

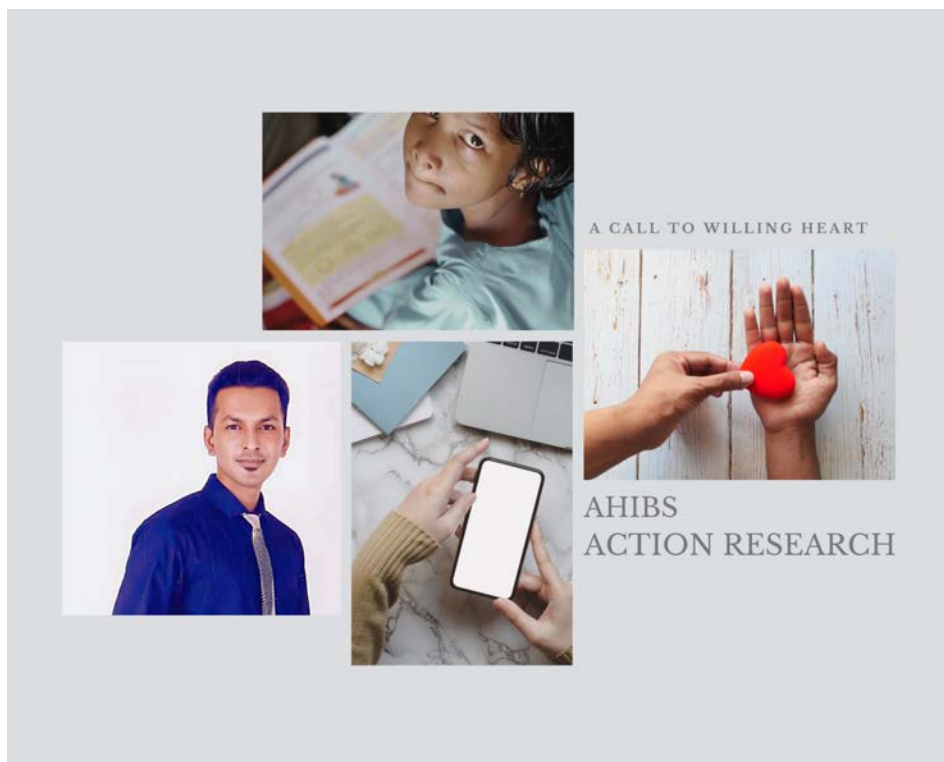
INSIDEahibs

Newsletter, May 2021

Azman Hashim International Business School (AHIBS), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) is committed to the development of innovative and entrepreneurial leaders who contribute to the advancement of knowledge, societal wealth and well-being. AHIBS offers academic programs, executive education, research and consultancy services in business management.

Learning

AHIBS Action Research – From Local to International Stage



“AHIBS MBA Action Research Framework has provided a complete learning experience that seeks a noble practical solution to real problems”. This is the remark shared by one of our MBA students, Pratheep Bobi, a final semester student who has recently graduated.

For his action research project, Pratheep has selected the Pertubuhan Kebajikan Anak-Anak Yatim Damo Kluang (Damo Children’s Home / PKAYDK), a small-scale orphanage home that looks after the welfare of underprivileged children. Although it has been around for 15 years, PKAYDK, like many NGOs, struggles to maintain a steady flow of funds for its operations.

Through the action research platform, AHIBS managed to match this external need with internal experts (i.e., our students). Our framework requires students to engage with chosen organizations to determine their needs, gather data, implement and measure relevant interventions to address their problems.

Pratheep found that PKAYDK had engaged in several fundraising activities but they had been less fruitful and unable to garner enough attention due to lack of social media visibility. Charity bodies throughout the world increasingly practice content marketing in communicating their philanthropic messages and fundraisings. Social media content can be used to create the impressions of transparency and accountability of the organization to enhance public/donors' loyalty.

Using knowledge gained in the MBA program, Pratheep assisted the home in designing its digital marketing strategy that involved enhancing the operations of its social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Whatsapp), producing relevant contents (videos, online brochures, online sessions, etc.), and maintaining a positive engagement with the public / potential donors. After three months, the intervention has so far improved PKAYDK's online visibility across Malaysia. Based on a survey conducted, the number of people who have heard about PKAYDK has increased more than 4 times compared to before the intervention. Its targeted social media content has also reached more people and funds. Pratheep is trying to work with potential parties to secure a sustainable supply of necessities to support the home where possible. Partheep is continuing to assist the home to manage its social media platforms while identifying possibilities of training some of the kids for their long-term sustainability.

Mr. Dhamodran, founder of Damo Children's Home praised the initiative. "We have limited resources at this home. When Pratheep contacted us with his plan, we were more than happy to participate", he said. He found that the digital marketing content has become a great help for him to communicate about his home and its activities to many other potential donors. He was particularly impressed with AHIBS's intention and its students' capability in coming forward to help organizations such as PKAYDK through their action research projects.

Pratheep has brought this project further at the international level. It was recently presented at the NGO Research Day 2021 in March organized by the University of Sussex, UK. The online conference featured projects around the world that discuss how technology shapes the modern perceptions of the NGO sector, its performance, governance and accountability, and identities. The audience applauded this effort and Pratheep is now exploring possibilities of having this research published for wider recognition and appreciation.

Congratulations to Pratheep and his supervisor, Dr. Shathees Baskaran, for taking the action research project further to fully leverage its benefits.

Learning

Dr. Mohd. Effandi Yusoff Leads Johor Investment Master Plan 2020-2030



AHIBS academic staff, Dr. Mohd. Effandi Mohd Yusoff, has been awarded by the Johor State Government to lead a consultancy project worths RM500,000 to prepare the Johor Investment Master Plan 2020 – 2030.

The Master Plan is part of the Johor State Government's aim to create a resilient ecosystem based on advanced technologies, high impact investments, and halal industry to propel the state towards an advanced economy. Once completed, the Master Plan will serve as the key reference in designing investment strategies and initiatives in Johor for the next ten years.

According to Dr. Effandi, "the Covid-19 pandemic has presented major economic challenges. Attracting foreign investments will be difficult. Therefore, aggressive economic strategies that consider foreign and local investments need to be in place to develop Johor in the post-pandemic period". The project will involve engagement with key stakeholders and economic players to identify investment trends, restructuring of economic activities, and recommendations to strengthen the state's investment machinery.

Dr. Effandi holds a PhD in Commercialisation from the University of Nottingham Trent. His academic works concentrate in the areas of Islamic banking and finance, fintech, and commercialization. This project is his latest feat in securing grants from the Johor State Government having previously completed a policy research worths RM1.2 million on Johor Sustainable Development Plan 2030.

Student & Alumni

AHIBS DBA Complements Experience in the Tech Industry



For this May 2021 newsletter, we feature our current student, Ms. Ts. Haslinda Rasip - a professional technologist and an entrepreneur, who pursues AHIBS Doctorate in Business Administration (Business Innovation).

Haslinda has over 20 years of experience in the tech industry. She now serves as the Chief Technology Officer and co-founder for Dropee.com - an Asian tech start-up that provides a wholesale omni-commerce solution. The company receives increasing media limelight as an example of a tech solution that helps the Malaysian food supply chain to sustain its business in the Covid-19 pandemic. The platform gives opportunities to farmers and fishermen to directly market and sell their produce to wholesalers, distributors, and retail businesses. Dropee hopes to maximize the supply chain effectiveness and minimize production wastage by empowering each stakeholder with a transparent process. Haslinda's roles at Dropee includes designing its system roadmap, leading engineering and product teams, and working closely with customers and partners.

Haslinda is also the Chief Operating Officer and co-founder for BETA Foundation, an institution that advances technoentrepreneurship development and ecosystems in the South East Asian region. Through the Foundation, she provides coaching and mentoring services to technopreneurs and startup founders through a vast network of public and private stakeholders.

After accumulating some experience in the industry, Haslinda felt a pressing need for an industry-relevant postgraduate degree that can give her a deeper understanding of her work. She has found that in AHIBS DBA program. "The DBA program is unique and provides beyond-the-boundary business knowledge. The technology component is included in all courses that make learning relatable and relevant to my experience", she remarks. The program combines both academic and practical perspectives in its curriculum delivery.

Haslinda is now working on several projects in digitalizing the supply chain especially in the wholesale industry with individuals, businesses, and also government agencies. The main objective of the digitalization transformation is to establish more bankable micro and small-medium enterprises using technology. This similar purpose is pursued in her DBA dissertation in which she is developing a user-centered design framework to improve online businesses in the wholesale industry. Once completed the framework can potentially contribute to creating an efficient tech solution to promote a sustainable food supply chain industry.

Event

UTM-University of Mindanao Virtual Forum Features AHIBS Researcher and Student

The poster features the logos of UTM (Universiti Teknologi Malaysia) and UUM (The University of Mindanao) at the top. The main title is "VIRTUAL STUDENT RESEARCH FORUM ON BUSINESS AND EDUCATION" in bold yellow and white text. Below the title is the theme: "THEME: CULTIVATING RESILIENCE AND INNOVATION IN BUSINESS AND EDUCATION". The date and time are "MAY 18, 2021, TUESDAY (2:00 - 5:00 PM GMT+8)".

PLENARY SPEAKERS:

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. ROSMINI OMAR**
Azman Hashim International Business School (AHIBS)
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
- Dr. RONNIE V. AMORADO**
SVP for Academic Planning and Services
University of Mindanao

STUDENT SPEAKERS:

- SOFIAZIANTI SALEH**
Ph.D. in Educational Psychology
- RIJETER PINEDA DIEL**
Ph.D. in Educational Management
- RIKK NICHOLSON M. NALZARO**
Master of Science in Accountancy
- MURNI ZARINA MOHAMED RAZALI**
Ph.D. in Sustainability Learning and Employees' Development

UTM and the University of Mindanao, Philippines recently hosted a virtual research forum on May 18th, 2021, with the theme "Cultivating Resilience and Innovation in Business and Education". The objective was to provide an avenue for faculty and student researchers from both universities to share their research findings and practices that will promote opportunities for research collaborations.

The forum was timely and relevant as we move forward towards the new normal (post-Covid era) with positivity and optimism. The convergence and sharing of ideas within the scientific community are highly needed to cope with the upfront challenges.

The event brought together two plenary speakers and four students from both institutions. AHIBS was represented by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rosmini Omar who shared about her experience in leading Erasmus-funded research projects and the role of business schools in the Covid era. Whereas, Ms. Murni Zarina Mohamed Razali, a PhD student at AHIBS shared her research on sustainability learning in Malaysian organizations.

The forum was broadcasted live on Facebook and has received much interests from both countries and elsewhere with close to 2000 views. The recording can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3oEpTWZ>.

Congratulations to the organizing committee at the Professional Schools of the University of Mindanao, and UTM International for the event's success. The forum marks an inaugural collaboration between the two institutions and has opened up dialogues for future activities.

