

## CONTENTS

### Neighbourliness and Mutual Interest in Academia: The Kuala Lumpur - CLMV Dialogue

Aniswal Abd. Ghani and Munir Shuib

p. 3

### Leadership in Higher Education: Private Higher Education

Elizabeth Lee

pp. 4-6

### Rethinking Leadership Behaviour in Higher Education

Muhamad Jantan

pp. 7-9

### Student Engagement as a Predictor of Effective Higher Educational Practices

Norzaini Azman

pp. 10-12

### Universiti Sains Malaysia Undergraduates' Thinking Styles: A Case Study

Wan Chang Da, Munir Shuib and Azlena Zainal

pp. 13-15

### News and Events

pp. 16-20

### Announcements

pp. 21-23

# Bulletin of HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH

## Establishing APEX University: "Business as Unusual"

**An Interview with Professor Emeritus  
Dato' Dr. Mohamad Zawawi Ismail, APEX University  
Selection Committee Chairman**

By Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan Abdullah and Munir Shuib



Prof. Emeritus Dato' Dr. Mohamad Zawawi Ismail

For Higher Education in Malaysia September 2008 would be best remembered for the announcement of the first APEX University. So much anticipation, so much drama and so much suspense as everybody eagerly waited for the announcement by the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE). But when Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) was chosen as the university, many wondered how and why, the oldest and premier university in the country, Universiti Malaya, was not selected. Many articles were written and many discourses were undertaken on the above issues. IPPTN spoke to Professor Emeritus Dato' Dr. Mohamad Zawawi Ismail, who led the APEX University selection committee appointed by MoHE, to get his views on APEX University, the selection process involved and why USM was selected and the challenges that await USM.

APEX University initially seemed vague, with different quarters having different perceptions and perspectives of what an APEX University should be and function as. Initially, the APEX University 'was'

understood as a crowning glory for one university and that the chosen university will take the lead in the future development of higher education. But as Zawawi explains, "During our first committee meeting, we deliberated on the purposes and objectives of APEX initiative. It was important to us that the proposed APEX initiative will have a long term positive impact on our higher education. Would APEX create different classes of universities, for example? It would be different if the committee is merely to select only one university for the APEX title. We could simply decide on some criteria and put the issue to vote. We thought that APEX must represent a long-term strategy and not just a contest. And therefore APEX should be more of a programme of initiatives".

APEX now stands for Accelerated Programme for Excellence. As Zawawi recalled, "In changing the idea of APEX from a title to that of a programme, I spent one weekend thinking of how to resolve the issue. I could not use another term as the word "apex" was already declared. I look at acronyms. Well, for the letters P and EX it was obviously easy to derive. 'A' took more than a while".

The APEX programme is about supporting our higher education to reach new levels of excellence. It began by the exercise of selecting one or more of our public or private universities to be given support for accelerated development. The chosen university(-ies) will pave the way for others to follow.

When asked if the selection committee ever thought of coming up with a new university rather than selecting an existing university, Zawawi elucidates that the committee proposed three tracks of initiatives. The first track is *Institutional Development* that emphasises on the transformation of universities to achieve accelerated development. The second track is to support *Centres of Excellence* for accelerated growth and become world class. This is to ensure that other universities not selected for the first track to excel in selected fields. The final track is *Green Field Development*, which is basically an alternative route to developing a world class university from scratch as has been done by a number of countries.

**"When asked about what the committee saw in USM's Transformation Plan, his candid reply was "there was a sense of excitement!" and that "USM was well prepared"."**

Nevertheless, the committee at that time was also very concerned with the issues of change and readiness of an institution to embrace the task of becoming world class. Hence, the state of readiness as one important criterion for selection. Obviously, the decision to select a university for the programme was admittedly not an easy one. But by focusing on the issues of change and the state of readiness - one important criterion for selection, their task of selecting a university was purposeful and meaningful. In the process two private institutions – Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP) and Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) and four public universities – Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Universiti Malaya (UM) – were short-listed. "We were hoping to select more than one university for the first track".

The second criterion was the Transformation Plan itself which each university was invited to submit. The Transformation Plan provides ideas as to how they will bring about change. "We asked universities to also write a theme for their transformation plan which could provide a clue to their thinking and approach". Some themes summarise well their transformation plans while some bears no relevance. Finally, we wanted to see how really prepared they are to execute the plans. Hence our visits to the campus and our interviews with the various members of the campus community".

When asked about what the committee saw in USM's Transformation Plan, his candid reply was "there was a sense of excitement!" and that "USM was well prepared". He explains that the committee "saw a synergy of thoughts, ideas and themes, sustained ability and imagination". This synergy is the single most aspect or strength that Zawawi personally liked about USM. "It is the coherency in terms of ideas that we could easily relate to and the kind of leadership USM has right now. This was the feeling of each and everyone in the committee, admits Zawawi.

However, the committee singles out one aspect that USM can (and should) greatly improve on – leadership at the second level of administration. He observes, "We could see very clearly the gap between the first and second level. As academicians we could be good in our areas but not necessarily good in leadership", clearly implying that there are problems in getting across messages from top leadership to the second level in executing a plan.

So what are the chances of USM realising the Malaysian dream of having a real world class university, one that is acknowledged by peers and international academic communities? Zawawi replies, "We have the confidence that USM can do it, but there is always a fear. Ours (the Malaysian setting) is not an ideal environment to exert change. So long as universities are part of some misguided political agenda then it is not going to be easy to have the kind of change we are looking for. Change can happen only if we have the right notion about academic freedom and about institutional autonomy".

So, where does the selection committee go from here? Zawawi hopes that the committee can still contribute and address the implementation issues and also the other proposed tracks. He also hopes that the APEX programme will remain and that universities will be part of the institutional transformation initiative in the near future. And on how USM can succeed as an APEX university, he elaborates:

"We, the committee, do not want to get involved in the micro planning and management meetings but it will be useful if there is an open dialogue especially at this time where USM needs other inputs in order to make sure that its plan is doable. There are many issues to contend with e.g finance and legal. USM should also visit other universities to see what others have done. We would expect the process of institutional change to be very bold – new norms and new forms. The university should review their people to make sure the right people are in the right job."

There is no doubt that USM still has a long way to go to prove itself worthy of the APEX status especially in the eyes of its competitors. Failure is definitely not an option. The university requires gargantuan efforts, undivided commitment, monumental sacrifice and the ability to think out of the box by its staff at all levels to realise the dream. As Zawawi puts it "we don't want to hear, 'We can't do it because we are bound by the Universities and Colleges Act.' USM and the relevant agencies should find effective ways and measures of overcoming that.

# **Neighbourliness and Mutual Interests in Academia: The Kuala Lumpur - CLMV Dialogue**

## **An Interview with the Director-General of the Department of Higher Education, MoHE, Y. Bhg. Professor Dato' Dr. Ir. Radin Umar Radin Sohadi**

By Aniswal Abd. Ghani and Munir Shuib

**M**alaysia has seen rapid growth in the demand for higher education. We have, over the last two decades consolidated our efforts in promoting this growth systematically and efficiently. We have a strategic plan for higher education.

According to the Director-General of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Y. Bhg. Professor Dato' Dr. Radin Umar Radin Sohadi, "we believe we have strengths and at the same time we have weaknesses". Therefore he adds, "we should share" and "we should learn". IPPTN had the pleasure of talking to him at the *Strategic Dialogue on Higher Education and Developing Human Capital between Malaysia and CLMV Countries*, also known as *The Kuala Lumpur - CLMV Dialogue* held on 1 and 2 December 2008.

CLMV stands for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam. The Kuala Lumpur - CLMV Countries came about from the World Bank *Symposium on Government and Non Government Participation in Education* held in July 2004 in Kuala Lumpur. It was with the awareness of development and challenges in higher education and the need to ensure that future workforce meets the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that this relationship became formalised through planned dialogues.

**"With shared Asian cultural values and being climatically similar, Malaysia offers ideal destination for knowledge growth and development to students and academics alike."**

"We have gone through the mill", said Radin referring Malaysia's experiences in meeting its higher education needs and demands. He adds that many countries are interested in our MQA (Malaysian Quality Assurance) and Akta IPTS. Some of these countries are in the position to want to learn how to go about setting up private institutions and ensuring the quality of the products of these institutions. In the spirit of ASEAN and neighbourliness, the



Prof. Dato' Dr. Ir. Radin Umar Radin Sohadi

Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) strongly advocates the bestpractices we have should be shared and further developed.

We are already collaborating with these countries at the diplomatic level. In this respect, Radin wants IPPTN to play a bigger role through networking and sharing and research activities. He sees IPPTN contributing as a Centre to disseminate policies. He also notes that in the 70s and 80s many Malaysians studied abroad, e.g. in Britain and New Zealand. Educationally Malaysians are familiar with the systems in those countries and academic collaborations are natural outcomes. "Research grants in this country [are] plenty, our private education is booming [and] we can take the numbers", he adds. CLMV Countries can utilise Malaysian Scholarship grants available to foreign students. Currently we have 60,000 foreign students. He states that we have rooms for 80,000 and would "welcome quality students especially government sponsored students". With shared Asian cultural values and being climatically similar, Malaysia offers ideal destination for knowledge growth and development to students and academics alike.

Malaysia also has things to learn from our neighbours. As an example, Radin speaks in awe of the Vietnamese prowess at the Olympiac on Mathematics. In this respect, he sees more specific collaborations with each country with bilateral agreements between the universities of CLMV Countries. Internationalisation is a feature of Malaysia's higher education strategic plan.

Radin believes that co-operation and collaboration is the way forward for all of us in the region if we are to keep up with the rest of the world and the challenges ahead. We should create key performance indicators (KPIs) as our road map ahead and simultaneously as an "objective way of measuring" our efforts. "No more rhetoric, let's get on with it", he concludes.

# Leadership in Higher Education: Private Higher Education

Elizabeth Lee  
Executive Director, Sunway University College

## Introduction

In recent years, dramatic changes in higher education (HE) have occurred on a global scale and leaders in education are faced with new challenges and opportunities. Higher education can no longer be viewed solely as a national endeavour as overseas universities actively position themselves as alternate providers of HE. Local HE institutions (HEIs) are also looking outward, actively attracting international students to enrol in local institutions, or going global by setting up overseas branches. Recognising these changes, the Ministry of Higher Education has drawn up the National Higher Education Strategic Plan in 2007 to reform HE in the country. Within this Plan, leadership features prominently and in fact forms one of the five pillars for transforming HE in Malaysia.

## What is Leadership

In the literature, there are many definitions of leadership. In this paper, the following definitions are proposed:

*"Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow"* (Kouzes and Posner, 2002).

*"Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal"* (Northouse, 2004).

*"Leadership is the ability of developing and communicating a vision to a group of people that will make that vision true"* (Valenzuela, 2008).

The definitions suggest that leadership is largely about relationship and action, the ability of leaders to inspire and influence the whole team to transform a vision into reality and to move the institution to a higher level. The modern concept of leadership goes beyond the authority and charisma of a single leader, but rather emphasises collaborative endeavour between the leadership and its employees for collective advancement rather than through authoritative command. Whatever the view, there are certain central concepts of leadership which are considered important for private institutions.

## What Constitutes a Good Leadership in Private Higher Education Institutions

### a) Vision and commitment

The leadership of a private HEI is guided by its vision which provides the goal and direction for the institution to progress. The vision should be easily understood and clearly explained to all staff so that they can accept it as a common vision and are committed to their roles in achieving it. Strong

commitment by the leadership is essential to inspire others to change and to contribute towards its fulfilment and progress of the institution.

### b) Leadership qualities and values

Leaders of private HEIs should possess certain positive qualities and values which enable them to motivate and influence their staff towards achieving a common goal. They should be honourable and conduct themselves in an ethical, impartial and fair manner in their dealings with their staff and clients. When required, they should demonstrate a sense of humour, be a good listener, broad-minded, and at times compassionate. By setting themselves as examples, these values will filter down to the staff and be gradually embraced into an institutional culture.

Private education is highly competitive and dynamic, and leaders should be well-informed on local and international developments in the industry and be constantly alert to change. Leaders should have agile minds to rapidly recognise potential threats and opportunities, and to take appropriate proactive steps to exploit them.

**"Leaders of private HEIs should possess certain positive qualities and values which enable them to motivate and influence their staff towards achieving a common goal."**

### c) Teamwork

Leaders cannot work in isolation and collaboration between leaders, staff and students is vital for the smooth running of the institution. Many leaders have embraced team leadership by providing substantial independence and responsibility in decision making to the Departments and Schools including course management, staff recruitment and student matters. Leaders should also make conscientious efforts to recognise individual staff by name as it cultivates a sense of

belonging, recognition and pride. The strength and weaknesses of each staff should be established, and opportunities provided for them to improve on their weaknesses or further develop their strength. Knowing individual staff allows the leadership to optimise job placement and promotion.

*d) Rapport through communication*

Communication is a powerful instrument for the leadership to cultivate strong rapport and commitment among its staff. Leaders must ensure that employees are well-informed about the institution, its current goals and overall strategy to achieve these goals. Staff should be clear on what is expected of them, the performance of the institution and their contributions towards achieving them. Such information will enable the staff to identify more closely with the institution, which then becomes 'our' institution.

*e) Recognition and rewards for contribution*

Due recognition is given to staff who have contributed to the institution. Private institutions reward their staff for their accomplishments, show appreciation for their work and motivate them to establish a higher level of achievement. Outstanding and dynamic staff are continually groomed into future leaders which is crucial for succession planning of the institution.

### **Challenges and Issues Confronting the Leadership of Private Higher Education Institutions**

Higher education is rapidly changing and leaders in private HEIs are faced with changing sets of challenges as they struggle with increasing competition, escalating cost and demand for improved quality. Globalisation has also generated significant threat to local private institutions as many overseas universities have set up branch campuses within the country. Under such conditions, the leadership in private institutions has to exhibit considerable innovation and dynamism to confront the wide range of challenges facing them. These include:

*a) Ensuring quality amidst escalating cost*

For private institutions, the quality of education offered is one of the most important factors for their success and survival. However, quality education is expensive as franchising cost, staff salary, and the price of equipments and supporting resources have escalated tremendously. Further, they have to support a reasonable research programme which necessitates additional resources. To pay for their expenditures, private institutions have to rely mainly on their enrolment, but the fees charged must remain highly competitive owing to stiff competition in the sector. Under such pressures, the leadership of private institutions must be exceedingly innovative and resourceful to improve quality with rising costs.

**"Leaders must ensure that employees are well-informed about the institution, its current goals and overall strategy to achieve these goals. Staff should be clear on what is expected of them, the performance of the institution and their contributions towards achieving them."**

*b) Expanding student enrolment in the face of mounting competition*

Student enrolment is the key to the success of private institutions. Presently, higher education is extremely competitive as public and private HEIs compete for the same pool of students, whether local or foreign. Additionally, many overseas universities with substantially higher financial resources are advertising aggressively to draw local and foreign students to their local branches or overseas campuses. With such stiff competition, the leadership of private HEIs has to continually motivate and mobilise its staff to increase enrolment.

*c) Sustaining a team of highly qualified academic staff*

The university is as good as its academia, but good lecturers are not easily available. They come at a high price, and are highly mobile. Recruiting and retaining good lecturers is a persistent problem in private institutions as they are often attracted to the industries and public universities by higher remunerations. Hence, leaders of private institutions not only have to continually induce efficient lecturers to stay, but also introduce innovative ideas to recruit good academic staff.

*d) Maintaining cost-effectiveness*

Private institutions offer a wide range of niche programmes which they are comfortable with to generate a surplus. Until recently, many of these are franchised programmes which are costly and can include extra conditions such as staffing requirements. To be sustainable, private institutions should establish their own programmes although initial acceptance can be challenging as clients need to be convinced of their quality. Even so, many private institutions have started such

programmes which have been recognised by their clients as equivalent to quality education.

A further challenge for private institutions is that knowledge is rapidly expanding which necessitates continual upgrading of existing courses and the introduction of new and popular programmes. Such changes are costly, require recruitment of specialised lecturers and investment in new resources and time, especially when it necessitates approval and accreditation by the ministry.

#### e) Harnessing globalisation and internationalisation

Private HEIs have to meet new challenges brought about by increasing globalisation and internationalisation of modern higher education. Increasingly, the leadership of private HEIs has to engage with competition from branch campuses of overseas universities. To stay relevant, they have to weigh new initiatives to compete or co-operate with these global universities, or embark on globalisation themselves by setting up their own overseas branches.

Internationalisation has also become important for private universities as their customer base declined with increasing number of local students furthering their education overseas. They are forced to expand their enrolment by attracting international students globally and injecting a more international dimension into their curricula. These create new challenges including course adjustments, entry qualification, visa application, hostel facilities and cultural adaptation.

**“Although the forms of leadership are variable, they have nevertheless enabled private HEIs to survive and thrive in an ever-changing environment and set the way for future expansion.”**

hindering the smooth running and development of private institutions. Many of these have been overcome, but the issue remains as a challenge for leaders of private institutions.

#### Summary

Through the years, private HEIs have evolved their own form of leadership, each suited to the particular institution and its specific challenges. Although the forms of leadership are variable, they have nevertheless enabled private HEIs to survive and thrive in an ever-changing environment and set the way for future expansion. In fact, the leaderships of private HEIs in Malaysia have demonstrated considerable resilience and success on a global basis. The large number of overseas students from a wide range of countries enrolled in private institutions is a testimony of this. However, the leaders of private HEIs are well aware of the dynamism within the industry and are always ready to change to ensure private HEIs in Malaysia can thrive and remain sustainable in the future.

#### References

- Kouzes, J. and Posner, B. (2002). *The leadership challenge (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)*. San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Ministry of Higher Education. (2007). *National Higher education strategic plan: Laying the foundation beyond 2020*. Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia.
- Northouse, P. (2004). *Leadership theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications.

Valenzuela, K. (2008). *A leadership defined*. Retrieved April 16, 2008 from <http://www.bealeader.net/be-a-leader2.php>

#### f) Coping with bureaucracy

Government input and control is inevitable in any country, especially if it concerns education. In the majority of cases this is essential as it ensures quality within the industry. However, in some instances, bureaucracy has crept in,

# Rethinking Leadership Behaviour in Higher Education in Malaysia

Muhamad Jantan  
Corporate and Sustainable Development Division, Universiti Sains Malaysia

## Introduction

The last two decades have seen the world of higher education undergoing tremendously difficult times. Academic capitalism, managerialism and economic rationalism (Mok, 2007), driven by the growth of neo-liberalism and the dominance of knowledge-based economy are challenging the fundamental ethos of the academe. In such uncertain times, leadership is critical to chart the development of higher education institutions (HEIs). In some countries, the decline in institutional resources (Johnstone, 1999), changing student demographics (Hutardo and Dey, 1997), shift towards student-centered learning (Barr and Tagg, 1995), impact of technology on faculty role (Baldwin, 1998), and more recently the shift from industrial age to a knowledge age (Dolence and Norris, 1995) have made leadership a key success factor in transforming HEIs. These issues are compounded by the growing trend of cross-border and transnational higher education (Knight, 2006; Huang, 2007; Morshidi, 2006). This paper aims at addressing the need to re-look at leadership issues in higher education institution taking into consideration the cultural contexts of Malaysia and higher education. It argues that leadership theories borrowed from a non-higher education context and non-Malaysian context cannot be directly applied to the context of Malaysian HEIs.

Leadership theories have developed largely in the field of business and management; with leadership research in higher education lagging far behind. Leadership studies in the context of education are largely undertaken in Western cultures. Studies in the Malaysian tertiary education sector requires urgent attention, particularly to address the validity and applicability of leadership findings from two different cultures – that of the western culture and that of the business one. The business culture is sufficiently different from that of higher education environment, and the western culture is different to the Malaysian culture, and this juxtaposition of differences in the cultures will have implications on the leadership of HEIs in Malaysia.

## Leadership Theories and Leader Bases of Power

Leaders have been described in terms of character, mannerism, influence and persuasion, relationship patterns, role relationships and as administrative figures. Fundamental to all these definitions is the notion that leadership is an influence process that affects the action of followers (Ansari, 1990; Yukl, 2006). Eddy and VanDerLinden (2006) argue that traditional theories of leadership focusing on leaders' traits and personality need a rethinking to focus more on the actual practice of leadership in HEIs to fully understand what the process of leadership essentially entails.

Leadership theories can be classified as trait theories, power and influence theories, behavioural theories, contingency theories, cultural and symbolic theories, and cognitive theories. Central to the process of leadership is the exercise of power to influence subordinates, and for this, leaders draw upon various bases of power in their relationships with their subordinates.

*Power* is defined as the potential or the capacity of an agent to alter a target's behaviour, attitudes, intentions, beliefs, emotion and/or values (French and Raven, 1959). The effectiveness of a leader to influence subordinates is very much dependent on the power base, which Ansari (1990) defines as the source of influence in a social relationship. The bases of power include (1) reward power (ability to supply desired rewards), (2) coercive power (ability to withhold desired rewards or make life unpleasant), (3) legitimate power (formal authority derived from position in the organisational hierarchy), (4) referent power (worthy of emulation) (5) expert power (derived from the possession of needed expertise) (6) information power (derived from the possession of required information), and (7) connection power (derived from his/her associates) (Ansari, 1990; Bhal and Ansari, 2000; Hersey et al. 1979; Howell and Costley, 2000).

How a leader exercises these bases of power to influence subordinates in achieving organisational goal, is dependent on contexts; and for HEIs the relevant contexts are the contexts of national culture and academic culture.

## The Malaysian Culture

The importance of national culture in organisational effectiveness is rooted in three important reasons: (1) political, as nations are by nature political unit, with theirs own history, legal, educational, governing systems, labour and employer associations, (2) sociological, as nationality provides identity and symbolic value, and (3) psychological, as our thinking are shaped by national cultures (Hofstede, 1983). Further, Hofstede's work in 1983 debunked the commonly-held belief of the 1950s and the 60s that the practice of leadership is universal, existing regardless of national environments.

National culture can be captured through four dimensions, namely (1) power distance, (2) individualism, (3) masculinity, and (4) uncertainty avoidance. Power distance relates to the fundamental issue of how society deals with the fact that people are unequal physically as well as in their mental capacity; and that these differences can grow into inequalities of power and wealth. In organisational settings, great power distance is manifested in hierarchical structures with centralisation of authority and autocratic styles of leadership.

The dimension of individualism-collectivism involves the relationship between an individual and his/her fellow citizens. In highly individualistic societies, typified by the American society, individuals are supposed to be looking after their own interest. Individualistic societies favour autonomy whilst collectivist societies prefer conformity and uniformity.

The masculinity (femininity) dimension relates to the fundamental issue of the social, rather than biological roles of the different sexes in society. In masculine societies the traditional social role of men permeates society and values of *showing off, the need for achievement, making money and "big is beautiful"* are important, whilst in feminine societies, values of *relationship over making money, quality of life, helping others, "small is beautiful" and anti-hero* are dominant.

The dimension of uncertainty avoidance relates to how society deals with the fact that time is unidirectional and that we are caught up with the reality of the past, present and the future; and that the future is and will always be unknown and uncertain. Societies with low or weak uncertainty avoidance tolerate and socialise the idea of uncertainty and tend to treat each day as it comes and take risks easily, and thus will not strive hard (Hofstede, 1983). On the other hand, societies with high uncertainty avoidance have difficulty with the unknown and deals with it by either (1) using technology to protect against risks of nature and war, (2) enact laws and formal rules to protect against the unpredictability of human behaviour, and/or (3) adhering to religion where events are interpreted through religious absolutes.

Table 1 indicates the differences in selected national cultures across the globe.

Like many other Far East nations, Malaysia is relatively low on individualism score indicating that it is a collectivist society, with high power distance. It is moderate on the Masculinity-Femininity scale, indicating that though we want to excel, relationship consideration is still important. Lastly, in terms of uncertainty avoidance, we are rated low at a level about equal that of the United States. More studies should be undertaken primarily to re-visit Hofstede's findings in the context of Malaysia.

### **The Academic Culture**

The academe has a long history of an independent thinking culture that may be divergent to that of the business culture. Differences manifest themselves in terms of cultural tensions related to the issue of language, freedom versus structure, fragmented versus unitary culture, and changing core values (Turnbull and Edwards, 2005). The language of market and business focuses on profit and bottom-line whilst that of the academe revolves around knowledge and pursuit for the truth. Of late, the growth of academic capitalism has seen the growing dominance of the language of business.

**TABLE 1: Cultural dimension score of Malaysia againsts other countries/regions**

Countries	PDI	IDV	MAS	UAI
<b>World Average</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>64</b>
United States	40	91	62	46
Canada	39	80	50	42
<b>Latin America</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Europe</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>63</b>
Malaysia	95	30	45	40
Thailand	64	20	34	64
Indonesia	78	14	40	48
Singapore	70	15	43	4
Hong Kong	68	25	51	29
India	77	44	56	40
<b>Arab Countries</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>68</b>

PDI=Power Distance Index; higher values indicate greater inequality in power

IDV=Individualism; higher scores indicative of individual needs dominate collective needs

MAS=Masculinity; higher scores reflect more tasks supersede consideration

UAI=Uncertainty Avoidance Index; higher scores indicative of less risk tolerance

Source: Hofstede, 2001. Retrieved 23 February 2008 from <http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>

The tension between freedom and structure revolves around the issue of autonomy, the fundamental aspect of academic and managerial identity of a university (Birnbaum, 1992; Brown and Moshavi, 2002). Academics see themselves as self-employed people, working independently or in groups; whereas the administrative role of leadership demands a certain degree of structure.

HEIs typically have two subcultures; the academic and administrative support subcultures. This fragmented culture creates tensions that are crucial in leading change in HEIs (Turnbull and Edwards, 2005). The tensions emanating from this dual control system result in leaders creating empires, with their own agenda. The leadership challenge then becomes the identification of these subcultures and unifying them to a common purpose.

Alternatively, the challenges to leadership in HEIs can be viewed from a knowledge-based view (KBV), that sees an organisation as collections of knowledge and therefore leading and managing HEIs revolves around the management of knowledge resources (Kogut and Zander, 1992; Grant, 1996). The effectiveness of leaders in HEIs is seen from their ability to nurture and create environments that meet the learning needs of others, including cultural awareness, acceptance of multiple intelligences and ways of knowing, strategic thinking, engagement and a sense of collective collaborators in developing knowledge and active research (Amey, 2006). With this perspective, managing and leading HEIs focuses on knowledge management.

In sum, the leadership of HEIs as seen from the knowledge-based view revolves around the managing and leading of the knowledge management processes to achieve organisational goals in an academic (knowledge) culture that focuses on seeking the truth and complete autonomy in pursuing this agenda.

## Conclusion

In HEIs, leaders' use of bases of power determines their effectiveness in effecting desired subordinates' behaviour, attitudes and actions. However, the cultural contexts, particularly the national culture and that of the academe, are important situational factors.

A society that is hierarchical with patronage norms typically works on legitimate or position power to effect change. This, however, is antithesis to the academic norms of autonomy and freedom to pursue ones' interest in the generation, dissemination and use of knowledge. The imposition of accountability and academic capitalism further challenges this fundamental value of the academe. The juxtaposition of these two cultures further complicates the effectiveness of leadership behaviour in HEIs in the Malaysian setting. These two cultures have contradictory effects on the effectiveness of each of these bases of power. Which culture dominates will determine the overall effectiveness.

We are a long way towards fully understanding leadership issues in higher education in Malaysia. The complex and dynamic environment that HEIs are currently operating in makes leadership research very challenging. It is therefore imperative that research on leadership issues be continuously undertaken to provide support to current and future leaders in their engagement of the academe.

## References

- Amey, M. J. (2006). Leadership in higher education. *Change*, 38(6).
- Ansari, M. A. (1990). *Managing people at work: Leadership styles and influence strategies*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Baldwin, R. G. (1998). Technology's impact on faculty life and work. In Gillespie (Ed.) *The impact of technology on faculty development, life and work*, pp. 7-21. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Barr, R. B. and Tagg, J. (1995). From teaching to learning: A new paradigm for undergraduate education. *Change*, 27(5) 12-25.
- Bhal, K. T. and Ansari, M. A. (2000). *Managing dyadic interactions in organizational leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Birnbaum, R. (1992). *How academic leadership works: Understanding success and failure in the college presidency*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brown, F. W. and Moshavi, D. (2002). Herding academic cats: Faculty reactions to transformational and contingent reward leadership by department chairs. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 8(3), 79-94.
- Dolence, M. G. and Norris, D. M. (1995). *Transforming higher education: A vision for learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Ann-Harbour M1: Society for College and University Planning.
- Eddy, P. L. and VanDerLinden, K. E. (2006). Emerging definitions of leadership in higher education: New visions of leadership of same old "hero" leader? *Community College Review*, 34(1) 5-25.
- French, J. R. P. and Raven, B. (1959). The bases of social power. In D. Cartwright (Ed.) *Studies in social power*, pp.118-49. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research.
- Grant, R. M. (1996). Toward a knowledge-based theory of the firm. *Strategic Management Journal*, 17, 109-22.
- Hersey, P., Blanchard, K. H. and Natemeyer, W. E. (1979). Situational leadership, perception, and the impact of power. *Group and Organization Studies*, 4, 418-428.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Geert Hofstede cultural dimensions*. Retrieved 23 February 2008 from [http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_malaysia.shtml](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_malaysia.shtml)
- Hofstede, G. (1983). The cultural relativity of organizational practices and theories. *Journal of International Business Studies* (pre-1986), 14, 75-89.
- Howell, J. P. and Costley, D. L. (2000). *Understanding behaviors for effective leadership*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Huang, F. (2007). Internationalisation of higher education in developing and emerging countries: A focus on transnational higher education in Asia. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3) 421-432.
- Hutardo, S. and Dey, E. L. (1997). Achieving the goals of multiculturalism and diversity. In M. Peterson, D. D. Dill and L. Mets (Eds.) *Planning and management in changing times*, pp. 405-431. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Johnstone, D. B. (1999). The challenge of planning in public. *Planning for Higher Education*, 28(2) 57-64.
- Knight, J. (2006). Internationalisation: Concepts, complexities and challenge. In J. Forest and P. Altbach (Eds.) *International handbook of higher education*. Springer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, Netherland.
- Kogut, B. and Zander, U. (1992). Knowledge of the firm, combinative capabilities and the replication of technology. *Organization Science*, 3(3), 383-97.
- Mok, K. H. (2007). *Internationalizing and international-benchmarking of universities in East Asia: Producing world class university or reproducing neo-colonialism in education?* Paper presented at Realizing the Global University, Critical Perspectives Workshop, organised by Worldwide Universities Network and Borderless Higher Education, Thistle Marble Arch Hotel, London, United Kingdom, 14 November 2007.
- Morshidi, S. (2006). Transnational higher education in Malaysia: Balancing benefits and concerns through regulations. In F. Huang (Ed.) *Transnational higher education in Asia and the Pacific region*. RIHE International Publication Series No. 10, Research Institute for Higher Education, Hiroshima University, Hiroshima.
- Turnbull, S. and Edwards, G. (2006). Leadership development for organizational change in a new U.K. University. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 7(3) 396-413.
- Yukl, G. (2006). *Leadership in organizations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

# Student Engagement as a Predictor of Effective Higher Educational Practices

Norzaini Azman

Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

The quest for excellence in teaching and learning in higher education is a world-wide concern. Universities and colleges have responded to the challenge for higher quality in instruction by looking closely at the nature of the teaching and learning environment. It is concurred that the quality of undergraduate education largely depends on the quality of teaching provided by faculty (Kuh, 2003; Kuh and Pascarella, 2004; Pascarella, 2001). A well designed, effective, student-centred learning environment that encourages active learning and enriching experiences will typically use a rich variety of relevant and effective instructional methods. Student-centred learning environments that contribute to active learning and enriching experiences include collaborative activities, goal-driven tasks, intellectual discovery, activities that heighten thinking, activities that provide practice in learning skills, tasks of a student's own invention and appropriate use of new technology and traditional resources. The lecturers need to be willing to experiment with alternative methods and to assess their effectiveness in promoting active and enriching learning experience for their students. The aim is to use engaging teaching and learning activities that promote higher level student outcomes.

Assessment of student learning and personal development gains are necessary evidence of the quality of undergraduate education. Research in college and university student development have shown that time and energy students devote to educationally purposeful activities are the best predictors of their learning and personal development (Astin, 1993; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991; Pascarella, 2001). Thus, those institutions that engage their students more fully in the variety of activities that contribute to valued outcomes of college can claim to be of higher quality in comparison with similar types of colleges and universities.

Student engagement is defined as "the student's psychological investment in and the effort directed toward learning, understanding, or mastering knowledge, skills, or crafts that academic work is intended to promote" (Newman, 1992: 17). More than just the energy to complete the task, engagement represents the psychological investment that cognitively involves students in the work they are doing.

Engagement requires both an inner quality of concentration and commitment to learning and a willingness or intention to act on the commitment. Student engagement can be viewed as a continuum for more engaged to less engaged, just as student disengagement can be plotted on a continuum. The extent of student engagement must be estimated or inferred from indicators such as the amount of participation in academic work, the intensity of their concentration, the interest and enthusiasm expressed and the care and quality shown in completing the work.

Student engagement is generally considered to be among the better predictors of learning and personal development (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 2003; Pace, 1990; Pike, 2004). It is believed that the more students study or practice a subject, the more they tend to learn about it. Likewise, the more students practise and get feedback on their writing, analyse or solve problems, the more adept they should become (Kuh, 2001; Tinto, 1993). The act of being engaged also adds to the foundation of skills and disposition that is essential to live a productive and satisfying life after graduation. That is, students who are involved in educationally productive activities in universities are developing habits of mind that enlarge their capacity for continuous learning and personal development (Shulman, 2002).

The implication for estimating collegiate quality is clear. Those institutions that engage their students in the variety of activities that contribute to valued outcomes of college can claim to be of higher quality. In other words, the most educationally effective colleges and universities are those that are able to channel students' energies toward appropriate activities and engage them at a high level in such activities.

This new perspective on the meaning of collegiate quality demanded that researchers use student engagement measures as indicators for good educational practices. Emphasising good educational practice helps focus faculty and students on the task and activities that are associated with higher level student outcomes. Towards these ends, faculty and lecturers will need to arrange the curriculum and other aspects of the college and university experience in accordance with good practices, thereby initiating and encouraging students to put more effort in their learning. This will result in greater gains in such areas as critical thinking, problem solving, effective communication, self-directed learning and responsible citizenship.

## Seven Principles of Good Practice

Certain institutional practices are known to lead to high levels of student engagement (Astin, 1993; Chikering and Reisser, 1993; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991). The best known set of engagement indicators is the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* (Chikering and Gamson, 1987; 1991). These principles were empirically linked to measures of 'collegiate quality'. The principles are grounded in theories developed by proponents of experiential learning (Dewey, 1958), cognitive learning (Bruner, 1960) and adult learning (Houle, 1964). These seven principles were: 1) frequent student-faculty contacts, 2) co-operation among students in their learning efforts, 3) faculty use of active learning strategies, 4) prompt feedback to students on their performance, 5) communications of high expectations to students, 6) time spent by students on task,

and 7) respect for the diverse talents and students' ways of learning.

The first of these principles pertains to the *encouragement of student-faculty contact*. Student motivation and involvement are fostered by frequent student-faculty interaction in and out of the classroom (Chickering and Gamson, 1991). Faculty concern helps students get through difficulties so that they can keep on working. Interaction with faculty members enhances students' intellectual commitment and encourages them to think about their own values and future plans. The *encouragement of co-operation* among students is the second principle. Chickering and Gamson (1991) contend that co-operation among students heightens learning. This principle incorporates elements of collaborative teaching and learning. Working with others often increases involvement in learning and that sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions sharpen thinking and deepen understanding. The third principle concerns the *encouragement of active learning*. Learning is increased if students actively participate in their courses by discussing and writing about course content (Chickering and Gamson, 1991). Students must be given the opportunity to talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate to past experience and apply it to daily lives.

The *provision of prompt feedback* constitutes the fourth principle of good practice. Appropriate feedback on course performance helps students assess their knowledge and skills. Students should be provided with frequent opportunities to perform and receive feedback on ways to improve their work (Chickering and Gamson, 1991). The fifth principle postulates that *time on task should be emphasised*. Learning to use one's time well is critical for students and future professionals. Students need help in learning effective time management. Allocating realistic amount of time means effective learning for students and effective teaching for faculty.

The *communication of high expectations* is specified by the sixth principle. This principle requires that faculty not only hold students to high standards but also expect that students will meet them. The seventh principle entails *faculty respect for diverse talents and ways of knowing*. Students have different set of experiences, skills, abilities and ways of learning. Students should be provided with the opportunity to show their talent, demonstrate their skills and use their styles of learning to their best advantage (Chickering and Gamson, 1991). By taking into account students' differences, faculty are in a better position to design activities which would foster individual learning.

The seven principles of good practices have been proven to be valid and appropriate for promoting learning and personal development for all students at all types of institutions (Braxton et al. 1998; Pike, 2004; Kuh and Pascarella, 2004). Many researches have been carried out to develop instruments that consist of examples and indicators of the seven principles. The College Student

Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ) developed by Pace (1990) is a research tool containing indicators that measure several of the seven principles and it is used to predict students' progress in learning. The questionnaire has been used in many studies (Kuh and Vesper, 1997; Kuh et al. 1997) and the seven indicators of good practices exhibited adequate psychometric properties as measured by students' reported gains in the CSEQ questionnaire, and that these indicators could be considered as reliable and valid indicators of student outcomes.

Friedlander, Pace and Lehman (1991) created the Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CCSEQ), a survey based on the seven principles which assesses the breadth and quality of effort community college students exert in attaining educational gains and development. The instrument has been used widely and findings generated from studies by Friedlander, Murrell and MacDougall (1993); Douzenis (1996); Swigart and Murrell (2001), support the use of this instrument as an assessment tool for exploring students' involvement and self-reported academic gains in the community college setting. Data from the CSSEQ provided relevant information to community colleges in addressing programmatic needs in student development as well as in providing a better understanding of students' views of their undergraduate learning environment (McClennay, 2004).

Building on the seven principles of good practices, a group of researchers from Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research developed a survey of student engagement which is intended to provide information about the extent to which colleges and universities exhibit characteristics and commitment to good practices and high quality student outcomes. The survey gathered information about classroom and non-classroom experience during preceding school year, which is used to estimate students' engagement in college. The results of the survey had been used to produce a set of national benchmarks of good educational practice that colleges and universities can use as proxy measures to identify opportunities for improving undergraduate education. (Kuh, 2001a).

## Conclusion

This article purports that student engagement and aspects of the students' undergraduate experience at an institutional level can be enhanced using indicators of effective practices. How the universities realise good practice in determining the delivery of their undergraduate programmes and implementing effective practices depends largely on their administration, staff and students. To do so, they need to examine successfully proven educational practices that produce higher quality learning environments. Fifty years of research has concluded that one of the most effective undergraduate learning is based on the *Seven Principles for Good Practice* (Chickering and Gamson, 1987). As an acceptable philosophy of good teaching and learning, these principles establish fundamental guidelines for quality higher education and therefore should be used as the building blocks for success by faculty and

students. Thus, strenuous efforts are needed to systematically adopt and implement the seven principles as a focus for improving the practice of undergraduate education. For a start, a set of indicators based on the seven principles can be used to distinguish quality learning environments. A list of specific indicators of each of the seven principles can also be used to guide the students and faculty to become more analytical in assessing their roles in the educational experience.

**"...we need to closely examine what promotes effective undergraduate education and the ways in which learning environments can be effectively created and nurtured. This way, we can gain a better understanding of what really constitutes institutional excellence in undergraduate education."**

The author believes that university faculty are committed to strengthening the learning environment in the university and that they are committed to the teaching and learning process as well as to the students who are engaged in that process. Although we take pride in excellence in teaching, we nevertheless cannot rest on these accomplishments. It is worthy to note that increased emphasis on teaching, learning and assessment is already evident in the Malaysian Quality Framework (MQF). Nonetheless, we need to closely examine what promotes effective undergraduate education and the ways in which learning environments can be effectively created and nurtured. This way, we can gain a better understanding of what really constitutes institutional excellence in undergraduate education.

## References

- Astin, A. W. (1993). *What matters in college: Four critical years visited*. San Francisco. Jossey Bass.
- Braxton, J. M., Olsen, D. and Simmons, A. (1998). Affinity disciplines and the use of principles of good practice for undergraduate education. *Research in Higher Education*, 39, 299-310.
- Bruner, J. S. (1960). *The process of education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Chickering, A. W. and Gamson, Z. F. (1987). Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *AAHE Bulletin*, 39(7), 3-7.
- Chickering, A. W. and Gamson, Z. F. (1991). Development and adaptation of the seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *Direction for Teaching and Learning*, 80, 75-81.
- Chickering, A. W. and Reisser, L. (1993). *Education and identity*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Dewey, J. (1958). *Experience and education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Douzenis, C. (1996). The community college student experiences questionnaire: Introduction and application. *Community College Journal of Research & Practice*, 18, 261-268.
- Friedlander, J., Pace, C. R. and Lehman, P. W. (1991). *The community college experience questionnaire*. Memphis, TN: Center for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Memphis.
- Friedlander, J., Murrell, P. H. and MacDougall, P. R. (1993). The community college experiences questionnaire. *Community College Review*, 20(1), 20-28.
- Houle, C. O. (1964). *The inquiring mind: A study of an adult who continues to learn*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Kuh, G. D. (2001). Assessing what really matters to student learning: Inside the national survey of student engagement. *Change*, 33(3), 10-17.
- Kuh, G. D. (2003). What we're learning about student engagement from NSSE. *Change*, 35(2), 24-33.
- Kuh, G. D. and Pascarella, E. T. (2004). What does institutional selectivity tell us about educational quality? *Change*, 36(5), 52-58.
- Kuh, G. D. and Vesper, N. (1997). A comparison of student experiences with good practices in undergraduate education between 1990 and 1994. *The Review of Higher Education*, 21, 43-61.
- Kuh, G. D., Pace, C. R. and Vesper, N. (1997). The development of process indicators to estimate student gains associated with good practices in undergraduate education. *Research in Higher Education*, 38, 435-454.
- McClenney, K. M. (2004). Redefining quality in community colleges. *Change*, 36(6), 16-22.
- Newman, P. R. (1992). *Conceptual models of student engagement*. National Center on Effective Secondary Schools, University of Wisconsin.
- Pace, C. R. (1990). *The undergraduates: A report of their activities and progress in college in the 1980s*. Center for the Study of Evaluation, University of California, Los Angeles.
- Pascarella, E. T. (2001). Identifying excellence in undergraduate education: Are we even close? *Change*, 33(3), 19-23.
- Pascarella, E. T. and Terenzini, P. T. (1991). *How college affects students: Findings and insights from twenty years of research*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Pike, G. R. (2004). Measuring quality: A comparison of U.S. news ranking and NSSE benchmarks. *Research in Higher Education*, 45(2), 193-206.
- Shulman, L. S. (2002). Making differences: A table of learning. *Change*, 34(6), 36-44.
- Swigart, T. E. and Murrell, P. H. (2001). Factors in influencing estimates of gains made among African-American and Caucasian community college students. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 25(4), 297-313.
- Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

# Universiti Sains Malaysia Undergraduates' Thinking Styles: A Case Study

Wan Chang Da, National Higher Education Research Institute  
Munir Shuib and Azlena Zainal, School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia

## Introduction

The distinction of higher (tertiary) education and education in pre-school, primary school and secondary school lies in one of the objectives of higher education that seeks to teach students how to think rather than what to think (Bassham et al., 2005; Munir, 2007). Higher education emphasises the importance of thinking through evaluation of ideas, information and reasoning. It is widely known that the ability to think is closely and directly related to learning. Resnick (1987) revealed that students who were taught to think reflected better learning outcomes through improvement in their reading comprehension and ability to solve problems in mathematics and science.

Embracing the assumption that for undergraduates to be able to gain admission into university, they have already shown a considerable level in their thinking ability, it may be said that the factor that differentiates undergraduates is not the ability to think but the thinking style. As noted by Nobel Laureate Roger Sperry, thinking pattern (style) using the right or left hemisphere of the brain distinguishes how an individual approaches in handling information.

The left half of the brain plays the role of processing information in an analytical, rational, logical and sequential method while the right half of the brain functions by recognising relationships, integrating and synthesising information to arrive at the intuitive insights (Dew, 1996). To illustrate the left and right brain, Dew states:

*"The left side of your brain deals with a problem or situation by collecting data, making analyses, and using a rational thinking process to reach a logical conclusion. The right side of your brain approaches the same problem or situation by making intuitive leaps to answers based on insights and perceptions. The left brain tends to break information apart for analysis, while the right brain tends to put information together to synthesise a whole picture."* (p. 91)

This concept of left and right brain was further developed by Ned Herrmann, with the introduction of the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI) in 1981. In this elaborated concept, an individual's thinking style is categorised into four different categories, namely the top left, bottom left, top right and bottom right (Abdul Fatah, 1998).

Understanding one's thinking style and pattern along with self-awareness of the thinking process has direct implications towards the person's ability to learn and perform. Therefore, this paper seeks to understand the thinking styles preferred by undergraduates with the objective to further grasp insights into evaluating the outcome of education as well as diversity of individuals.

The second section of the paper will present the methodology used to evaluate the thinking styles of undergraduates, to be followed by the findings and discussion of the data collected. Due to constraint of space, only the general findings of the study will be presented and discussed in this paper.

## Methodology

The methodology of the study is based on Ned Herrmann's Individual Profiling taken from the Malay Language translated profile by Abdul Fatah (1998). As discussed earlier, the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI) comprises four compartmentalisations of the brain. Each category of the brain is represented by five adjective words (see Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1: Four quadrants of the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument**

<i>Analytical Logical Critical Rational Quantitative</i>	<b>A</b>  Analyse	<b>D</b>  Strategise	<i>Holistic Creative Integrative Intuitive Synthesising</i>
<i>Detailed Conservative Controlled Planned Organised</i>	<b>B</b>  Organise	<b>C</b>  Personalise	<i>Emotional Spiritual Empathetic Interpersonal Symbolic</i>

Source: Adapted from Abdul Fatah, H. (1998) with additional amendments

These words describing the characteristics of each quadrant were listed into one-page questionnaire with detailed description for each word, both in English and Malay. The respondent is required to give preference for each word at the scale 5 (least preferred), 10, 15, 20 and 25 (most preferred). Each scale-point is only allowed to be chosen maximally four times. To eliminate biasness in choosing familiar words, the exact glossary of terms in both English and Malay were distributed to the undergraduates prior to the survey and the listing of words in the questionnaire was randomised.

A sample of 284 undergraduates from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) was gathered. From this study, 58 percent of the respondents majored in subjects in the area of Arts and Social Sciences while the remaining 42 percent are Science undergraduates. The ethnicity ratio is two Malays for every single non-Malay. The composition in the year of study is almost equally distributed between the first year, second year and final year students<sup>1</sup>.

The analysis involves two levels. The first focuses on the four quadrants as a whole whereas the second on the individual style in each quadrant.

## General Findings and Discussion

### Overall Landscape

The first level of analysis focuses on the four quadrants as a whole (see Table 1). Quadrant A (Top Left) is the most dominant among the 284 undergraduates surveyed, with 28 percent (393 responses) indicating words associated with Quadrant A being the most preferred. This was followed by Quadrant C (Bottom Right) with 24 percent (342 responses) and Quadrant B (Bottom Left) with 15 percent (211 responses). It is interesting to note that Quadrant B is the most equally distributed in terms of the undergraduates' preferences with the largest percentage of 23 percent (319 responses) indicated neutral preferences (15 points) to the words in this category. Of the four quadrants, Quadrant D (Top Right) is the least preferred choice and the frequency skewed towards the lower end, as almost 25 percent (347 responses) indicated least preferred (5 points) for words associated with the quadrant.

**"Understanding one's thinking style and pattern along with self-awareness of the thinking process has direct implications towards the person's ability to learn and perform."**

From analysing the characteristics of thinking styles among the undergraduates, it is clear that certain trends and patterns do exist. Firstly, words such as "rational", "creative", and "critical" have been emphasised consistently throughout Malaysian Education System. Beginning from primary education to secondary

**TABLE 1: Cultural dimension score of Malaysia against other countries/regions**

Quadrant A	25	20	15	10	5	Total
Analytic	74	75	51	41	43	<b>284</b>
Logical	109	93	39	25	18	<b>284</b>
Critical	73	58	62	52	39	<b>284</b>
Rational	118	90	37	20	19	<b>284</b>
Quantitative	19	41	52	85	87	<b>284</b>
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>1,420</b>

Quadrant D	25	20	15	10	10	Total
Holistic	22	43	66	77	77	<b>284</b>
Creative	112	61	63	33	33	<b>284</b>
Integrative	18	39	75	82	82	<b>284</b>
Intuitive	29	45	39	83	83	<b>284</b>
Synthesising	9	35	57	85	85	<b>284</b>
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>1,420</b>

Quadrant B	25	20	15	10	5	Total
Detailed	42	65	86	51	40	<b>284</b>
Conservative	32	41	59	63	89	<b>284</b>
Controlled	48	61	75	60	40	<b>284</b>
Planned	73	90	45	37	39	<b>284</b>
Organised	16	45	54	69	100	<b>284</b>
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>1,420</b>

Quadrant C	25	20	15	10	5	Total
Emotional	109	56	42	45	32	<b>284</b>
Spiritual	60	58	71	37	58	<b>284</b>
Empathetic	65	43	53	64	59	<b>284</b>
Interpersonal	84	58	61	52	29	<b>284</b>
Symbolic	24	39	50	73	98	<b>284</b>
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>1,420</b>

Analysing the 20 words individually, some interesting trends also surfaced. The most dominant word associated with the undergraduates is "rational". Close to 42 percent of the undergraduates, or precisely 118 undergraduates indicated "rational" as a word that is the strongest associated with their thinking style. Following closely were words such as "creative" (39 percent), "logical" (38 percent), "emotional" (38 percent), "interpersonal" (30 percent), "analytic" (26 percent) and "planned" (26 percent).

On the other hand, the undergraduates described words such as "organised" (35 percent), "synthesising" (35 percent), "symbolic" (35 percent), "conservative" (31 percent), "intuitive" (31 percent), "quantitative" (31 percent), "holistic" (27 percent) and "integrative" (25 percent) as words that do not really describe their thinking style.

education and ultimately furthering into tertiary education, such words are commonly used as part of the educational goals and missions. The following was translated from the Education Development Master Plan 2006-2010 that was published by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MOE) (2006) to explain the roles of education in human capital development, where rational, creative and critical are among the core objectives of the education system.

*"Human capital development aims to ensure that Malaysians have the knowledge and expertise as a preparation to meet the manpower needs of various occupations. Besides that, these students are equipped with skills, efficient communication, ICT ability, creative and critical thinking as well as the ability to act rationally; practising lifelong learning; have high values and capable of becoming efficient leader in families and the society." (p. 53)*

Further to that, the book published by the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) (2006), *Development of Soft Skills Modules in Institutions of Higher Education in Malaysia*, outlines many of words that are seen to be dominant in this survey. Among them are "analytic", "interpersonal", "critical", "creative", "holistic" and "intuitive". The fact that the respondents showed preference for these styles suggests the education system has somewhat managed to develop the aspired students as far as thinking is concerned. In other words, it reflects the impact and role of education in influencing and formulating the thinking styles of undergraduates. After all, they are the chosen elite of the education system.

This does not necessarily mean that the undergraduates do not face any challenges in their thinking skills. In fact, the low frequency of several words in the survey in Quadrant D particularly 'holistic', 'integrative' and 'synthesising' suggests some potential weaknesses among the undergraduates in the way they construct their thinking. "Integrative" refers to the ability to combine pieces, parts and elements of ideas, concepts and situations into a unified whole whereas "holistic", the ability to perceive and understand the 'big picture' without dwelling on individual elements of an idea, concepts or situation, can be understood as the secondary process of creativity. "Synthesising" is even more complicated, understood as the ability to unite separate ideas, elements or concepts into something new. The low frequency of these words suggests that while they may be generally creative and critical, they may have difficulties in carrying out tasks that require them to look at the big picture and make connections of certain ideas.

Likewise, the survey exposes a further possible challenge to the undergraduates. Although mathematics is considered a core subject since the first year of primary education all through secondary school, the low percentage of undergraduates indicating "quantitative" as one of the most dominant traits in them could again signal some shortcomings among themselves. It suggests that they may have a low inclination to know or seek exact measures: attributes deemed essential in tertiary education.

### Conclusion and Implications

From the analysis of the 284 undergraduates' thinking styles, it is clear that several trends and patterns emerge that point towards the strengths and weaknesses of the respondents. Such revelation does provide insights not only into their mindset but also into the impact of the education process that these undergraduates went through since primary, secondary and currently at the tertiary level.

The implication of such analysis provides not only understanding but also present the direction for policy makers and planners of the education system to further enhance and develop the educational process with greater efficiency in efforts to develop the desired individuals as far as thinking is concerned. In the era of increasing

unemployment among the graduates in Malaysia, such analysis could also offer several indications into bridging the differences and expectation of the employers towards the graduates of the education system.

**"...while they may be generally creative and critical, they may have difficulties in carrying out tasks that require them to look at the big picture and make connections of certain ideas."**

### References

- Abdul Fatah, H. (1998). *Pemikiran keseluruhan otak*. Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publications and Distributors Sdn. Bhd.
- Bassham, G., Irwin, W., Nardone, H. and Wallace, J. M. (2005). *Critical Thinking* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Dew, J. R. (1996). Are you a right-brain or left-brain thinker? *Quality Progress Magazine*, April, 91-93.
- Ministry of Education. (2006). *Education development master plan 2006-2010 [Pelan induk pembangunan pendidikan 2006-2010]*. Putrajaya: MoE.
- Ministry of Higher Education. (2006). *Modul pembangunan kemahiran insaniah (Soft Skills) untuk institusi pengajian tinggi Malaysia*. Putrajaya: MoHE.
- Munir, S. (2007). *Developing undergraduates' thinking skills*. Paper presented in Persidangan Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran di Peringkat Pengajaran Tinggi 2007: Ke Arah Peningkatan Kualiti Modal Insan, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Seri Kembangan, Selangor, December, 12-14.
- Resnick, L. (1987). *Education and learning to think*. Washington D.C.: National Academy Press.

### Endnote:

- Final year students include third year students pursuing a four-year course.

# Leadership in Administration and Management of Higher Education

Reported by Wan Chang Da

The National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN) in collaboration with Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) organised the third IPPTN Seminar Series entitled Leadership in Administration and Management of Higher Education on 21 May 2008. The seminar sought to discuss the following wide-ranging spectrum of issues about leadership in higher education: the ideal leadership underlined in the National Higher Education Strategic Plan, comparative leadership styles in Malaysia and overseas as well as current issues about policy implementation and leadership principles.

The one-day seminar was held at the Grand Riverview Hotel in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, where a total of six papers about leadership were presented. The seminar began with Professor Ambigapathy Pandian presenting a paper on "Framing Leadership in Higher Education in Malaysia", followed by a paper titled "The Concept of Succession Planning: Is It Applicable In Higher Education Leadership Strategies?" that was discussed by Professor Dr. Haji Ibrahim Che Omar. Dr. Munir Shuib then shared some observations about the management and administrative arrangement of the Division of Industry and Community Network in Universiti Sains Malaysia.

The seminar resumed by inviting Ms. Elizabeth Lee from Sunway University College to discuss leadership from the perspective of private higher education institutions. Professor Dato' Dr. Mohd. Nawi then shared his observations about leadership and academic excellence in relation to the major happenings in Malaysian higher education that have shaped the higher education landscape. The final paper, "Rethinking Leadership Behaviour in Higher

Education", was presented by the Acting Director of IPPTN, Professor Muhamad Jantan, who deliberated on theories of leadership in Western businesses that might have difficulties being directly applied into Malaysian higher education, without considering the academic traditions, culture and norms that might seriously undermine the development of leaders in the Malaysian higher education sector.



Prof. Muhamad presenting a paper on "Rethinking Leadership Behaviour in Higher Education".

The seminar concluded with words of appreciation by the Acting Director of IPPTN to the participants for their active participation and interest in leadership in higher education of Malaysia. The Acting Director also thanked for Universiti Malaysia Kelantan and Professor Dr. Haji Ibrahim Che Omar for their kind hospitality in successfully organising the seminar.



Participants listening attentively during the one-day seminar held at the Grand Riverview Hotel, Kota Bharu, last May.

# Pre-Conference Workshop on “Raising Awareness: Exploring the Ideas of Creating Higher Education Common Space in Southeast Asia”

Reported by Christopher Koh Boon Han and Noraini Mohamad Yusof

As part of the conference series initiated by SEAMEO-RIHED and Japan Foundation to raise the awareness among key stakeholders in the higher education sector in Southeast Asia on the importance of the regional harmonisation process, the National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN) in collaboration with SEAMEO-RIHED hosted a pre-conference seminar titled “Pre-Conference Workshop on Raising Awareness: Exploring the Ideas of Creating Higher Education Common Space in Southeast Asia”.



Participants getting ready for the half-day conference.

The half-day pre-conference was held on 21 August 2008 at the Equatorial Hotel, Bangi-Putrajaya, and was attended by 36 participants representing 11 public higher education institutions, five private higher education institutions, student associations from public and private higher

education institutions and the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education. The programme began with an introduction to the harmonisation of higher education project by Professor Muhamad Jantan from Universiti Sains Malaysia as a country coordinator.

Conducted in three separate sessions, the workshop first discussed the Context and Common Features of Higher Education with issues related to the higher education scenarios. This was then followed by a session on ‘Harmonisation of Higher Education around the World’. The issues discussed included the definition of harmonisation, aspects and process of harmonisation, existing harmonisation practices in Malaysia and the expected outcomes of harmonisation and implication challenges. The third session of the conference focussed on how South East Asia (SEA) would respond to the various changes in moving towards the harmonisation of higher education.

The need for raising awareness among stakeholders and decision makers in SEA was highly acknowledged by all participants. It might well be impossible to achieve regional harmonisation if stakeholders, decision makers and political masters alike fail to identify the benefits of harmonising the regional community as a whole. To achieve a distinctive Southeast Asian identity, one that is comparable to that of the European nation, key stakeholders need to give their full cooperation in realising and enhancing existing capabilities in their institutions. Political masters may have to pave the way for academics and researchers and other lesser stakeholders to realise this distinctive objective.



Participants from various higher education institutions engaging in the discourse on harmonisation.

# **Discussion on National Higher Education Strategic Plan (PSPTN) Thrust 4: Strengthening Public Higher Education Institutions and Promoting Academic Excellence**

*Reported by Noraini Mohamad Yusof*

On 27 August 2007, The Malaysian Prime Minister, YAB Datuk Seri Abdullah Badawi launched the “National Higher Education Strategic Plan” (PSPTN). To achieve its objective and main target for every strategy that has been identified, the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) has set up a total of 13 working teams. Each of the teams is handled by a chief leader, designated by MoHE, and each activity will be coordinated by the Programme Management Office (PMO). IPPTN has been selected as the Team Leader for Academia Project.

Subsequently on 23 October 2008, IPPTN in collaboration with the Department of Higher Education, the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) organised a half-day workshop on “National Higher Education Strategic Plan (PSPTN) Thrust 4: Strengthening Public Higher Education Institutions and Promoting Academic Excellence” at the Equatorial Hotel, Bangi-Putrajaya. The discussion was chaired by Professor Morshidi Sirat, the project leader for the Academia Team. The workshop focused on academic staff associations from all public higher education institutions in Malaysia. A total of 42 participants from Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, Universiti Darul Iman Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA, University of Malaya, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Universiti Utara Malaysia,

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, Universiti Malaysia Pahang. All were representatives of academic staff associations in their respective universities. Also present were officers from the MoHE and Associate Research Fellows of IPPTN.

The main objective of this workshop was to obtain feedback



An academic staff giving his feedback and opinion.

from academic staff associations from all public universities in Malaysia on ways to strengthen the public higher education institutions and to promote excellence among the academic staff. Based on the feedback, several strategies and action plans to strengthen the public higher education institutions and to promote higher autonomy for public universities were identified. It is hoped that the implementation of the strategies and action plans will lead to greater academic excellence and creativity among the public universities.



An academic staff sharing his thoughts and opinion during the workshop.

# **Focus Group Interviews with President/Representatives of Academic Staff Associations for Local Universitites: Changing Academic Profession (CAP)**

*Reported by Siti Asma' Mohd. Rosdi*

After the morning discussion on the National Higher Education Strategic Plan, the Academic Staff Association representatives were invited to participate in focus group interviews for IPPTN's research project on the Changing Academic Profession (CAP). The project aims to examine the nature and extent of the changes experienced by the academic profession in recent years. It was to explore both the reasons for and the consequences of these changes as well as so to consider the implications of the changes for the attractiveness of the academic profession as a career and for the ability of the academic community to contribute to the further development of knowledge societies and the attainment of national goals.

For the purpose of the focus group interviews, the Academic Staff Association representatives were divided into two groups. One group comprising 12 representatives were interviewed on issues pertaining to general work situation. The second group comprising 15 representatives were interviewed on issues pertaining to teaching and research. The first group was led by Associate Professor Dr. Aida Suraya Md. Yunus while Professor Ibrahim Che Omar and Associate Professor Dr. Koo Yew Lie acted as



Some of the academic staff association representatives participating in the focus group interview.

moderators. The second group was led by Associate Professor Dr. Ahmad Nurulazam Md. Zain with Dr. Munir Shuib, Associate Professor Dr. Norzaini Azman and Associate Professor Dr. Sarjit Kaur as moderators.

All in all, the interviews were able to yield valuable input for the CAP project which greatly helped the moderators in fine-tuning their research reports.



One of the focus groups being interviewed by the project moderators.

# Strategic Dialogue on Higher Education and Developing Human Capital between Malaysia and CLMV Countries

Reported by Noraini Mohamad Yusof

From December 1-2, 2008, the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) and the National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN) with the collaboration of the department/agencies higher education sectors in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam, organised "The Strategic Dialogue on Higher Education and Developing Human Capital between Malaysia and CLMV Countries (The Kuala Lumpur - CLMV Dialogue)". This dialogue was held at the Boulevard Hotel, Mid Valley, Kuala Lumpur.

The dialogue focused on the sharing of knowledge, experiences and information in higher education policy issues. It was targeted to convey key elements and opportunities for strengthening relationship between Malaysia and CLMV partners, to create a forum for strategic and policy dialogue, to increase mutual understanding of priorities and possible cooperation areas, to identify common agenda and to develop mutually understanding collaborative projects.

This dialogue was attended by the Director-General of Higher Education, the Deputy Director-General and a Vice-Chancellor/President of universities from the CLMV Countries. 22 participants from Malaysia were present, including officers from the MoHE and Associate Research Fellows of IPPTN. Cambodia was represented by HE Dr. Touch Visalsok (University of Battambang), Mr. You Virak (Department of Higher Education) and Mr. Chunhieng Thavarith (Institute of Technology of Cambodia); Myanmar was represented by Dr. Tin Htun Myint (Hinthada University) and Dr. Khine Mye (Sitwe University); and Vietnam was represented by Dr. Nguyen Van Duong, Dr. Nguyen Van Huu (Higher Education Department) and Dr. Do Van Xe (Can Tho University). Delegates from Lao PDR were unable to attend this dialogue due to unforeseen circumstances.



Prof. Morshidi welcoming the Secretary General and Director-General of MoHE during the dialogue held in Boulevard Hotel, Mid Valley, Kuala Lumpur.

On the first day, the Secretary General of MoHE, Y. Bhg. Datuk Dr. Zulkifli A. Hassan, gave his welcoming remarks and this was followed by two presentations. Y. Bhg. Professor Dato' Ir. Dr. Radin Umar Radin Suhadi, Director-General, MoHE did the first presentation on the National Higher Education Strategic Plan: What and How? This was followed by Y. Bhg. Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, the Vice Chancellor, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) sharing his views on USM's experiences about APEX University. Subsequently, the participants had a dialogue session on strategic policy planning and formulation, chaired by Professor Dr. Rugayah Mohamed from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

On the second day Professor Asma Ismail, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) of USM, spoke on Malaysian Achievements on Research and Development. After this presentation, Y. Bhg. Dato' Professor Dr. Ahmad Haji Zainuddin, Director of Higher Education Academy of Leadership enlightened the participants about AKEPT.



Delegates from Cambodia. From left Mr. Chunhieng Thavarith, HE Dr. Touch Visalsok and Mr. You Virak.

The dialogue ended with several resolutions. To implement these resolutions, Malaysia will draft a road map of sustained engagement with the CLMV Countries. As an immediate action, in 2009, a series of workshops will be held with a view to identify specific collaborative projects with partners in CLMV Countries. MoHE will work on the details and funding mechanisms on this project together with other agencies/departments within the ministry. IPPTN will document all the activities for reference, starting with a book publication on the Kuala Lumpur Dialogue.

# **Announcements**

## **VICE-CHANCELLORS' FORUM**

### **17<sup>th</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers**

15-19 June

Kuala Lumpur International Convention Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

*"How far are universities changing and shaping our world?"*

#### **FORUM RATIONALE**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (17CCEM) is a triennial event at which Commonwealth Education Ministers and senior officials meet to discuss areas of critical importance in strengthening education policies in the Commonwealth.

For the first time, a Vice-Chancellors' Forum (VCF 2009) will be held as an integral part of the Conference, alongside the Stakeholders' Forum (for civil society, international agencies, academia and the private sector), the Teachers' Forum and the Youth Forum.

The VCF 2009 will offer a platform for university leaders and senior managers to discuss their common concerns in order to develop insights and forge solutions to the issues and challenges facing Commonwealth universities.

These deliberations will allow university leaders to map the development of their universities while taking account of the aspirations of their respective nations and the goals and targets for education determined by the Commonwealth fraternity.

VCF 2009 also presents a unique opportunity for university leaders to formulate and present a statement to Education Ministers, highlighting their key policy concerns.

The social programme will allow participants to interact with Ministers and government officials from Commonwealth countries. There will also be opportunities to meet delegates from the other forums.

The VCF 2009 is organised by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education Malaysia, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) and the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is supported by the National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN), University of Malaya and Universiti Putra Malaysia.

#### **DELEGATES**

The VCF 2009 is intended for Executive Heads of universities including Vice-Chancellors/Rectors, Presidents and also Deputy Vice-Chancellors and other senior managers of universities in the Commonwealth.

#### **FORMAT**

The VCF 2009 will offer a varied programme of keynote addresses, plenary sessions, panel discussions, discussion groups and a statement to Ministers.

#### **THEMES**

The programme aims to explore a range of current issues to Vice-Chancellors, with a focus on areas such as:

- The need for a coherent education policy across all sectors in the context of increasing demands for higher education; the importance of higher education to social and economic development; and the contribution of higher education to the development of all levels of education.
- Issues of quality and accreditation: Their affect on both traditional delivery and open and distance provision in the context of increasing demands and the rapid emergence of new providers.
- Issues of accountability: How are universities accountable to government in the context of the shifting balance between public and private funding and the introduction of student fees? This will also include a discussion with Youth Delegates and representatives of the business community whose needs universities should be meeting.
- The importance of universities and their research capacities in understanding the major issues of sustainability such as climate change and food security, and in contributing to solutions to these problems.

# **Malaysia-Cambodia Workshop on Higher Education and Developing Human Capital: Towards Strategic Partnerships and Alliances**

*25 and 26 February 2009, Sunway Hotel Phnom Penh, Cambodia*

The Malaysia-Cambodia Workshop (MCW) is organised by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia with the co-operation of the Cambodian Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry Education, Youth and Sport and other departments/agencies overseeing higher education sector in Cambodia, while the National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN), Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, provides intellectual and technical support.

The primary aim of MCW is to translate ideas and commitments made at the Kuala Lumpur-CLMV Dialogue in December 2008 into practical and feasible projects to be undertaken jointly by Malaysian and Cambodian higher education institutions.

Several presentations will be made by Malaysian delegation and counterparts from Cambodian Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry Education, Youth and Sport and Cambodian universities. During the break-out session the deliberations will be more focussed and action oriented aimed at identifying feasible projects to be undertaken by partnering institutions.

Cambodia will send a delegation comprising the Director-General of Directorate General of Higher Education, the Deputy-Director General of Higher Education, Ministry Education, Youth and Sport and 25 Vice-Chancellors/senior university management/senior researchers and academics. Malaysian delegation will be led by the Ministry of Higher Education with speakers from both public and private higher education sector.

## **GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION FORUM (GHEF) MALAYSIA 2009**

*13-16 December 2009, Park Royal, Penang, Malaysia*

### ***"Global Higher Education: Current Trends, Future Perspectives"***

#### **SUB-THEMES OF THE FORUM**

- Current Global Higher Education: One Model Fit for All?
- Higher Education Regionalisation and Harmonisation - Global Convergence or Divergence?
- Higher Education in Times of Global Financial and Economic Turbulence (case studies)
- Scenarios for Higher Education Futures

#### **APPROACH**

The GHEF2009 will deliberate on all of the above sub-themes from both global and regional perspectives. Thus we may organise plenary sessions and/or panel discussions based on (1) a global perspective, (2) a single region and (3) a comparative perspective of several regions.

#### **FORMAT**

The GHEFF 2009 will offer a varied programme of keynote addresses, plenary sessions and panel discussions with ample time for Q&A.

There will be presentations by invited keynote and plenary speakers with a small number of presenters selected from "Call for Papers".

#### **ORGANISERS, CO-SPONSOR AND SUPPORTER**

The GHEF2009 is jointly organised by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MoHE) and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) with the Centre for Higher Education Research and Study (CHERS), Ministry of Higher Education, Saudi Arabia as co-sponsor. The Association of African Universities (AAU) will provide intellectual support.

#### **PARTICIPATION**

The Higher Education Forum (GHEF) brings together scholars, policy makers, researchers, academics and administrators to reflect, analyse, discuss and debate on variety of issues pertaining to global higher education. In particular GHEF2009 will focus on the theme of Global Higher Education, seeking to ponder and reflect on the benefits and challenges and at the same time, envision the way forward for emerging and expanding, rather than for matured higher education systems.



# THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL LITERACY CONFERENCE (LITCON 2009)

## LITERACY: Forging Pathways to Unity

Date:  
**7, 8 & 9 October 2009**

Venue:  
**BERJAYA GEORGETOWN HOTEL  
ONE STOP MIDLANDS PARK  
PENANG, MALAYSIA**

## CALL FOR PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Please include the following information in your proposal:

1. Full name, contact and address details of presenter(s) institutional affiliations (If applicable)
2. Title of proposal
3. 150 Word abstract of paper/presentation (Before 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009)

Presentation format:

- Paper - 30 minutes
- Workshop - 60 minutes
- Poster Session

Presentations shall be in English or Bahasa Malaysia

### Themes of the Conference

- Theme 1: Teachers and Literacy Practices
- Theme 2: Citizenship and Unity
- Theme 3: Conflict Resolution
- Theme 4: Sustainable Education
- Theme 5: General

### Conference Registration

• EARLY BIRD (Payments received before 30 April 2009)	RM 270.00
• FROM May to June 2009	RM 300.00
• July to October 2009	RM 350.00
• DAY REGISTRATION (Not for presenters)	RM 200.00
per day	

### Package Registration

(3 Nights accommodation inclusive of 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 morning teas and 3 afternoon teas plus conference dinner)

- Early Bird (before 30 April 2009) RM700.00
- Registration (after 1<sup>st</sup> May 2009) RM 800.00

### For more information, please contact

**Professor Ambigapthy Pandian  
Chairperson**

School of Languages, Literacies and Translation  
Universiti Sains Malaysia  
11800 Penang, Malaysia  
Tel: 604-653 3145 / Mobile: 019-777 1292  
Fax: 604-656 9122  
Email: ambiga@usm.my / litcon2009@gmail.com

# Calling for Articles and News Briefs

## Guidelines on Submission of Manuscripts

1. Manuscripts should be written in English, typed using Times New Roman 12 point font, and double spaced on only one side of A4 size paper with ample left and right margins on Microsoft Word.
2. The length of the manuscripts should not exceed 1,500 words. An abstract of about 150 words should be included.
3. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to use any published material. The publisher shall not be held responsible for the use of such material.
4. Citations in the text should include the author's last name and date of publication, e.g. (Ashton, 2001). If quotations are used, page numbers should be indicated, eg. (Ashton, 2001: 30).
5. Endnotes may be used.
6. Include tables and figures within the text. Number tables and figures consecutively.
7. The reference list should be arranged in alphabetical order and should include only works cited in the text.

Examples:

Altbach, P. G. (2004). *The costs and benefits of world-class universities*. Retrieved 23 October 2005 from <http://www.aaup.org/publications/Academe/2004/04jf/04jfaltb.htm>

Mahadhir, M., Ting, S. H. and Carol, D. (2006). *Learning materials and human factors: Looking at the chemistry in the genre-based approach classroom*. Proceedings of 2<sup>nd</sup> Science and Art of Language in Teaching International Conference, 'Change: Bridging Theory and Practice', 20 - 22 November, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Pulau Pinang.

Watkins, D. (1998). A cross-cultural look at perceptions of good teaching: Asia and the West. In J. J. F. Forest (Ed.), *University teaching: International perspectives*. New York: Garland.

Wolfe, R. N. and Johnson, S. D. (1995). Personality as a predictor of college performance. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, Vol. 2, 177-185.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

8. All submissions should include a cover page containing the title, name of author(s), designation, affiliation, mailing/e-mail address and telephone/fax number. A brief biographical note of the author(s) should also be included.
9. Manuscripts submitted must not be those already published or those which have been offered for publication elsewhere.
10. Manuscripts received will be acknowledged but not returned.
11. Submission of a manuscript will mean that the author agrees to transfer copyright of his/her article to the publisher if and when the article is published. Authors who wish to send their articles to be published elsewhere should seek the written agreement of the publisher.
12. Manuscripts may be sent via e-mail attachment ([ipptn@yahoo.com](mailto:ipptn@yahoo.com) or [munir@usm.my](mailto:munir@usm.my)) or via post together with the diskette or compact disk.

The *Bulletin of Higher Education Research* welcomes short articles, opinions, comments and information about people and events related to higher education in public and private institutions in Malaysia and abroad.

Please address your correspondence to:

**The Editor-in-Chief**  
**Bulletin of Higher Education Research**  
**National Higher Education Research Institute**  
**Suite 109, Level 1**  
**EUREKA Complex**  
**Universiti Sains Malaysia**  
**11800 Penang**  
**MALAYSIA**

Tel: 604-659 0534 / 604- 653 3888 ext. 4090  
Fax: 604-659 0532  
Web: <http://www.usm.my/ipptn>  
E-mail: [ipptn@yahoo.com](mailto:ipptn@yahoo.com)

## Editorial Board

**Advisor:**  
Professor Morshidi Sirat

**Editor-in-Chief:**  
Dr. Munir Shuib

**Editors:**  
Professor Ambigapathy Pandian  
Associate Professor Ahmad Nurulazam Md. Zain  
Associate Professor Sarjit Kaur  
Dr. Aniswal Abd. Ghani  
Dr. Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan Abdullah

**Assistant Editors:**  
Ms. Nor Azreen Zainul  
Ms. Noraini Mohamad Yusof  
Mr. Christopher Koh Bon Han  
Ms. Siti Asma' Mohd. Rosdi

**Graphics and Layout:**  
Ms. Noraini Mohamad Yusof



Materials in this bulletin may be reproduced. Please cite the original source of publication. Opinions expressed here may not necessarily reflect the views of IPPTN.