

# THE IIUM PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER



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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA  
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## 9<sup>th</sup> IPRC SUCCESSFULLY ORGANISED

As promoted in the previous issue of this newsletter, the department is hosting the 9th International Postgraduate Research Colloquium. By the grace of Allah, the colloquium was successfully organized by the Department.

Dr. Wahabbudin Raes, the Deputy Dean of Academic Affairs, officiated the opening of the Colloquium on behalf of the Dean of KIRKHS.

Over the course of two days, a total of 30 papers were presented on various topics of psychology including I/O, health, clinical, and educational. As in the previous editions of the colloquium, there was a mix of research results and proposals presented by

the postgraduate students and their supervisors.

Prof Noraini delivered the first keynote address. She presented research findings related to work, family and women's well being in Malaysia. On the second day, Dr Dusadee Yeolao enlightened the delegates of the colloquium with her keynote address on "Interaction in Behavioral Science Research: Present and Future Methods".

This edition of IPRC welcomed participants from the Philippines and Nigeria. Other international participants who had submitted their abstract did not turn up for the colloquium. However, that did not dampen the spirit of

the organizing committee because the core delegates from Thailand had attended.

During the farewell dinner, the delegates were treated to an energetic performance by students from Indonesia. They showcased saman dance, which is also known as the dance of thousand hands. It underscored the rich culture available among students of the university.

On Saturday, the delegates from BSRI went on a short trip to major landmarks in Kuala Lumpur before flying back to Bangkok. We hope to see each other again in the 10th IPRC in Bangkok in 2013.



## HOD Highlights



*Knowledge is*

A woman, who seldom found time to cook at home, complained to her husband that their kitchen is not big enough, nor up-to-date enough. She frequently pointed out fancy looking kitchens in Ikea catalog and other catalogues that she could find. “If we renovate our kitchen, it would look better. It would be more comfortable for me to cook more often.”

After several months of the wife repeating and rephrasing the script, the husband relented. The kitchen is now a

gleaming cooking area.

Did the renovation changed the frequency of the wife cooking at home? It depends how often she cooked before.

She would not have enough skills as a cook if she had not practiced before. Having a new kitchen does not automatically enhance her repertoire of recipe, not does it sharpen her skills. In short, her performance would greatly depend on her previous performance when the kitchen was a jaded and outdated space.

It is not wrong to dream of a better future: we can conduct more scholarly activities if the Department has more financial autonomy. Or, we can admit more students if we have more staff. However, we should not forget to keep building our personal capacity and improve our job performance from time to time.

We should not be caught clueless of what to cook when we are placed in a gleaming new kitchen.

## MOU Signing with BSRI

After the first collaboration between the Department and BSRI in 2004, the tie between the two institutions was formalized at a MOU signing ceremony on 5th of October 2012. Dr Dusadee Yeolao signed on behalf of BSRI. The Dean of KIRKHS later signed on behalf of IIUM in a separate occasion. The MOU was signed during the IPRC 2012 hosted by the Department.

The intention to sign an MOU had been mooted several years ago. It was an honour for the Department to have the MOU signed during the IPRC hosted by the Department.

The MOU aims to “strengthen, promote and develop research and academic cooperation” between the Department and BSRI. It is seen as a step to not only formalize, but carve new areas of mutually beneficial collaboration. The areas covered by the MOU include:

- i) cross cultural research
- ii) International Postgraduate Research Colloquium
- iii) publication
- iv) staff and student exchange

According to the office of International Cooperation

and Exchange Office (ICEO), the MOU is among four that were signed between IIUM and external institutions for the month of October. International Collaboration such as this would serve to promote the University as well as support the internationalization mission of IIUM. By working across the borders, staff and students at the Department can learn to play their role effectively as global citizens. It has been shown through classic research (Sherif’s Robber Cave experiment) that having a shared objective can unite people in spite of (artificial) group identity.

It is hope that the cooperation will be for far longer than the 10 years period of the MOU being effective. Indeed, the international collaboration would enhance the working and learning experience of staff and students at the

Department. Under the suggestion of the ICEO, a student mobility programme, covered under the MOU, has been proposed. The Department hope to send a bus load of undergraduate students to Bangkok as early as next year.



## MQA Pilot Visit

The Department had the honour of being selected by Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) for testing out their draft of standards for psychology programme. A four-member panel from MQA paid a visit to the Department on 19th October 2012.

During the one-day pilot visit, the panel examined selected documents pertaining to undergraduate degree programme currently offered by the Department. The panel also had dialog sessions with staff and students of the Department. The activities were meant to help the panel know the current practice and standards of the Department with regards to the curriculum content and development, student admission, staff, and course assessments.

The panel was headed by Prof. Rahmattullah Khan from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris. He was accompanied by Dr Shamsul Haque from Monash University. The representatives from MQA were Mr Mohamad Azley Ahmad and Ms Syahidatul Irma Muhammad. For Prof. Rahmattullah and Dr Shamsul, the visit was also a homecoming event since both were once members of the Department. The visit allowed them to catch up with the latest development at the Department.

At the end of the visit, a feedback dialog was held and attended by the Dean of KIRKHS and the Deputy Director. Among the observations made by the panel are:

1. The match between program and learning outcome need to be reflected in the course outline.
2. The panel suggested the inclusion of UG Research Project and Industrial Training as compulsory components of the UG curriculum
3. The suggested staff to student ratio is 1:18. According to the MQA calculation, the current ratio is 1:27.
4. Support staff is lacking. A suitable post for the Department is a Psychology Officer who can manage the laboratories, and coordinate the Industrial Training.
5. It was also suggested that the class size for counseling courses is lowered to around 20 students to provide better one-to-one time for teaching counseling skills.

The visit, even though was not meant to evaluate the quality of the Department's programme, is important for self-reflection and assessment. The feedback from the panel can help the Department to plan ahead so that the MQA standards can be met when they come into effect. For example, with regards to support staff, the Department needs to recruit suitable candidates to be the laboratory technician. Currently, the Kulliyah assigned a technician whose background is not in psychology. Problems associated with lack of person-job fit can be minimized if someone with a psychology qualification is hired instead. It would be ideal if a psychology officer can be hired.

Another important point to take up from the MQA feedback is the UG Research Project course. At a wider scale, other departments within the Kulliyah are also considering the recommendations for future standards development in their respective field. It was an honour indeed, for both the Department and the Kulliyah that MQA chose the Department for their pilot visit.



Agensi Kelayakan Malaysia  
Malaysian Qualifications Agency



## News Bite

PSYCSTA members, in collaboration with students from the Faculty of Education UiTM Shah Alam, organized a “Food for Homeless” programme targeting homeless people in the Chow Kit area on 11th November 2012. The voluntary activity helped to raise awareness among students on the plights suffered by a marginalized section of society in the country.

## Call for contributions

If you have opinions, academic materials, announcement, or just want to share something interesting, please contact the Editor at [harris@iium.edu.my](mailto:harris@iium.edu.my).

## Recent Journal Articles: Traffic Speed Camera

A survey conducted among car users in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark revealed that the acceptability of road safety measure depends on users’ awareness that speeding is a problem. The acceptability is also related to whether or not the users perceiving the safety measure as fair and effective, as well as not infringing on their personal freedom. [Eriksson, L., & Björnskaug, T. (2012). Acceptability of traffic safety measures with personal privacy implications. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 15(3), 333–347.]

Drivers seemed to respond positively to changes to automated speed enforcement when the changes were combined with an appropriate information campaign. An experiment was conducted at a two-lane rural road showed. It was found that, on average, drivers reduced their speed by 2.5km/h, when the threshold of the fixed automated speed enforcement system was lowered from 20km/h to 4 km/h. [Luoma, J., Rajamäki, R., & Malmivuo, M. (2012). Effects of reduced threshold of automated speed enforcement on speed and safety. *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 15(3), 243–248.]

The assumptions about car drivers may influence the design of speed camera systems. Two contrasting assumptions were examined in a case study of speed camera systems in Australia and Sweden. The system in Australia was based on the assumptions that speeding is a deliberate offence made by rational individuals. In contrast, the Swedish approach assumes that lack of information and social support is the reason for speeding. [Belin, M., Tillgren, P., Vedung, E., Cameron, M., & Tingvall, C. (2010). Speedcameras in Sweden and Victoria, Australia—A case study *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, 42(6), 2165–2170.]

## 28th IIUM Convocation

It may be a rite of passage for some. Or the moment of truth. Or an affirmation of success. However people may see it, convocation ceremony at IIUM is a jubilant celebration that creates a lot of smiles, to graduates, their family, and observers.

This year witnessed the 27th Convocation of IIUM. There were 84 graduates from the Department of Psychology who had been certified as graduates of the universi-

ty. Dr Nor Azlin was the sole PhD recipient. She received her scroll during the first convocation ceremony session. Joining her were seven masters students.

Bachelor degree recipients packed the CAC hall on Sunday afternoon during the 5th session. A total of 76 students, 11 male students and 65 female students, were confirmed as graduates.

Congratulations to all graduates.



Best Student Award Winner: Nur Afifah Abu Hassan

DEGREE	GENDER	
	MALE	FEMALE
Bachelor	11	65
CGPA > 3.60	0	2
CGPA 3.00 – 3.59	2	34
CGPA < 3.00	9	29
Master	2	5
Ph.D.	0	1

