

## Human Governance Approach in Building High Performing Learners

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*Abstract: Academic dishonesty and unethical behaviours such as cheating and plagiarism are obstacles to innovative and creative thinking and mastering the course materials. Recognition of human values and principles from the internal drivers can drive and motivate individuals to excel beyond expectation. Various programmes have been executed to encourage ethical student behaviour. However, the programmes are not an integral part of the course. This paper describes the method used to build consciousness at a deeper level in one of the Electronic Engineering courses for the purpose of producing high performing learners with good values. A strategy was developed where a mechanism was used to make the learners realize the correct way of sharing knowledge and the wrongdoings in academic that may become their habit and usual practice. Being human was stressed in the first lecture with the realization of the purpose of life and discussion on the code of conduct as a learner and effect of academic dishonesty on society. Student responses to Being Human Evaluation questionnaires allow suitable activities to be designed to enhance their knowledge and skills. The human governance approach has demonstrated a positive impact on the course outcomes.*

**Keywords:** Human governance, being human, God conscious, academic dishonesty, unethical behaviours.

## INTRODUCTION

Integrity and trustworthiness are the significant aspects of highly effective charismatic leadership (Bartholomew Craig & Custafson, 1998). Researches conducted by (Bartholomew Craig & Custafson, 1998; Sean et al., 2011) have shown that ethical, principled and wholesome behaviour of leaders lead to positive outcomes in the organisation and bring success to the leaders. One of the ways to shape or train individu to be an ethical person is through education. It is the role of higher learning institution to produce graduates with good moral and values (Lim & Lee, 2016; Ahmad et al., 2015).

Human governance approach was proposed to be employed in organisation and institution of higher learning (IHL). Salleh and Ahmad (2009) suggested human governance to be a focus as a strategy to govern corporations. Hanapiyah et al. (2016) analysed the determinants of human governance and proposed the variables to be the spotlight by organisations to improve their employees. Ahmad et al. (2015) recommended the implementation of human governance in the management of IHL by first exploring the best way through research to produce effective leaders, team members and managers. Even though several reports have discussed the human governance in education, most are conceptual frameworks, an approach of human governance implementation in the classroom has not been reported. According to Salleh et al, (2009), human governance is people-centred, principle-based, and the best way to encourage excellent performance. It is the internal moral drive which can motivate individuals to excel and control them from executing unethical actions. Salleh and Ahmad (2012) proposed the human being roles and principles that governed them to be included in the accounting curriculum. Since the proposed ethics education model by Salleh and Ahmad (2012) is considered a framework and focussed for accounting, a more detailed model which is applicable to any programme has to be created. In the existing Electrical Engineering curriculum, the ethics topics are included in a few courses, however the contents are fully complete and comprehensive since the inclusion of the belief or core values is not incorporated (Salleh and Ahmad, 2012).

This paper describes human governance approach used in the classroom to enhance and encourage students' ethical behaviour. It is believed that the use of inner principles will help the students to avoid plagiarism and unethical

behaviour, produce original work and hence perform well in their studies.

## METHOD

The human governance approach was implemented in the teaching of two groups of semester five students studying one of the electronic engineering courses. The total number of students involved in the work was fifty-five. The approach comprises several stages which include being human evaluation, Secret of Success talk, 'Teach Your Friend' training, remind student continually and finally monitoring students' behaviour as shown in Fig.1. In the first lecture, after discussing the course outline and introducing the outcome based education in the class, being human evaluation (BHE) was carried out. The evaluation was conducted online where all students in the class have to answer the questions created on Google form. They were allowed to answer the questions using the computer provided in the class or their mobile phones.

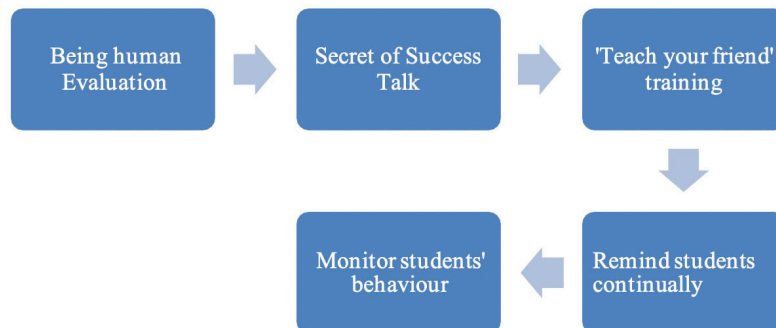


Fig. 1 Strategies in human governance approach.

The purpose of conducting this evaluation is to make the learners realize the correct way of sharing knowledge and the wrong doings in academic. There are six questions in the BHE online form. The first question was designed to check whether they have experience of cheating in the test or exam. The second question asked about their feeling when cheating in the exam or test and the reason for doing it. The third, fourth and fifth questions checked their integrity in solving the assignment and test questions by giving scenarios (see Fig. 2).

**3. Your friend does not know how to solve the assignment and ask the solution from you. What would you do?**

- Pass your solution to her/him.
- Allow her/him to copy but remind her/him to change a few sentences to make it looks different.
- Do not show your solution but teach her/him to do it.
- Prepare another solution and give it to her/him to submit.

**4. Your best friend could not solve the test question and signal you during the test. Do you...**

- Pass your solution to her/him.
- Give the clue to her/him when the lecturer is not looking at both of you.
- Pretend that you do not see the signal and continue answering the question.
- Raise your hands and let the lecturer knows that your friend asks for the solution from you during the test.

**5. It's exam time, and your lecturer steps out of the room and accidentally leaves the answer on his/her desk. Do you....**

- Sell each answer for RM50 a piece.
- Leave it alone and earn your grade.
- Blackmail the lecturer into giving everybody at least a 'B'
- Hold on to the answer and give it back for a fee

**Fig. 2 Samples of BHE online questions**

After the students completing the BHE online form, a talk on the secret of success was delivered for ten minutes with the aims to open the students' eyes on the correct way of learning and the importance of integrity in life. The contents of the talk include, the code of conduct as learner, ethics in project, the importance of ethics, the effect of academic dishonesty on oneself and the society, and the purpose of life. The students were introduced with the meaning of 'be human' which refers to actualize rightness or practicing ethics (Salleh et al, 2009; Bilal Philips, 2002). The discussion on this topic was carried out to build a conscience in them so that their internal values will judge, control their actions and prevent them from doing the wrong things, and to assist them to link the environment to their transcendental accountability.

The students were trained to teach their friends in every activity carried out in the classroom and laboratory. Peer to peer teaching was practiced during active learning where the good students were given a task to teach a group of students who could not solve the questions. This approach will make them see the correct way of helping their friends to understand the subject matter. They were reminded to 'be human' continually, for example during delivery of assignment and mini project tasks and before the quizzes and

tests started. Monitoring of students behaviour during each activity in the class was carried out to ensure the students engaged in the activity. It is difficult to measure the effectiveness of the human governance approach. The students' performance based on the course outcomes and observation through out the activities were used to analyse the impact of the human governance approach. Table 1 shows the outcomes for the course and the key performance indicator (KPI) that the students have to achieve for all outcomes. The attainment of the course outcomes and the percentage of the students achieving the targeted level of the outcomes were measured using an online evaluation system called OBEET. The details on the measurement of the course outcomes can be found in Mansor et al, (2017).

CO	Course Outcome Statements	KPI
CO1	Analyze microprocessor based program and circuit designs.	65%
CO2	Design hardware and software interfacing.	65%
CO3	Demonstrate entrepreneurial attributes in solving engineering problem through innovation.	65%

Table 1 Course outcomes and the KPI

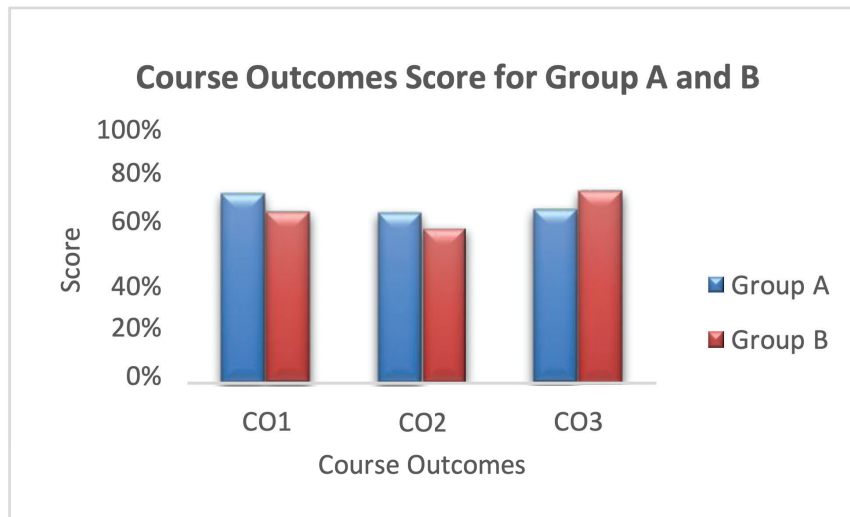
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The response from the BHE online questions give some information on the students' background, attitude and their thinking. The response serves as the basis for designing suitable activities that give them opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge throughout the semester for the course. The talk on the 'Secret of Success' especially the 'The Purpose of Life' part has awakened the students on God consciousness and their transcendental accountability from the look in their eyes. The 'Teach Your Friend' training has given a positive change in the students behaviour. Observation during the activities in the class and laboratory has shown that the students are practicing peer-to-peer teaching in helping their friends to solve the problems. This indicates that the training has the potential to deviate their thinking from the usual mode of practice (wrong way) for some students and build strong work ethics. Reminding the students continually on the ethics also helps the students to enhance their ethical sensitivity and make them engage in ethical behavior.

The human governance approach has provided a positive impact on the students' performance for both groups. Figure 3 shows the score for the

students' ability of analyzing microprocessor based program and circuit designs (CO1), designing hardware and software interfacing (CO2) and demonstrating entrepreneurial attributes in solving engineering problem through innovation (CO3). Students in both groups have achieved score of above the targeted level which is more than 65% for CO1 and CO3. Different observation is found for CO2 between these groups. Group A students has managed to achieve good level for this ability whereas group B students are 2.5% below the targeted level. This shows that a few activities that have been carried out are not suitable to some of the group B students.

Percentage of Group A students achieving score of more than 50% for all course outcomes is more than 80%. For group B, 77% of the students has achieved score of more than 50% for CO1 and 100% of the students has attained the KPI for CO3. However, only 61% of the students managed to attain more than 50% score for CO2. The results indicate that the human governance approach is effective for enhancing the entrepreneurial and managerial skills of the students.



**Fig. 3 Course outcomes attainment for two groups**

## **CONCLUSION**

Human Governance approach has been implemented in the teaching delivery and activities in the classroom. The student responses to BHE questionnaires give some indications on students thinking which can be used to develop a strategy for enhancing and encouraging the ethical behaviour among them. The observations on the students' behaviour during classroom and laboratory activities show that the approach can bring the students' back to being human or build work ethics. The course outcomes attainment measured from two groups of students demonstrated that the approach has produced positive impact especially in enhancing the entrepreneurial and managerial skills.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This work was supported by Academic and Research Assimilation Scheme (ARAS), Malaysia (600- RMI/DANA 5/3/ARAS (7/2015). The authors would like to express their gratitude to Faculty of Electrical Engineering for providing equipment for this research, and to Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia, for financial support.

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