2.39 vs 2.71)*
 - *Fairly treated (2.75 vs 3.18)*
 - *Appropriately compensated (3.09 vs 3.46)*

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY (cont'd)



- Significant improvement of mean scores in two surveys for some categories of staff:
 - *My workload is reasonable.*
 - Academic staff
 - Members served in the university for < 3 years
 - Members served in the university for 10 - 15 years
 - Members who feel themselves as 'appropriately compensated'

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY (cont'd)



- Significant improvement of mean scores in two surveys for some categories of staff members (cont'd):
 - *My work is very stressful.*
 - Academic staff
 - Members served in the university for < 3 years

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY (cont'd)



- Significant improvement of mean scores in two surveys for some categories of staff (cont'd):
 - *I enjoy working in my department / unit.*
 - Academic staff
 - Non-academic staff
 - Members served in the university for < 3 years
 - Members served in the university for 5 – 10 years
 - Members who feel themselves as 'appropriately compensated'
 - Members who feel themselves as 'not appropriately compensated'

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY (cont'd)



- Significant improvement of mean scores in two surveys for some categories of members (cont'd):
 - *I am treated fairly among colleagues in my department / unit.*
 - Academic staff
 - Non-academic staff
 - Members served in the university for < 3 years
 - Members served in the university for 5 – 10 years
 - Members who feel themselves as 'appropriately compensated'
 - Members who feel themselves as 'not appropriately compensated'

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY (cont'd)



- Significant improvement of mean scores in two surveys for some categories of members (cont'd):
 - *I feel appropriately compensated for the work I am doing.*
 - Academic staff
 - Non-academic staff
 - Members served in the university for < 3 years
 - Members served in the university for 5 – 10 years
 - Members served in the university for 10 – 15 years

COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH 2014 SURVEY (cont'd)



- What does the comparison bring us to?
- Overall results appear to be improving?
- Looking into details, improving result may be due to positive responses from certain member sub-groups
- Taking those who feel positive to compensation for measurement, we discover ...

Follow-up analysis



- Among colleagues who feel appropriately compensated, 39.5% of them has served in the University more than 15 years and 28.5% served in the University fewer than 3 years
- But within this group, service period has nothing to do with good will: the Mean responses from colleagues serving in the University fewer than 3 years are significantly more favorable than colleagues serving here for more than 15 years, for all items excluding work overtime. [for data details on this bullet point, please refer to separate tables (slides 103-115) provided in the “PUSA 2015 Survey Data Bank” PDF file]

Depicting the open-end views



- Of those 147 open-ended comments
 - 65 pieces come from non-academics
 - 82 pieces come from academics
(46 from teaching track and 36 from research track)
 - Shortest case: four key words (“promotion chance, fairness, better pay”); longest case: two pages

Depicting the open-end views (cont'd)



- Most eye-catching:
 - *84 of them (from both fronts) have casted doubts in one way or the other on the usefulness of the Annual Performance Appraisal in doing what it aims to do (favoritism, unequal treatment to different tracks of staff members, waste of time and resources, unclear positions of staff in RAP grade)*
 - *37 out of 46 comments from TT staff members are doubtful to the importance of the Senior Management given to teaching (salary scale, promotion, window-showing, second class citizen)*

Depicting the open-end views (cont'd)



- *There were three separate cases (from different departments / units involving both academics and non-academics) mentioning the same piece of article ["How America's Great University System is being Destroyed" by Noam Chomsky] and two other cases (two academics from different departments) mentioning a book ["The Fall of the Faculty: the rise of the all-administrative university and why it matters" by Benjamin Ginsberg] when they were referring to the daily running of the University*

Depicting the open-end views (cont'd)



- *There were around 20 cases, some from academic but more from non-academic units, talking about the bad management style of the department / unit heads, summarized as follows:*
 - Non transparent
 - Favoritism
 - Avoiding responsibilities
 - High-handed
 - In-decisive
 - Moody
 - Demanding (after office hours disturbance)

Depicting the open-end views (cont'd)



- *More than ten cases (all serving for > 10 years) have used comments (re-grouped below) to show how they may have chosen loving the University but not the Senior Management:*
 - loving one's department, but not the senior management style
 - Loving the University, but not the Seniors
 - Senior Management interferes too much

- *Three cases (all serving for < 3 years) have praised the Senior Management as*
 - understanding
 - supportive

Depicting the open-end views (cont'd)



- *Staff members from three different non-academic units have similar views that to have work-life balance have nothing to do with the organizing of work-life balance activities.*
- *On the other hand, there are a handful of views mentioning that if the Management really wants staff to get relaxed, work-life balance activities should not be organized during lunch time, which should be the private moments of staff members*

Depicting the open-end views (cont'd)



The following views are more frequently mentioned by non-academic staff (from academic department and non-academic units):

- *Some supervisors maintain unfriendly attitudes during the leave application process*
- *Grievances on the Language Proficiency Tests are strong*
- *Asking for flexible work hours*
- *Asking for flexible lunch hours*
- *Promotion prospect for non-academics in academic departments is gloomy because of capping from the Central Administration*
- *Very insufficient catering facilities within campus*

Depicting the open-end views (cont'd)



The following views are more frequently mentioned by academic staff members (from both tracks):

- *Closing of sports facilities during public holidays is a self-conflicting act on promoting work-life balance*
- *Insufficient catering facilities within campus*
- *Workload formula is not working well*
- *Teaching load too heavy*
- *Contract/temporary research staff members should not be renewing for years without a chance to get regular terms*
- *Lack of monitoring on lengthy teaching hours arrangements*
- *In-sufficient support to research endeavors*

Main Reflections



- Statistical difference between research track and teaching track staff is significant – **implication?**
- Statistical difference of staff members serving here < 3 years and those serving for 3 – 5 years as well as those > 15 years are also significant – **meaning?**
- Less than 20% of staff members see Senior Management being transparent, and less than 25% have confidence in work of Senior Management – **deserving attention?**

PUSA is going to make use of the upcoming communication opportunity with senior management (PUSA Consultative Group Meeting) to launch formal follow up on this survey result. Meanwhile, PUSA will continue to gather views from staff members once the survey result is uploaded to PUSA website.

Acknowledgement



- We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to:
 - *Statistical Advisory Unit of AMA, HKPolyU*
 - *Colleagues who have taken the time and courage to participate in this survey.*

END