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EFFECT OF *TA'AWUN* (MUTUAL COOPERATION) AND *SEJAHTERA* LEADERSHIP ON SUSTAINING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Suhaimi Mhd Sarif (PhD)*

**Corresponding Author*, Professor, Department of Business Administration, Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia
suhaimims@iiu.edu.my

Yusof Ismail

Fellow, Department of Business Administration, Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia
yusof.edu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *sejahtera* (holistic) leadership. The scope is limited to 13 community engagement projects that were led by university students as part of their course assignments. There are two research objectives, namely (a) to investigate the effect of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership in aligning the community engagement projects with the course learning outcomes and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, (b) to offer a model of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership in sustaining community engagement projects. The study applies qualitative research with constructionism paradigm through case study method. The study analysed the data with content analysis. Triangulation has been used to assure validity and reliability of the data. The key findings revealed that the effect of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership on coordination, facilitation, and maintenance of the community engagement projects. The practical application of the study is the integration of community engagement projects into university courses and assignments. This study is significant because it showcased the delivery of mutual benefits by the University stakeholders to the community. The future research should include industry engagement projects as well to integrate the industry and the university for greater *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership.

Keywords: *Ta'awun*, *Sejahtera* leadership, Community engagement, Qualitative research, Sustainable development goal

INTRODUCTION

Islam transcends specific activities in the *masjid* (mosques), or during certain months like fasting and *hajj*. Islam is described as *Al-Deen* (dynamic livelihood). It emphasises *ukhummah* (good bonding) among people in the *ummah* (human society) (Dusuki, 2008; Ardi, Abdullah & Cholil, 2019; Sulaiman *et al.*, 2022). In managing livelihood with Islam, one needs to integrate five *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* (purposes of the Islamic Law in relation to human existence), namely *aqidah* (faith), *nafs* (life), *'aql* (intellect), *nash* (lineage), and *mal* (wealth) (Ibn Ashur, 2006; Auda, 2008; Kamali, 2008). Ibn Ashur (2006) underlined key elements of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*. Auda (2008) argued that *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* provides a system of understanding and implementation. Kamali (2008) offered practical and operational of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*. By knowing the key elements, the system of understanding and implementation, and the

practicality, *Maqasid al-Shariah* guides every decision and action (Dusuki & Abdullah, 2007; Dusuki, 2008; Sulaiman *et al.*, 2022). The actionable verbs that reflect the five *Maqasid al-Shariah* are the *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership. *Ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) is spiritually driven mutual cooperation in attaining *al-birr* (righteousness) and *taqwa* (piety). *Sejahtera* leadership integrates *'ilm* (knowledge), *adab* (manners), and *'amal* (action) to lead oneself and others to achieve sustainability and felicity in this *dunya* (the world) and in the *Akhirah* (the Hereafter) (Borhan *et al.*, 2021; Moten, 2021; Sanusi, 2021).

It is believed that the lack of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership led the industrialised and developed world to vulnerability. The world is very vulnerable to pollution, climate change, civil wars, political unrests, discrimination, the uneven playing field of competition, and so on (Sam, 2016; Worley & Jules, 2020; Malafry & Brinca, 2022). According to Sam (2016), it is the duty of everyone to end the vulnerability. Worley & Jules (2020) argued that organizations also can end the vulnerability by working together with the stakeholders. Indeed, Malafry and Brinca (2022) contended that every household could do a part to end the difficult situations.

Lack of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership has resulted in severe vulnerability, uncertainty, chaos, and ambiguity (Worley & Jules, 2020; Tarkhani, 2021; Lahsen & Ribot, 2022) which will not sustain humanity for long (Sam, 2016; Worley & Jules, 2020). Worley and Jules (2020) argued that organizations are experiencing more difficulties with the COVID-19 while struggling to be agile and sustainable in the vulnerable, uncertainty, chaos and agile (VUCA) world. In fact, Tarkhani (2021) contended that the continuous political unrest has just intensified the VUCA situation. Lahsen and Ribot (2022) argued that the climate change situation is also another situation intensified the VUCA. Indeed, according to Sam (2016), it is the duty for everyone who desires for peace, prosperity, and justice to participate seriously at all levels. At policy level, leaders of the world through the United Nations have collectively formulated the Millennial Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, and later revised them to be 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Sachs, 2012; Bexell & Jonsson, 2017; Nelson, 2021; Heleta & Bagus, 2021). According to Sachs (2012), there has been huge tasks to formulate the Millennial Development Goals (MDGs) due to lack of common goals. Bexell and Jonsson (2017) contended that the leaders have to put aside the differences due to the responsibility and accountability to the world. Nelson (2021) emphasised that sustainability and human rights are the common goals for all. Indeed, Heleta and Bagus (2021) argued that the higher education sector also should participate actively.

A sustainable engagement is deeply rooted in the mind, soul and attitude of the world community. It embraced by everyone as a way of life (Sam, 2016; Worley & Jules, 2020). Sam (2016) argued that all individuals, groups and corporations should align their individual goals and bottomline with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Indeed, according to Worley and Jules (2020), the participation of all into the SDGs agenda could reduce the intensity of vulnerable, uncertainty, chaos and agile (VUCA) world. Likewise, Nelson (2021) argued that sustainability is common to uphold human rights. According to Heleta and Bagus (2021), the role of higher education is very essential in bringing all stakeholders together. Assembling all stakeholders together is an act of mutual cooperation. According to Mhd. Sarif (2018), mutual cooperation is conceptualized as *ta'awun* which is spiritually driven to attaining *al-birr* (righteousness) and *taqwa* (piety). As for *sejahtera* leadership, Razak (2020) argued that *sejahtera* is embedded in soul, mind, body, and intellect. Thus, Razak (2020) contended that *sejahtera* leadership integrates *'ilm* (knowledge), *adab* (manners), and *'amal* (action) to lead oneself and others to achieve sustainability. According to Moten (2021), the comprehension of *Maqasid al-Shariah* empowers *sejahtera* leadership for sustainability. Thus, sustainability should not be just a world forum agenda or academic debates. Mhd. Sarif (2018) argued that mutual cooperation with all stakeholders is necessary

especially the mutual cooperation between civic organizations and institutions of higher learning to incorporate community engagement agenda into the curriculum and co-curriculum.

In fact, the higher education sector has more responsibility to assure sustainability is embraced as a shared value, knowledge, mindset and attitude (Bien & Sassen, 2020; Heleta & Bagus, 2021; Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021). Bien and Sassen (2020) argued that the higher education sector has the ability and context to make sense of sustainability understanding into mind and action. In lieu of that, Heleta and Bagus (2021) contended that higher education also has a reputation to work with all stakeholders with mind and action. Needless to say, Chankseliani and McCowan (2021) argued that higher education sector has vital role in implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 17 SDGs also cover a wide spectrum of academic programs in hard sciences as well as social sciences (Sam, 2016; Nelson, 2021; Heleta & Bagus, 2021). According to Sam (2016), individuals, groups and corporations can participate actively to implement the SDGs. Indeed, Nelson (2021) argued that sustainability is related to sustaining human rights. Thus, Heleta and Bagus (2021) emphasised that the higher education could bring unity in diversity into the SDGs.

The insertion of SDGs as awareness or as an additional topic in academic programs is considered inadequate to mobilize the involvement of all students in the execution of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Awareness and engagement must be harmonized. Community engagement projects should be aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) subscribed to the UNESCO learning principles. Razak (2020) argued that the UNESCO learning principles included learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to be, and learning to become. According to Delors (2000), the learning principles are the pillars of education. In fact, Delors (2013) discovered that the learning principles are embedded in the research. Indeed, Kommers (2022) contended that the learning principles are not just philosophical, but also actionable. Thus, the 17 SDGs can be embedded in thinking (mind) and action (Delors, 2000; Delors, 2013; Razak, 2020; Kommers, 2022). Each learning stage has its own impact on individuals, groups and society. Learning to know stops at the cognitive experience and could trigger interest in something but not have any clue on how to do it (Delors, 2013; Razak, 2020; Nelson, 2021; Heleta & Bagus, 2021). Even if one knows what and knows what to do, one does not have support and continuity without practicing it together with others. More importantly, everyone will be able to be activists instead of just passengers.

Every learning requires practice. One may worry about the place to practice (Delors 2013; Razak, 2020). This should not be an issue because every place is relevant to practicing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021; Heleta & Bagus, 2021). According to Chankseliani and McCowan (2021), the higher education sector could do more to make the 17 SDGs aligned with the curriculum and the impact to the society. Indeed, Heleta and Bagus (2021) argued that the higher education has a good reputation to bring all stakeholders together. Diaz & Potvin (2020) contended that the higher education is practically a living laboratory. Likewise, Peimani and Kamalipour (2022) argued that the reputation and the facilities of higher education are remarkable. Thus, the SDGs can be aligned with the existence of laboratory, incubation, studio, and workshop at every education sector (Diaz & Potvin, 2020; Peimani & Kamalipour, 2022). The science lessons are reinforced with experiments in science laboratories. Likewise, the science lessons that incorporate the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require social spaces to practice them (Delors, 2013; Diaz & Potvin, 2020).

Research Problem

Everyone is aware that the absence of sustainability means everyone has to live with vulnerability, uncertainty, chaos, and ambiguity (Worley & Jules, 2020; Tarkhani, 2021; Lahsen & Ribot, 2022). Practically, no one would desire to live in such a situation (Sam, 2016; Worley & Jules, 2020). The world has agreed with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve peace, prosperity, and justice (Sam, 2016). Even 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) received coverage in the media, government policies, and advocacy. The gap between the awareness and the global agenda (17 SDGs) is the action to translate the awareness and the global agenda with coordination, facilitation and maintenance.

No one could achieve sustainability alone. In fact, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda is a collective agenda. It is not worthy for the governments to incorporate the SDGs into major economic and social policies only when no one implements them as a way of life (Sam, 2016; Worley & Jules, 2020). Individuals, groups and corporations should align their goals with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Nelson, 2021; Heleta & Bagus, 2021). However, is everyone really serious about implementing SDGs? To reiterate, the gap between the efforts and the global agenda is that there is lack of coordination and facilitation to translate the SDGs into implementation without silo and disintegration.

A good civilization is always associated with education. Awareness about 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in community engagement projects is nowhere without systematic and coordinated actions (Nelson, 2021; Heleta & Bagus, 2021). There is a need to formulate a system and coordination for the public to learn (learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to be, and learning to become) and to put knowledge and awareness into actions (Delors, 2000; Delors, 2013; Razak, 2020; Kommers, 2022). *Ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) brings people to work with full commitment, sincerity, and passion. *Sejahtera* leadership integrates *'ilm* (knowledge), *adab* (manners), and *'amal* (action) to lead oneself and others to achieve sustainability and felicity (Borhan *et al.*, 2021; Moten, 2021; Sanusi, 2021).

Research Questions

This study focuses on two research problems, namely (a) the action to translate the awareness of the global agenda with coordination, facilitation and maintenance, and (b) coordination and facilitation to translate the SDGs into implementation without silo and disintegration. Thus, the research questions are formulated as follows:

- (a) In what ways university could students translate the awareness of the global agenda (i.e. 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) into community engagement projects with coordination, facilitation and maintenance guided by *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *sejahtera* leadership?
- (b) What is the appropriate model of coordination and facilitation to translate the SDGs into implementation replacing silo efforts and disintegrated initiatives with *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *sejahtera* leadership?

Research Objectives

There are two research objectives, namely (a) to investigate the effect of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership in aligning the community engagement projects with the course learning outcomes and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, (b) to offer a model of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership in sustaining community engagement projects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents a critical review of key constructs of the research. The organization of the discussion is divided into several subtopics. Firstly, the concept of sustainability. Secondly, the scope of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thirdly, the incorporation and implementation of SDGs into higher education. Fourthly, the concept of *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation). Fifthly, the concept of *sejahtera* leadership. Sixthly, the integration of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership. Seventhly, the integration of scope of learning theory into the community engagement. Finally, the field training of implementing community engagement projects.

The research uses systematic literature review (SLR) method in the critical review (MacKenzie *et al.*, 2012; Brunton & Thomas, 2012). MacKenzie *et al.* (2012)'s systematic approach to literature review focused on the nature of essential constructs. Likewise, Brunton and Thomas (2012)'s systematic approach is based on information management protocol. In fact, Systematic Literature Riew (SLR) is superior to NLR (Narrative Literature Review) in terms of minimizing biases, preplanned methodology with predefined outcome measures, including a set search strategy, defined and comprehensive systematic searching, documented with explicit methodology, systematic quality assessment on studies documents, involves a team of researchers, use of meta-analysis with numerical aggregation data, and conclusion with a series of predefined outcomes. SLR emphasizes a clearly formulated question on systematic and explicit methods to identify, select, and appraise relevant research.

Sustainability

Literally, sustainability is the ability to maintain something at a certain duration. It is also about avoiding the depletion of natural resources so that the future generation will be able to meet their need (Polk *et al.*, 2010; Brundtland Commission, 1987). While Brundtland Commission (1987) provided broad and holistic worldview about sustainability, Polk *et al.* (2010) developed sustainability framework to guide and to execute sustainability with the ability to live and develop without depleting the natural resources and increasing climate change.

Practically, sustainability is the ability to balance the economy (prosperity), with society (peaceful) and the environment (ecologically protected) (Hedstrom, 2018; Polk *et al.*, 2010; Brundtland Commission, 1987). The Brundtland Commission (1987) developed a framework for sustainable development when the world was focusing on economic prosperity. Hedstrom (2018) argued that sustainability brought in balanced and holistic into the development and civilization. According to Polk *et al.* (2010), there has been a well thought sustainability framework. The issue of sustainability has been formalized by Brundtland Commission in 1987. The world needs to sustain the globe as humans live meeting their needs without compromising the ability of future generations.

Sustainability should be incorporated into organizational objectives as a triple bottomline, namely profit, people, and planet (Hedstrom, 2018). Hedstrom (2018) argued that sustainability enables organizations to achieve more than just profitability. In other words, organizations must achieve profit along with the welfare of people and the goodness of the planet earth. By doing so, everyone would be able to maintain life and well-being with Polk *et al.* (2010)'s approach.

In the contemporary economic-pandemic context, sustainability can be understood as meeting the present needs without compromising future generations to meet their needs (Polk *et al.*, 2010; Brundtland Commission, 1987). The understanding should be incorporated as a policy direction as underlined by Brundtland Commission (1987). In reinforcing the policy direction, Polk *et al.* (2010) operationalized the policy direction into sustainability framework to guide and to execute sustainability.

The understanding about sustainability should be accompanied by actions. According to Diprose *et al.* (2017), sustainability deals with achieving a balance of three aspects, economic development, environmental conservation, and social justice. This approach is applicable to corporations and well as individual consumers.

Everyone is not spared from the sustainability responsibility. The higher education sector has more responsibility to assure sustainability is embraced as shared value, knowledge, mindset, and attitude (Bien & Sassen, 2020). Bien and Sassen (2020)'s approach to sustainability is on the sense making of sustainability understanding into action within the higher education contexts. In addition, Bien and Sassen (2020)'s approach has included in the United Nations (2018)'s sustainability includes literacy or knowledge, mindset, and attitude of the mass. The high literacy and mindset will translate into the commitment of the mass population to sustain the future (United Nations, 2018; Bien & Sassen, 2020).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Sustainable Development Goals are mooted as a mechanism to achieve balanced development. This is management by objective approach with an emphasis on global governance (Biermann, Kanie & Kim, 2017). Biermann *et al.* (2017) argued that a governance framework is necessary to govern the SDGs. Absence of governance may lead to non-sustainability. According to Gupta and Vegelin (2016), the inclusivity narrative in the SDGs requires a set of governance. The global agenda is inclusive and holistic (Gupta & Vegelin, 2016). Needless to say, Adelman (2018) argued that the SDGs would have to face the existing ideology on the economic and social development. The world needs a sustainable development agenda to bring peace, harmony, and justice (UNDP, 2015; United Nations, 2018; Adelman, 2018).

The 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) have been arranged from the basic individual needs to the world's collective needs (United Nations, 2018; Yusof & Sanusi, 2021). Yusof and Sanusi (2021) argued that the SDGs should be in the mainstream with all stakeholders. There six categories of the 17 SDGs are: individual/human sustainability, human surrounding sustainability, economic and industrial sustainability, human society sustainability, environmental, and institutional governance (United Nations, 2018; Yusof & Sanusi, 2021). Table 1 summarizes specific SDGs with the six categories of sustainability concern.

Table 1: Specific SDGs with six categories of sustainability

Individual/human sustainability	Human surrounding sustainability	Economic and industrial sustainability
GOAL 1: No Poverty	GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
GOAL 2: Zero Hunger	GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being		
GOAL 4: Quality Education		
GOAL 5: Gender Equality		
Human society sustainability	Environmental	Institutional and governance
GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality	GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	GOAL 13: Climate Action	GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal
	GOAL 14: Life Below Water	
	GOAL 15: Life on Land	

Source: Yusof & Sanusi (2021)

Eleventh Malaysia Malaysia (11th MP) has mapped the strategic thrusts and 17 SDGs (Economic Planning Unit, 2018; Yusof & Sanusi, 2021). The strategic thrusts are (a) enhancing inclusiveness towards an equitable society, (b) improving wellbeing for all, (c) accelerating human capital development for an advanced nation, (d) pursuing green growth for sustainability and resilience, (e) strengthening infrastructure to support economic expansion, (f) re-engineering economic growth for greater prosperity, and (g) transforming public service for productivity.

The first strategic thrust, enhancing inclusiveness towards an equitable society, covers seven sustainable development goals, namely GOAL 1: No Poverty, GOAL 2: Zero Hunger, GOAL 5: Gender Equality, GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality, and GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

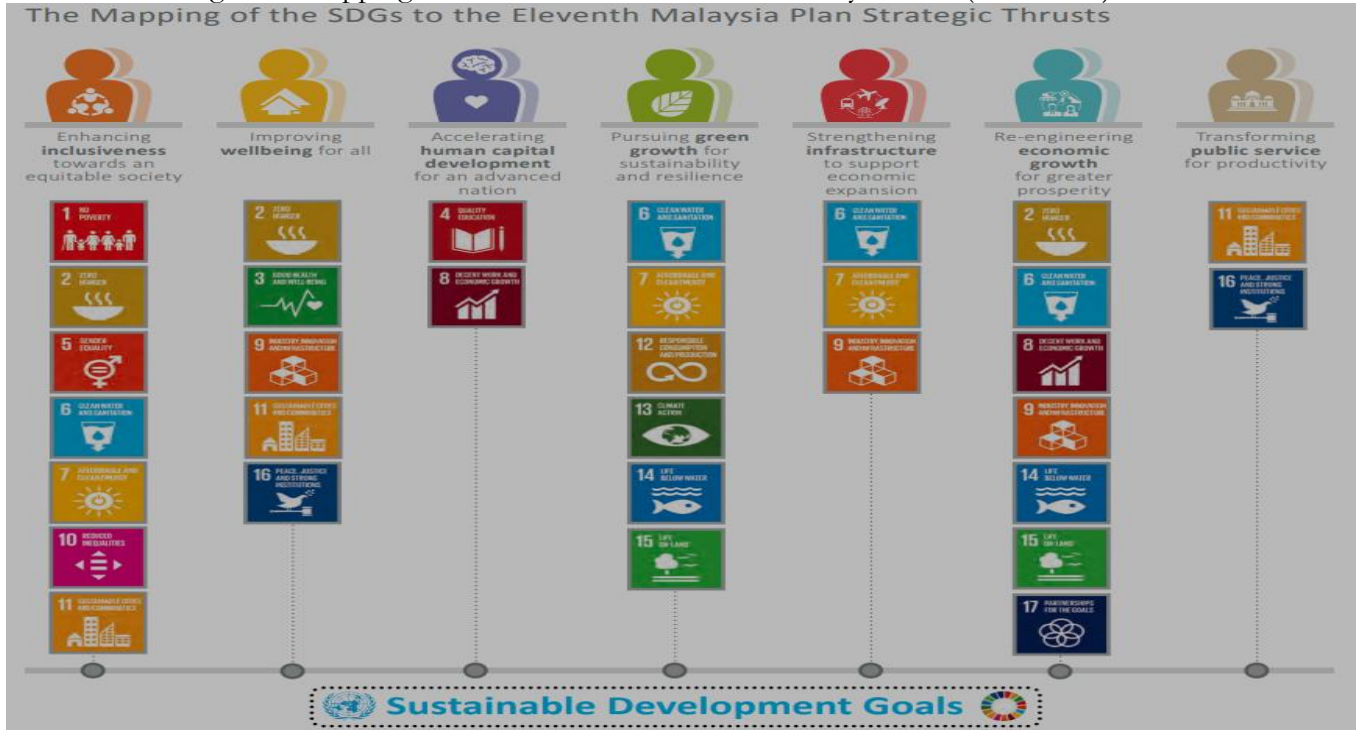
The second strategic thrust of improving wellbeing for all covers GOAL 2: Zero Hunger, GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being, GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions. The third strategic thrust of accelerating human capital development for an advanced nation covers GOAL 4: Quality Education and GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth.

The fourth strategic thrust of pursuing green growth for sustainability and resilience covers GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, GOAL 13: Climate Action, GOAL 14: Life Below Water and GOAL 15: Life on Land. The fifth strategic thrust of strengthening infrastructure to support economic expansion covers GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, and GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.

The sixth strategic thrust of re-engineering economic growth for greater prosperity, covers GOAL 2: Zero Hunger, GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, GOAL 14: Life Below Water, GOAL 15: Life on Land Justice Strong Institutions, and GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal. The seventh transforming public service for productivity covers GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and

GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions. Figure 1 depicts the mapping between Eleventh Malaysia Plan (2016-2020) with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Figure 1: Mapping of the SDGs to the Eleventh Malaysia Plan (2016-2020)



Source: Economic Planning Unit (2018).

SDG Higher Education

The world is not sustainable, not peaceful, and not prosperous. A sustainable, peaceful, and prosperous world is desired by everyone. Sustainability is the ability to balance the economy (prosperity), with society (peaceful) and the environment (ecologically protected) (Hedstrom, 2018; Polk *et al.*, 2010; Brundtland Commission, 1987). The Brundtland Commission (1987) has developed the framework for sustainable development which transcends economic prosperity. In fact, Hedstrom (2018) argued that sustainability brought a balanced and holistic for the civilization. In the same tune, Polk *et al.* (2010) contended that the sustainability framework is a well thought and actionable framework.

The issue of sustainability has been formalized in Brundtland Commission in 1987. The world needs to sustain the globe as humans live meeting the needs without compromising the ability of future generations. Sustainability should be incorporated into organizational objectives as a triple bottom line, namely profit, people, and planet (Yusof & Sanusi, 2021; Hedstrom, 2018). While Hedstrom (2018) argued that sustainability brought a balanced and holistic for the civilization, however Yusof and Sanusi (2021) also argued that the SDGs should be in the mainstream with all stakeholders involved. In other words, organizations must achieve profit along with the welfare of people and the goodness of the planet earth. By doing so, everyone would be able to maintain life and well-being.

In the contemporary economic-pandemic context, sustainability should be extended from just meeting the present needs without compromising future generations to meet their needs. According to

Diprose *et al.* (2017), sustainability is related to achieving a balance of three aspects, economic development, environmental conservation, and social justice.

Everyone is not spared from the sustainability responsibility. The higher education sector has more responsibility to assure sustainability is embraced as shared value, knowledge, mindset, and attitude (Bien & Sassen, 2020). According to United Nations (2018), sustainability should be included as literacy or knowledge, mindset, and attitude of the mass. The high literacy and mindset will translate into commitment of the mass population to sustain future (United Nations, 2018; Bien & Sassen, 2020).

***Ta'awun* (Mutual Cooperation)**

Literally, *ta'awun* can be defined as mutual cooperation or mutual assistance (Al-Haddad, 2015). Anything can be done with *ta'awun*. Al-Haddad (2015) explained that *ta'awun* is part of the Islamic way of life. According to Zar'um (2016), *ta'awun* brought universality in human relationships. However, the scope of *ta'awun* has been limited to *al-birr* (virtue) and *al-taqwa* (piety) based on *Sura al-Maidah*, verse 2. There is prohibition for *ta'awun* on *ithm* (sins) and *'udwan* (enormity). *Ta'awun* drives mutual cooperation in executing any task within the scope of *al-birr* (righteousness) and *al-taqwa* (piety). Mutual cooperation reinforces social connectedness and bonding among people (Al-Haddad, 2015; Zar'um, 2016).

In any activities, there is a need of *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation). According to Mhd. Sarif (2015), *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) empowers members of the society to live in peace, harmony and unity. In fact, Mhd. Sarif (2015) argued that unity and solidarity manifest mutual cooperation among members of the society. The meaning of unity is when one can speak with the same tone for common goals. As for the solidarity is about being together with good bonding. In doing so, Mhd. Sarif (2017) contended that, everyone needs a noble heart to produce noble work. A noble heart is not automatic. One has to earn for it. Mhd. Sarif (2020) argued that *taqwa* (piety) mobilizes noble hearts. The dynamism of *ta'awun* enables sustainability (Mhd. Sarif, 2018).

***Sejahtera* Leadership**

The term "*sejahtera*" is not new in Malaysia. The term is originated from Sanskrit language but has been used in *Bahasa Malaysia* (Malay language). In fact, the term "*manusia*" used in Bahasa Malaysia is also derived from Sanskrit language that denotes "creature with thinking" (Hoogervorst, 2012; Jalaluddin & Ahmad, 2012). When both terms "*sejahtera*" and "*manusia*" are combined, *sejahtera* as "peace" and *manusia* as "creature of thinking," then by default humans are peaceful thinking creatures (Lim Kim Hui, 2003; Abdul Razak, 2020; Baharom, 2021).

The *Sejahtera* concept has been embedded in Malaysia's education system since the 1990s when the *Sejahtera* has been the ultimate outcome of the education system. This education system has been producing human talents with *Sejahtera* since the 1990s (Adil, 2019; Hussin, 2020; Hopkins *et al.*, 2020; Nketsia *et al.*, 2020). This implies that the stakeholders in Malaysia have been influenced by the *Sejahtera* concept.

Integrating *Ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *Sejahtera* Leadership

Islam advocates *Al-Deen* (dynamic livelihood) in every aspect of life. The dynamic livelihood in Islam emphasizes *ukhuwwah* (good bonding) among people in the *ummah* (human society) (Dusuki, 2008; Ardi, *et al.*, 2019; Sulaiman, *et al.*, 2022). The dynamic livelihood manifests the five *maqasid al-shariah* (human existence), namely *aqidah* (faith), *nafs* (life), *'aql* (intellect), *nash* (lineage), and *mal* (wealth) into actionable verbs of *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership (Dusuki & Abdullah, 2007; Razak, 2020; Nasir, 2021).

While *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) is built on the spiritually driven mutual cooperation in attaining *al-birr* (righteousness) and *taqwa* (piety), *sejahtera* leadership is based on the integration of *ilm* (knowledge), *adab* (manners), and *'amal* (action) to lead oneself and others to achieve sustainability and felicity in this World and in the Hereafter (Maududi & Ahmad, 2001; Helfaya, Kotb & Hanafi, 2018). *Ta'awun* and *Sejahtera* leadership are influential in sustaining performance.

Learning theory

Teacher-focused learning is built upon behaviorism and cognitivism learning theories. Student-focused learning is built upon constructivism and connectivism learning theories (Thomas, Barbas & Schnapp, 2022; Bien & Sassen, 2020; Diprose *et al.*, 2017; Polk *et al.*, 2010; Singla, 2019; Grain, 2019). In behaviorism learning theory, learners are passive, learn from external processes and need positive reinforcement (Bien & Sassen, 2020; Diprose *et al.*, 2017; Polk *et al.*, 2010).

The methods used in the behaviorism learning include lectures, drill, practice, and multiple choice tests. This is in contrast to the cognitivism learning theory. In cognitivism learning environment, learners learn beyond the external, more internal process, short and long term memory, and the methods used are lecture, visual tools, multiple choice & essay assessment (Diprose *et al.*, 2017; Polk *et al.*, 2010). The behaviorism and cognitivism are teacher-centred learning, which lack experiential learning.

For student centred, constructivism and connectivism use collaborative group work, peer review, and personal experience (Bien & Sassen, 2020; Diprose *et al.*, 2017). According to the method of connectivism, learners self-directed learning, sharing content, create knowledge collaboration. Learners are required to translate learning into action. Any actionable learning requires excitement, concern, verification, analytical, cross-checking, deliberation, and reflections.

Field Training

Field training is pragmatic, hands-on and facing reality (Andrews, 2014; Nair, Juvva & Nadkarni, 2020; Dash & Roy, 2019). The field training is experiential-based and student centred (Bien & Sassen, 2020; Diprose *et al.*, 2017).

The field training is an experiential learning, but it requires detail recording and documentation (Nigudkar, 2020). In assuring the experiential learning outcomes, guidelines for fieldwork implementation and evaluation are required (Kumari, 2019). In fact, learners are required to make reflection of what is heard, seen and made sense (Garain, 2019).

The field training allows for more chances to align community engagement projects with 17 sustainable development goals. The spirit in co-creation and co-production manifests unity (Dash & Roy, 2019; Augusdinata, 2022; Aubrey & Riley, 2022).

Based on the critical literature review, the study argued that the *ta'awun* and *sejabtera* leadership are influential to sustain community engagement through sustainable development goals (SDG) projects. *Ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) is a result of *ta'aruf* (knowing), *tafabum* (understanding), and *takaful* (protecting). Thus, one may have reached awareness (*ta'aruf*) and education (*tafabum*) stages; however, any community engagement will be less sustainable without a deep *amal* (action) or 'edu-action,' *ta'awun* and *sejabtera* leadership.

The global agenda through the 17 sustainable development goals is to bring peace, unity, prosperity, justice and harmony into the human society. Everyone is not spared in achieving the global agenda. In fact, the global agenda with community engagement should have been accepted as universal and collective goals with willingness and ability. Acceptance requires continuous awareness and education. Awareness refers to the acceptance in cognitive and affective about some issues or situations. However, the awareness is unable to trigger actions to address the deficiencies. Awareness needs education to generate education-actions (Bien & Sassen, 2020; Diprose *et al.*, 2017; Dash & Roy, 2019).

The global agenda requires unity and solidarity. The community shared the common agenda for the global prosperity, peace, and justice. Community engagement requires *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) because it is built on the spiritually driven mutual cooperation in attaining *al-birr* (righteousness) and *taqwa* (piety), *sejabtera* leadership is based on the integration of *'ilm* (knowledge), *adab* (manners), and *'amal* (action)

Ultimately, everyone will be able to contribute to the community engagement through SDGs as 'edu-action' community engagement projects. All these variables can be summarised in a conceptual framework. Figure 2 shows the conceptual framework of the research. The framework explains that *ta'awun* and *sejabtera* leadership are able to sustain community engagement projects. *Ta'awun* develops mutual cooperation, collaboration, unity and solidarity among people to work in attaining a common goal. In this context, the common goal is the sustainable development agenda. *Sejabtera* leadership provides motivation, communication, direction and resources for people who have agreed to work together for a common goal.

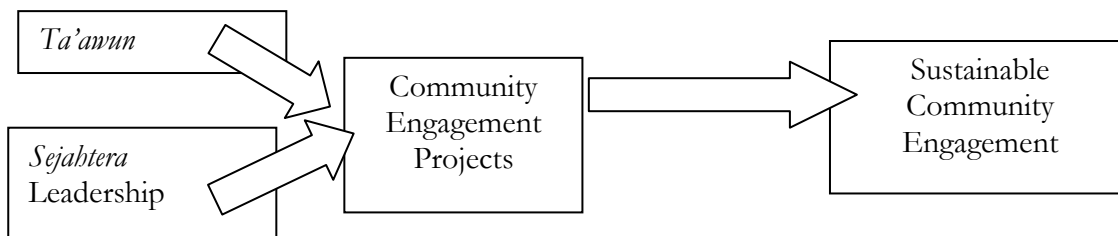


Figure 2: Research Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative research methodology with constructionism paradigm. The specific method is case study method. A qualitative case study is used to explore a phenomenon through various data

sources (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2015; Yazan, 2015). Merriam (1988)'s approach is of sociological and educative approach of case study. In other words, a case study in this sociological and educative approach aims to understand the phenomenon through observation, interview and content analysis of documents. As for Stake (1995)'s approach to case study is of contextual approach. The case study of contextual approach aims to explore the context through interactions with persons and the environment. In Yin (2016)'s approach, the case study developed a protocol with scientific approach to understand the phenomenon through interactions with individuals, groups and organizations. Yazan (2015) argued the case study by Merriam, Stake and Yin has own merit with different approaches without compromising the constructionism paradigm. All of the approaches require protocols and validation in all the processes includes planning, designing, preparing, collecting, analyzing, and sharing (Yazan, 2015). Yazan (2015) argued that the case study falls under the constructionism in which the research and the researchers are not separated and involved actively in the same context.

The study uses Merriam (1988)'s approach case study. The researchers aimed to understand the phenomenon of the SDGs into the projects through observation, interview and content analysis of documents submitted by the 13 groups for assessment. The case study in this research comprises the 13 community engagement projects that involved the researchers who are the lecturers and the 35 students who studied the principles of management course. Majority of the students are in their first-year (freshie) from economics faculty. The remaining students came from other social sciences programs. One of the assignments requires the students to propose community engagement projects by applying the principles learned in the course and basic communication skills.

The students were given the freedom to choose their group members. Each group comprises 2-3 members. Each team elected a team leader. The leader decided the roles of other members after *shura* (mutual consultation). The main requirement for the project is that each team selected a particular problem faced in the community, particularly the nearest community that is not *sejahtera* and not sustainable. Each team practiced *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *sejahtera* leadership. Each team developed a proposal in consultation with team members.

The researchers developed the protocol of the case study. All of the community engagement projects are required to meet three course learning outcomes. Firstly, students should be able to describe management principles, practices, concepts, and theories from contemporary and Islamic perspectives. Secondly, students should be able to apply managerial concepts in the analysis of the community engagement projects in the past and in the present. The main concern is not to reinvent the wheel. Thirdly, students should be able to develop *ta'awun* and *sejahtera* leadership through team building skills related to working as part of a management team in group assignments and projects.

FINDINGS

This section presents the findings based on the case study protocol obtained from direct observation, interview with 13 groups and content analysis of documents submitted by the 13 groups for assessment. The case study covers 13 community engagement projects that involved the researchers who are the lecturers and the 35 students.

The themes of the community engagement projects include free food, a healthy life style, and a meaningful life. Table 1 lists the 13 project proposals.

Table 1: 13 Community engagement projects

Group	Project	Aligned to SDG
1	Part time job no hassle	8
2	Friday Free Food @ SHAH Masjid	2
3	Healthy Life @ Halimah	3
4	Declutter Paper @ Ruqayyah Block C	12
5	Drying Racks @ Ruqayyah Block E	3
6	Online Kindness @ IIUM	4
7	Advocate Recycling Habit @ Mahallah IIUM	4 & 13
8	Affordable & Healthicious @ Nusaibah	3 & 12
9	Stay Clean @ Asiah G-L3	3, 6 & 13
10	IIUM Minimizing Junk Nusaibah G2.6 Asiah G3.5 Ali E2.2	3, 12, & 13
11	Sejahtera Umbrella @ KENMS IIUM	3
12	Clean Toilet @ Mahallah IIUM	6
13	<i>Sejahtera</i> Time	3 & 4

All the venues of the projects are located within IIUM campus, i.e., Masjid Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah (SHAH), *Mahallah Halimah*, *Mahallah Ruqayyah*, *Mahallah Nusaibah*, *Mahallah Asiah*, *Mahallah Ali*. The specific location within a *Mahallah* (dormitory) consists of the accommodation dormitory rooms, washrooms, café, and compound.

In terms specific sustainable development goals, most of the projects matches SDG Goal No. 3 Good Health and Well-being, Goal No. 4 Quality Education, Goal No. 12 Responsible Consumption and Production, Goal No. 13 Climate Action, Goal No. 14 Life below Water, and Goal No. 15 Life on Land.

In their reflections, the students have been asked to address the managerial concepts such as managerial functions, roles, skills, scopes and depth, and also the experience of teamwork in doing the projects. The students applied managerial roles, skills, and functions. Table 2 shows the application of managerial functions for each component of the project.

Table 2: Application of managerial functions in the project

Managerial Functions	Proposal	Progress	YouTube	Reflections
Planning	Set goal			
	Formulate strategies			
Organizing	Develop plans			
	Determine tasks & scope			
	Assign tasks to members			
Leading		Reminders Study Circle Shared leadership		
Controlling		Concurrent control to meet Progress 1, 2, and 3	Available and accessible	Feedback control

However, in their reflection, the students said that they have to use a lot time in doing the fieldwork. The allocation of 60 hours student learning time for this project is not adequate. In addition, almost all of the various courses are aligning all assignments with the 17 sustainable development goals.

The students suggested this to be made a major project at the university level. All the projects should involve staff, students and the community.

DISCUSSION

The discussion here is grounded from the presentation, deliberation and discussion of 13 community engagement projects. Each project through the case study method (observation, interview and document analysis) has answered the research questions, namely (a) In what ways could university students translate the awareness of the global agenda (i.e. 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) into community engagement projects with coordination, facilitation and maintenance guided by *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *sejahtera* leadership?, and (b) What is the appropriate model of coordination and facilitation to translate the SDGs into implementation, replacing silo and disintegration initiatives with *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *sejahtera* leadership?

In general, all 13 groups are not fully aware of the community engagement projects can be aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). When the students were given the tasks to propose community engagement projects, mechanisms to execute, ways to sustain the projects, the students started to show that they have learned swiftly through interactions with fellow students who have passion in community engagement with sustainable development goals. The translation of the 17 SDGs into community engagement projects require swift action within the curriculum of education. From awareness to education, the process should complement awareness and education (Radwan & Khalil, 2021; Yusof & Sanusi, 2021). There is a need for passion in sustaining the project (Leiba-Brondo *et al.*, 2022; Chaleta *et al.*, 2021).

The results grounded from 13 groups of students revealed that the informants emphasized that passion, willingness, and commitment are essential to create, maintain and sustain community engagement projects. Figure 3 shows the presence of the heart (love and care symbol) in education.

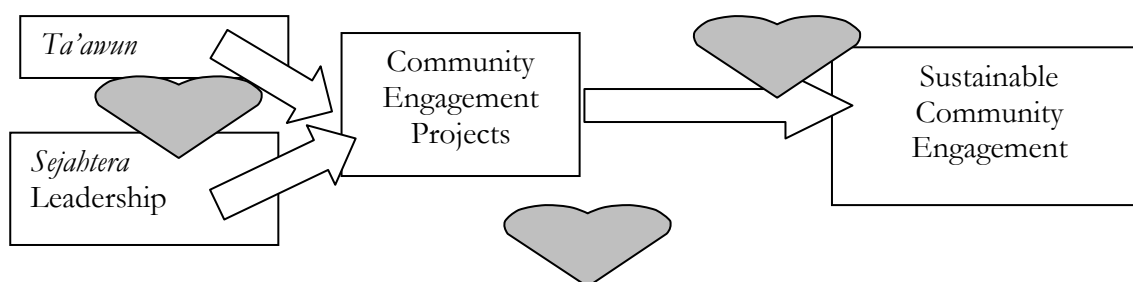


Figure 3: The presence of heart (love and care symbol) in education

Figure 3 depicts the findings in a diagram. The study argued that there is a conceptual impact of *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *sejahtera* (peaceful) leadership on the education for sustainable development. The meaning of impact here is different from the inferences in quantitative research.

The box with “*ta'awun*” is a variable that has a relationship with the box with “community engagement projects.” The meaning of the arrow from the box “*ta'awun*” to the box “community

engagement projects” is that *ta’awun* has an impactful relationship with the projects. The box “sejahtera leadership” is another variable that has an impactful relationship with “community engagement projects.” The love and care (♥) symbol indicates the presence of heart (♥) or passion between *ta’awun* and *sejahtera* leadership on community engagement projects. The community project needs a heart (♥) or passion for *ta’awun* and *sejahtera* leadership. In summary, the key findings from the study is that *ta’awun* and *sejahtera* leadership enable coordination, facilitation, and maintenance of the community engagement projects for sustainability.

Recommendations

The study recommends an incorporation of community engagement as part of the national socio-economic policies in the education. This effort requires shared understanding among government, non-government, the industry, and the higher education sector in enhancing the national socio-economic policies. This can be done by a continuous engagement with key government stakeholders.

The awareness about community engagement is perceived to be present in the national policies through national unity, rural development, women and welfare, industrial relations and so forth. However, it is suspected that the awareness is limited to surface advocacy and campaigns. It has to be moved from mere education to education with action.

At the practice level, higher education regulators and all higher education institutions should incorporate community engagement element in university-level courses.

Incorporating SDGs in individual courses seems redundant. The students would be doing more or less the same projects for multiple courses. A more practical alternative is for the University to formulate one common course or a single project that can serve the SDG application in the university as a whole. In this way, the whole University can share the resources optimally.

In summary, the practical application of the study is the integration of university courses and assignments with community engagement projects. This study is significant to integrate the community and the university for mutual benefits. Future research should ideally include industry engagement projects as well to integrate the industry and the university for greater *ta’awun* and *sejahtera* leadership.

CONCLUSION

Education and actions for community engagement cannot be separated especially in the higher education sector. It needs greater and committed collaboration with *ta’awun* (mutual cooperation) and *sejahtera* leadership. The commitment is manifested with passion to serve for the betterment of the community. The leadership of higher education institutions should engage community leaders, social advocates, civic organizations and gras root leaders to enable knowledge sharing for innovation and creativity. The continuous relationships between high education institutions, the community, and the industry is necessary and vital. The commitment between community and university should be based on passion, responsibility and accountability. The community engagement edu-action of 17 sustainable development goals could be introduced in courses in the university, or better still, as a whole university course. This is a practical initiative to develop, maintain and sustain the actions that support the SDGs. Individuals and organizations can align themselves with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) formulated by the United Nations. Besides the classroom lectures and in-class discussions, the

awareness of SDGs could be increased by involving students of higher learning in SDG-related projects. The learning-by-doing theory is being operationalized by requiring the undergraduate students to identify suitable target facilities and service providers on campus, conduct a study and provide recommendations to make these targets SDGs friendly.

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