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- **Special Issue-A deep memory of Dr. Arfah Salleh -**
ABEST21

THE ALLIANCE ON BUSINESS EDUCATION AND SCHOLARSHIP FOR TOMORROW,
a 21st century organization

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A deep memory of Professor Arfah Salleh

Professor Arfah passed away on the 18th of December 2020.

ITOH Fumio, ABEST21 President

We announce with deep sadness that Dr. Arfah Salleh, Former President & CEO, Putra Business School and Founder & Principal Director, Human Governance Institute INC., Malaysia, passed away on the 18th of December 2020 at the age of 61 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She was a vital force among the community of ABEST21, and with her passing, many have lost a friend and a colleague. Although we did not spend much time with her, we always enjoyed our lively conversations. She had a very good sense of humor, though always took her responsibilities seriously. We will remember her for her hard work and dedication during the Joint Research Project No.8 "Humanizing Management Education for Sustainable Economic Development in Asia-Pacific," for her collegiality, for her forward-looking thinking, and her keen ability to engage and collaborate with international members of ABEST21. Her contribution to promoting of Joint Research Project No.8 was invaluable, and she leaves us with fond memories and a mandate for ABEST21 to continue and become even stronger over time.



“To my mother”

Anas Matsham & Family

My mother, the kindest of souls full of empathy and selflessness

My mother, the purest of hearts with no prejudice or judgement

My mother, the strongest of will with never ending dedication and perseverance

My mother, the intrigued mind forever seeking the truth

My mother, purposeful, reminding us what does it mean to be human

My mother, the late Prof. Arfah Salleh

My mother, thank you for who I am today

May we continue to champion your beautiful message of Human Governance to the world.

“Prof. Dr. Arfah Salleh”

Associate Professor Dr. Devika Nadarajah

Putra Business School, Malaysia

Professor Dr. Arfah Salleh, Professor of Human Governance, was the first President and Chief Executive Officer of Putra Business School (2012 to 2016). She had a Bachelor’s degree in Accountancy, a Master’s degree in Finance and Investment, and a PhD in Accounting Education and Courseware and Systems Design.

During the early days of her career, she excelled in teaching, research, and innovation, winning various commercialisation opportunities, international patents, and accolades due to her active involvement in the computer-based teaching of basic accounting. Her passion, work ethic, and diligence in academia did not go unnoticed. She was recognized and given the responsibility to serve as Dean of the Graduate School of Management (GSM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and a member of the UPM Senate. She was also appointed as the coordinator of GSM’s research-based PhD and MSc programmes.

Professor Dr. Arfah was no stranger to the industry as well, being a member of the Malaysian Accounting Standards Board, the Deloitte industry-academic initiative, the Malaysian Institute of Accountants, and the CPA (Australia). She further demonstrated her commitment to the education sector by advocating and supporting the government’s education initiatives. A testament to her efforts, she held prestigious positions as advisor to the Ministry of Education in curriculum development and teachers’ training, advisor to the Malaysian Higher Education Ministry in accreditation matters, and panel member of the SETARA rating of universities and university colleges. She also sat on the committee of multiple international business accreditation bodies.

With the emergence and growth of corporate scandals over the past decades, Professor Dr. Arfah felt duty bound to take action rather than be a passive observer. She went on to formulate and champion the Human Governance philosophy, calling for leaders from all walks of life to remember their spiritual purpose and use it as an internal guiding light or moral compass in decision-making. As the leader of Putra Business School (PBS), she embodied Human Governance and instilled the philosophy in all PBS students, faculty members, and staff. Urging leaders to “be human”, she tirelessly published manuscripts and delivered talks on Human Governance to government and private agencies in Malaysia and abroad.

After her term at Putra Business School, she was appointed as the Vice Chancellor of UNITAR for a brief period before she moved on to establish the Human Governance Institute. She continued pursuing her passion until her Creator decided it was time she returned. She touched many lives – her legacy shall live on.

“Professor Arfah was most prominent in Malaysia as the pioneer, advocate and professor of the philosophy of Human Governance.”

President & CEO Professor Dr. Zulkornain Yusop

Putra Business School, Malaysia

Prof. Dr. Arfah was Founder, President and CEO of Putra Business School (PBS) since 2013 until 2016. Prof. Dr. Arfah binti Salleh, who was most prominent in Malaysia as the pioneer, advocate and professor of the philosophy of Human Governance, sadly passed away on December 19, 2020. Hailing from Bandar Bharu, Kedah, she rose through her education and was accomplished in accountancy, finance and investment, accounting education, Accounting Courseware and Systems Design. She was also renowned in the world of academia and the industry, with numerous memorable feats in teaching, research, and innovation.

Her advocacy towards Human Governance started with the emergence of corporate scandals over the past decades. She felt duty bound to take action, and eventually managed to formulate the very philosophy she believed in. She was involved in strengthening the foundation and network for her philosophy, publishing papers and delivering talks on Human Governance to various departments and agencies in Malaysia and abroad. After her term at PBS ended, she went on and established the Human Governance Institute, where she continued her passion.

Her service and contributions to society and country were widely acclaimed, and her wisdom and tenacious spirit lives on and remembered by those around her.

“Dr. Arfah was a transformational leader of Humanity on Human Governance.”

Senior Vice President, Professor Dr Ali Khatibi

Management & Science University, Malaysia

Vice President - ABEST21

It was with deep sadness that I heard of the death of Professor Dr. Arfah Salleh on December 18, 2020. I have long held her in high regard and see her as a transformational leader inspiring Humanity and Human governance.

To the family, friends and the wider educational community in Malaysia and ABEST21 members, I want to express my condolences (Al-Fatihah) to the Arwah' Professor Arfah family; this is a sad day for education in Malaysia. The efforts and legacy of Arwah's Professor Arfah will continue.

“Professor Arfah was a strong proponent of the idea of ‘Human Governance’.”

Dean Professor Dr. Azlan Amran

Graduate School of Business, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

I had the privilege of meeting Professor Arfah Salleh on several occasions, both formal and informal. I really admired her charisma and leadership aura when she was at the helm of Putra Business School (PBS), steering it to become one of the top business schools in Malaysia. As a member of the Peer Review Team (PRT) who was sent to PBS for the ABEST21 Accreditation, I recall sharing with fellow PRT team members that the success and achievement of PBS is attributed to Professor Arfah Salleh's amazing leadership prowess and relentless commitment in propelling PBS to reach greater heights.

Professor Arfah Salleh was a strong proponent of the idea of 'Human Governance' - a concept that re-considers and re-visits the model of the nature of humans that we largely use today. According to her, the concept of Human Governance goes beyond the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility. She has been acknowledged as a top Professor by peers back home, and we are all the beneficiaries of her tangible legacy. She was a regular invited speaker and a keynote speaker in many academic conferences and dialogues where she shared her ideas on the concept of human governance.

She will be fondly remembered for her contribution as a great leader and a proponent of the concept of human governance. May Allah grant her Jannah.

Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"When a person dies, his deeds are cut off except for three: Continuing charity, knowledge that others benefited from, and a righteous son who supplicates for him.

"Professor Arfah was a highly valuable and respected leader and academic."

Director Professor Dr. Faidz Abd Rahman

Institute of Postgraduate Studies and Research, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia

We are saddened by the news of Professor Arfah Salleh's passing, and we would like to express our sincere condolences to her family. Professor Arfah was an exemplary leader and the pride of many women who look up to her as a role model. She was a highly valuable and respected leader and academic whose passion for her profession has touched the lives of many who worked with her. Professor Arfah will always be remembered for her vibrant personality and her focused leadership.

"Professor Arfah worked her way up with one objective, to make Putra Business School a "world class business school."

Dean Professor Dr. Sulaiman Sajilan

Universiti Kuala Lumpur Business School, Universiti Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

"It is my honour to talk about the late Professor Dr. Arfah Salleh, a soft spoken but full of confidence and straight to the point. I only knew her because we are in the same capacity but different university. I have not seen her for quite a long time and I did not remember when we last met. No one worked harder than Professor Dr Arfah. She knew every aspect of the business, which is not a surprise since she started as an academician, of course I much earlier than her. She worked her way up with one objective, to make Putra Business School a "world class business school, we were share the same vision". Let's start by remembering her serious but friendly face. A real loss for UPM and nation.

"Professor Arfah was a visionary who was always creative in introducing new ideas for business school development in Malaysia."

Dean Professor Syed Jamal Abdul Nasir bin Syed Mohamad

Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

The news of Professor Arfah's passing is saddening and leaves a great sorrow to the business school family in Malaysia. Professor Arfah had made a priceless contribution to the development of business schools in Malaysia. She was a dedicated and diligent worker without knowing the meaning

of being tired and weary. She was a visionary who was always creative in introducing new ideas for business school development in Malaysia. Most importantly, Professor Arfah was also a generous and kind soul. May Allah bless her soul and place her among those who are pious. And may she be admitted to the paradise of Firdaus insyallah.

"To Allah we belong and To Him we return" Quran Chapter Baqarah (Quran 2:156). "Every soul shall taste death and only on the Day of the Judgement shall you be paid your full recompense. Only those who are saved from the fire and admitted to Paradise will have attained the object (of life). For the life of this world is but good and chattels of deception" (Quran 3:185)

"Professor Arfah was a mentor to guide us in the ABEST accreditation process."

Dean Fazeeda Mohamad, Ph.D.

Faculty of Industrial Management, Universiti Malaysia Phang, Malaysia

No one worked harder than Prof Dr Arfah Salleh for her love in human governance. She knew every aspect of human governance. She graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Accountancy, Masters in Finance and Investment, and a Ph.D. in the areas of Systems Design, Courseware Development, and Accounting Education. She worked her way up as the Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder, Human Governance Institute Inc. (HGII), besides a Professor (Honorary) at University Sains Malaysia.

A true believer of the importance of humans embodying our essence as relational beings, Prof. Dr. Arfah Salleh co-founded HGII as a platform to share the philosophy of Human Governance to individuals in various organizations and educational settings. She holds an international-patent for her accounting education courseware and has received many accolades including Woman Inventor of the Year Award (2005) from the Geneva-based IFIA. Prof. Dr. Arfah Salleh had also held numerous leading positions in both public and private educational institutions including capacities as the Dean, President, and Vice-Chancellor. She wrote a book entitled: Human Governance: A Paradigm Shift in Governing Corporations, published by MPH Publishing, become an invited speaker to many organization and medias, and has published numerous works on Human Governance.

She was always close to our heart when she was one of the faculty's Board of Studies. She advised our faculty on the program curriculum design and ensured that we attain the program outcomes through cognitive, psychomotor and affective. Not forgetting, it felt so good when we had a mentor to guide us in the ABEST accreditation process. Having said that, we would never thank enough for her undying support to the faculty.

She will always be a part of our hearts and a bright star in the ABEST21 family.

Professor Arfah was a vital force among the community of ABEST21.

1. Professor Arfah organized ABEST21 International Symposium

"Creating the Future through Quality Improvement"

On Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at Sony University in Shinagawa, Tokyo, the symposium on "Creating the Future through Quality Improvement" was held, chaired by Professor Hirotaka Kawano (Dean, Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University). The theme was how to create an organization which develops and realizes the dreams for the future. This was an opportunity to think about the

driving force of such development. At the symposium the keynote speech was given by Prof. Dr. Channarong Pornrunroj (Director of ONESQA, President of AQAN, Thailand) and panel discussion was held with Dr. Arfah Salleh as a commentator. Respective panelists reported on the current issues of university reform. Dr. Arfah Salleh raised questions on the leadership of Rectors in the university reform.

Commentator:

- Prof. Dr. Arfah Binti Salleh (President & CEO, Putra Business School, Malaysia)

Panelists:

- Prof. Dr. Hasriadi Mat Akin (Rector, Universitas Lampung, Indonesia)
- Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ashari (Rector, Universitas Telkom, Indonesia)
- Prof. Dr. Kusmartono (Vice Rector, Universitas Brawijaya)



2. Professor Arfah was a promoter of Joint Research Project No.8 “Humanizing Management Education for Sustainable Economic Development in Asia-Pacific”

Background:

“Humanizing the School’s Research and Education” is one of the important criteria of ABEST21’s accreditation system for quality improvement. Following the intensifying globalization process and advancement of technological innovation where robotics, machine learning, artificial intelligence and digitization are changing the ways we do business, human factors are playing more critical role in today’s management process for sustainable development. What does humanizing management mean to businesses? To what extent are the business schools incorporating the humanizing aspect into their management education? These are some of the issues to address in this research project.

Objectives of the study:

- (1) To examine the level of understanding/awareness of the concept of humanizing management education among ABEST21 members
- (2) To document and analyze the practices initiated at business schools in humanizing business management education
- (3) To identify challenges in the implementation of humanizing efforts

(4) To investigate key stakeholders' viewpoints on the importance of humanizing management education.

Methodology:

This project has two phases. The first phase of the study aims to analyze the humanizing practices among ABEST21 members, to gauge the level of understanding of humanizing as well as the challenges encountered in the implementation of humanizing activities. For this purpose, surveys are conducted at ABEST21 member schools located in Japan, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. In addition to collecting inputs from ABEST21 members via survey and discussion, content analysis is used to analyze ABEST21 member schools' humanizing initiatives as reported in the Self-Check Report submitted by members for accreditation purpose.

The second phase of the study involves discussions and interviews with key stakeholders, particularly companies, government agencies and other related organizations on the importance and the relevance of humanizing management for sustainable development.

Researchers:

Prof. Emeritus Dr. ITOH Fumio, ABEST21

Prof. Dr. Arfah Salleh, Human Governance Institute Inc.

Prof. Dr. Ming Yu Cheng, Universiti Tanku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia

Prof. Dr. Qin Hai Ma, Northeastern University, China

Dr. Rapeeporn Srijumpa, Burapha University, Thailand

Dr. Riani Rachmawati, Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia

Communication between us on the Introductory Chapter

November 25, 2020 17:20

Dear President Itoh,

Yes, I would be happy to prepare it.

Could you advise on where I could source for the official information regarding the project please?

Looking forward to receiving the relevant info.

Thank you and kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Arfah Salleh.

November 26, 2020 20:23

Dear President Dr. Arfah Salleh:

Hope you are doing well.

Please find my manuscripts attached. I hope this note satisfies your request on the outline of the Joint Research Project No. 8.

All the bests,

ITOH Fumio

November 30, 2020 2:35

Dear President Itoh,

I am pleased to forward to your goodself the above.

May I seek your further input to the Draft before we share with the rest of the research project team unless you feel it is appropriate to share with them as it is.

Thank you for your attention and patience.

Yours sincerely,

Arfah Salleh

December 2, 2020 11:09

Dear President Arfah Salleh:

Hope you are doing well.

Thanks so much for your Draft sent to me on Nov. 30. I think your Draft will meet our philosophy of the ABEST21 Accreditation on "how to nurture global management professionals in globalized society."

Thanks once again for your significant contribution.

I wish you the best of health and hope everything will be back to normal soon.

All the bests,

ITOH Fumio

December 2, 2020 15:359

Dear President Itoh,

Thank you for your feedback on the Draft and your kind wishes for my health.

I am glad that you find the Draft representing the philosophy of ABEST21 to "nurture global management professionals in globalized society."

Moving on, shall I share the Draft with Prof Cheng so that she could invite the rest of the team members to proceed with their respective sections?

Looking forward to receiving your advice.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Arfah Salleh

Professor Arfah Salleh's Introductory Chapter (Draft)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Humanizing Management Education & Sustainable Development Management Education and Globalization

In the age of globalization, the role of management education in nurturing management professionals who can contribute to a better world can never be overemphasized. Towards this end, it is helpful to revisit how the shift in the historical view that resources are abundant towards one that is of scarcity had impacted the way business and countries are run.

While a philosophy of resource abundance as suggested by John Locke implied that man was to obtain what he needed out of plentiful gifts from God, over time, the capitalist economy has turned the world into one of competition for ownership of these scarce resources.

The maxim of "Maximisation of Profit for Shareholders" and that human thinking is guided by Adam Smith's motto of "homo economicus" who exists to maximise economic wealth for self-interest became the foundational purpose of doing business adopted by business entities. The same ethos has also become what is taught in most management education programs, disregarding the interest of other stakeholders including employees.

Such philosophical view has shown adverse effect on the well-being of the organization as a single entity. And when practised at the larger or aggregate level of regional settings, the potential harm that awaits global conflict cannot be dismissed. The world has seen how as a result of the Capitalistic thinking that the gap between the economic well-being of the "haves" and "don't haves" has exponentially grown so that today, according to Oxfam (2020) the world's 2,153 billionaires have more wealth than the 4.6 billion people who make up 60% of the planet's population.

Sustainable Development Goals

On the larger world platform, in recognition of the need to address the future of world peace and prosperity, the United Nations crafted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which was adopted by all UN Member States in 2015. This document

“provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries – developing and developed – in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.” ([THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/))

While the SDGs have been cemented in the 2030 document, to turn the SDGs into a reality, a strong commitment by all stakeholders to implement the goals cannot be compromised.

These stakeholders include management education providers.

As highlighted earlier, the assumption that human as having a purpose to serve the interest of the self only will need to shift towards one that cares about the interests of others, too. Management education that side-lines the importance of observing the relationship between humans in favour of only the self towards only material acquisition needs addressing. Unless management education providers take conscious effort(s) to bring into the learning journey of future global professional managers of their higher purpose role of being managers other than just to maximise the profit of their organizations, the potential achievement of the SDGs can be affected. Any commitment to the Agenda too, should not only be at a superficial level of “ticking the boxes”. Appreciating the culture and values that form the basis of regional collaboration for the Asia-Pacific becomes imperative.

1.2 ABEST21’s Quality Improvement and Humanizing Education

In cognizance of the increasingly impactful role that management education can play with regard to the human well-being Agenda globally and in tandem with the SDGs, ABEST21 has adopted “Humanizing the School’s Research and Education” as one of the important criteria of ABEST21’s accreditation system for quality improvement.

Member schools are required to declare in their respective documentation, how they have implemented strategies and/or policies on “Humanizing the School’s Research and Education” based on their interpretations of “Humanizing Management Education”.

How the conception of “Humanizing Management Education” is interpreted by an institution can be influenced by how the organization/ institution views the nature and role of human in the larger society as well as when their graduates become professional global managers of organizations.

For instance, when the inter-relationship among humans is recognized as a key feature of human, contrary to human as a stand-alone independent object, there should be acceptance that every decision made and action taken will have impact on others. This can create the empathy for one another so that when graduates take on their role as professional managers and leaders, they are sensitive to all potential repercussions of their decisions whether within the organizations or larger society. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has showcased the importance of viewing “humanizing” our daily life from the perspective of humans as being a network of relationship in society. While the experience has also revealed how technological advances can play a vital task to facilitate business processes and management, how the dynamics of trust as a human element becomes the non-visible component sustaining the life of organizations is one that is real.

Hence, “Humanizing Management Education” is one area that has been identified by ABEST21 as a way forward to improve the quality of the management education provided.

2.0 Project Overview (Prof. Cheng)

2.1 Research Background

This Joint Research Project No. 8 “Humanizing Management Education for Sustainable Economic Development in Asia-Pacific” is a fruit of the devoted collaboration of the ABEST21 Global Knowledge Network.

We are confident that this Joint Research Project contributes to the enrichment of people who, possessed of unshakable faith in symbiotic relationships and working in harmony with nature, are capable of serving society and working in aid of the development of the economic communities of the Asia-Pacific.

This research is intended to assist business schools and companies to understand the expectations and needs of companies regarding management education in business schools and competencies necessary for company managers.

“Professor Arfah was a great teacher and mentor, as well as a special friend.”

Prof. Dr. Ming Yu Cheng

Faculty of Accountancy and Management, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia

I was so saddened to hear the news of the passing of Professor Arfah Salleh on December 18, 2020. I have known Prof. Arfah for more than 20 years. She was my professor at Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (later known as Universiti Putra Malaysia, UPM), for the subject “Introductory Accounting”. I got a chance to interact more with Prof. Arfah through ABEST21 activities. Since July 2019, we have been working on the humanizing management education project initiated by ABEST21. Prof. Arfah has shared many great ideas with the team members on how to reshape our education systems for sustainable development, to minimize scandals and to avoid future crises. Prof. Arfah was a strong advocate of human governance. She strongly believed that business schools play an important role in nurturing responsible and ethical leaders to create a peaceful and harmonious world. Businesses should not be just focusing on profits. She also said, *“learning about ethics requires us to know about the human nature”*, hence she encouraged us to delve deeper into the nature of human, to challenge our students to question who they are and what purpose is their life. The ultimate goal is to create a better life for everyone.

Prof. Arfah was a great teacher and mentor, as well as a special friend; she will always be remembered for her efforts to pursue a new path in developing quality business management education for sustainable development.

“Professor Arfah was indeed an inspiration and visionary.”

Professor Dr. Qinhai Ma

School of Business Administration, Northeastern University, China

I am sorry to hear about Professor Arfah Salleh passing. My deep condolences to you all. My connection to Professor Arfah Salleh was in ABEST21 family, and we worked together more closely online for ABEST21 joint research project 8 during this epidemic outbreak year. She was indeed an inspiration and a visionary. We lost a good friend and partner. I will pray for her peaceful repose and for her family and friends at their great loss.

“Professor Arfah was smart, humble and friendly who always had fresh ideas, always listened to others' opinions and always taught us to respect each other.”

Riani Rachmawati, Ph.D.

Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia

This sad news is very shocking, I read through it again and again as I could not believe it. We all belong to God and to Him we shall return. May Prof. Arfah rest in peace and may Allah grant patience to her family who are left behind.

I worked together with Prof. Dr. Arfah for project 8 of ABEST21; that was my first time working together with her but I felt that we have known each other for quite a long time as we always had good discussions even in our first meeting. She was smart, humble and friendly who always had fresh ideas, always listened to others' opinions and always taught us to respect each other. Whenever she joined the meetings, the situations became very much alive. She is deeply missed by me and other members of Project 8; May Allah bless her and grant her His mercy and forgiveness.

Dean Dr. Rapeeporn Srijumpa

Graduate School of Commerce, Burapha University, Thailand

I just checked the mail and feel deeply sad that Prof. Arfah has passed away yesterday. We all believe her soul rests in peace. I also still remember her advice and her contribution to our project.