

Objective of Accounting Education: Moral or Skills?

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to identify the respondents' preferred objective of accounting programme, especially for public universities as compared to National Philosophy of Education (NPE). This study also attempted to suggest the improvement needed in objective setting for undergraduate accounting programme. The study relied on primary data obtained from reviews of documents and interviews involving a total of 28 accounting lecturers from four (4) selected Malaysian public universities, namely, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), National University of Malaysia (UKM), University of Malaya (UM) and International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM). The results suggested that most public universities involved in this study formally expressed their commitment towards academics excellent (material part) in their vision and mission. In contrast, the same universities did not seem to indicate formal commitment toward developing their students' spiritual part as required by NPE. However, accounting lecturers at public universities involved in this study seemed to agree with NPE that the development of students' moral should be set the as the primary objective of the accounting programme. Several respondents, especially Muslims, suggested that the objective of accounting programme should be based on the Islamic framework. In addition, they further suggested that the accounting programme for undergraduates should reduce the technical part and include more trainings that emphasise on the ability to be a thinker. This paper extends the accounting and education literature related to the accounting profession since it analyses the issues revolving around the objective of accounting programme, with specific reference to the Malaysian context.

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INTRODUCTION

National philosophy of education (NPE) in Malaysia states that “Education in Malaysia is a continuous effort towards enhancing potentials of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner in order to create individuals who are well-equipped intellectually, spiritually and emotionally”. This effort aims to produce knowledgeable, ethical and responsible Malaysian citizens who can contribute towards the harmony and prosperity of the community and nation (Ministry of Malaysia Education, 2013). This announced objective by NPE should be accepted as representative of all universities’ general objectives.

International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) released the Framework through International Education Standards for Professional Accountants (2009). It is outlined that the objective of accounting education is to develop competent professional accountants. In order to demonstrate competence in his or her role, a professional accountant must possess the necessary knowledge and skills including values, ethics and attitudes. Education, according to IFAC, is a systematic process aimed at acquiring and developing knowledge, skills and other capabilities within individuals; a process that is typically but not exclusively conducted in academic environment.

Even after the pronouncement of the relevant educational standard on ethics by IFAC, scholars continue to argue for the need to re-examine the type of educational system that produces accounting professionals

who, consciously or otherwise, appear to act unethically (Boyce, 2008; Low *et al.*, 2008). This is because evidence that accounting education is largely guilty of failing to develop students’ intellectual and moral abilities abounds (see for instance, McPhail, 2001; Swanson & Frederick, 2003; Amernic & Craig, 2004). Low *et al.* (2008) argue that it is the lack of morals in ‘educated people’ that has contributed to the recent financial reporting scandals and corporate frauds. Only come to the question: are those existing objectives of accounting programme compatible with the education objectives setting by NPE? This research tries to answer the question.

This article is organised in the following manner. First, this paper presents literature review; second, it describes the research method and then followed by the analysis. The paper then concludes with discussion of the results and suggestions for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Accountants face the pressure to show and demonstrate that accounting is a highly credible profession (IFAC, 2008). The infamous accounting scandals such as Enron, WorldCom and Tyco have already highlighted the failure of accountants to safeguard societal welfare. Given that professional conduct steeped in human values and ethics is the core to accounting professionalism, it is not surprising that the focus of attention has now shifted back to the manner in which accountants are trained and educated. It is based on

this premise that criticisms have been levelled at educators for contributing to the corporate reporting scandals by discharging poor quality professional education (see Lehman, 1988; Jackling, Leung, & Dellaportas, 2007; Low, Davey, & Hooper, 2008). Additionally, Amernic and Craig (2004, p. 343) stated that one of the causes of the seemingly never-ending parade of accounting scandals and unexpected company collapses is the inadequacy of university curricula and business education. The accounting programmes are said to be dominated by the learning of techniques and rules (Boyce, 2008; Low, Davey, & Hooper, 2008) and thus have very little attention given in instilling values, ethics and a sense of integrity (Armstrong, Ketz, & Owsen, 2003).

The ultimate aim of education based on the philosophy of NEP is to develop every aspect of individuals in a harmonious and balanced manner so as to preserve their well-being (Ministry of Malaysia Education, 2013). Knowledge and education should path the way to good ethics and moral values as responsible and learned members of the community and nation. A core concept of the NPE is the value and role of knowledge in the development of individuals and their role in the community. More importantly, the value of knowledge lies in the truth of the matter which serves not only to inform but also transform and shape individuals to serve the community. Education is a lifelong process and human beings are constantly in need to expand, explore and

verify existing knowledge. Experience does not only enrich and strengthen knowledge but also re-examine and increase the capacity of the existing knowledge possessed by individuals. Based on NPE, it is evident that the aim of all programmes, including accounting programme in higher education, should show the direction towards educating individuals for self-development in a holistic approach to serve their community and nation as learned and responsible not only to community but mainly as a God's servant citizens.

Accounting Education in Malaysia

The summary of the report entitled, 'East Asia Accounting Roundtable Country Presentation: Malaysia Summary' published by American Accounting Association in 2000 claims that "in the current curriculum (referring to the year 2000), the majority of accountancy programmes in Malaysia tend to 'over focus' on core accounting subjects. There is an imperative need to review the education curriculum to give more weight to the learning of management, analytical skills and communication. These are necessary attributes in an information based and highly competitive business world" (East Asia Accounting Roundtable Country Presentation: Malaysia Summary, 2000, p. 3).

Consequently, the accounting education in Public Institutes of Higher Learning is being revised to improve the quality of education and reduce the expectation gap relating to employers' demands. Public universities in Malaysia have responded

by developing and articulating coherent policies and frameworks called *Hala Tuju 1* in 2001 to build accounting graduate attributes within and across the programmes. Malaysia Institute of Accountant (MIA), the accounting professional body in Malaysia, has also recognised the critical importance of the development of generic skills and attributes for accounting graduates. Beside compliance with the International Education Standard (IES 1-8) issued by the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), MIA has also produced Accreditation Guidelines for universities making explicit of their expectations of the generic (cognitive and behavioural) skill level of graduates.

Consistent with the philosophy of IFAC, through the issuance of International Education Standards (IES) 4 in 2005 [1] on the role of accounting education in inculcating ethics, the Ministry of Education, Malaysia (formerly known as Ministry of Higher Education), revised the Reassessment Report on Accounting Programme offered by Malaysian Public Universities call *Hala Tuju 2* in 2006. The Reassessment Report on Accounting Programme requires the Public Universities in Malaysia to incorporate twelve learning outcomes into their respective accounting degree curriculum, one of which is a demonstration of students' ethical behaviour.

Even after the pronouncement of the relevant educational standard on ethics by IFAC, scholars continue to argue for the need to re-examine the type of educational system that produces accounting professionals who, consciously

or otherwise, appear to act unethically (Blanthorne, Kovar, & Fisher, 2007; Sikka, Haslam, Kyriacou, & Agrizzi, 2007). For example, Low *et al.* (2008) argued that it is the lack of moral in 'educated people' that has contributed to the recent financial reporting scandals and corporate frauds.

Graduate attributes being developed during accounting programmes should now going well beyond disciplinary or technical knowledge and expertise and include qualities that prepare graduates as lifelong learners, as 'global citizens', as agents for social good and for their personal development in light of an unknown future (Bowden & Marton, 1998; Barrie, 2004). However, the critiques on the inadequacy of accounting education continue. In fact, the claim that accountancy students are encouraged to learn rules and technique or the aim of 'maximizing shareholder wealth' sounds very familiar (Sikka, Haslam, Kyriacou, & Agrizzi, 2007).

METHODOLOGY

This study was based on interpretive of the ontological assumptions. These assumptions have led the researchers to choose the qualitative method through interview and document review approach and analysis by using *Nvivo*. Based on the general research questions, several sub-questions were formulated. These sub-questions constituted the main topics to guide the search for supporting documentary evidence and interviews, as summarised in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Sub-questions and guided the search for supporting documentary evidence

Sub questions	Main data source	Support data source
How are the objectives of NEP being translated in the current vision and mission of university and faculty?	Document review	
What should be the objectives of accounting education?		
i. What are the general objectives of education?	Document review	Educators' interview
ii. In your opinion, what should be the objectives of accounting education?	Educators' interview	Document review

Data Collection and Sample of the Study

Due to limited time frame and financial budget, the collection of the data for this study concentrated at four (4) universities in Selangor, Malaysia, namely, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), National University of Malaysia (UKM), University of Malaya (UM) and International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM). On several occasions, however, locations might have been visited on the same day due to scheduled interview appointments.

Respondents in the interviews were divided into two categories. The first category consisted of the main committee and subcommittee of business ethics and corporate governance in *Hala Tuju* 2. They participated in the development of accounting curriculum and education policies such as conceptual framework for accounting education, redesign of accounting programme curriculum and establishment of cooperative linkages with industry and accounting profession.

The purpose is to understand the current requirements of *Hala Tuju* 2 on ethics accounting education.

Documents and Webpage

In this study, documents were intended as part of the strategy to ensure validity and reliability, namely, via triangulation of data sources. The contents of these documents were compared against some of the teaching educators' claim on the integration of their own objectives they always emphasise to their students in class.

It was decided that a review must be made of the websites of the relevant faculty and department at each university. The websites were thought to contain useful background information about the institutions, especially on the ways in which each institution presents itself to the external public. Table 2 indicates the documents that had been reviewed and the information that was obtained from each of the documents. All the documents are considered as 'public documents' and thus have been made accessible to the researchers.

TABLE 2
Source of the documents

Documents	Purpose
University/Department/Unit Website	Background information on the university Department/Unit, and staff
University Mission/ Vision	Indication of the influence of human elements in University vision and mission (if any)

Interview

In total, 28 face-to-face interviews were conducted and recorded. The general purpose of educator interviews was to obtain insights on the measures that are in place at the university to create individuals who are well-equipped intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. The order and structure of the questions were not fixed as they were exploratory, loosely-structured and open-ended in nature, as suggested by Rubin and Rubin (1995, cited in Yin, 2003, p. 89). For most of the duration of the interview, the researcher remained attentive and only probed for further clarification when necessary. Morse and Richards (2002) described this approach of interviewing as ‘interactive’. Such approach, which is common for qualitative research, is essential where the researcher would focus on listening and learning from the interviewees.

DATA ANALYSIS

The generic steps of data analysis in qualitative inquiry proposed by Creswell (2003) are applied for the qualitative data. The steps involve generating opening code, assigning axial codes, identifying a story line representing qualitative narrative and making an interpretation or meaning of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Objective of Education in the Official Pronouncements

The vision and mission statements of each university contain unequivocal references to certain notions that could be associated with their identity. The opening paragraph of each vision statement in Table 3, for instance, attributes “the worldview of knowledge” as the source of inspiration for the universities’ overall educational direction.

TABLE 3
Vision Statement of the Four Public Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL)

University	Vision Statement
University Putra Malaysia (UPM)	To become a University of international repute.
National University of Malaysia (UKM)	To be ahead of society and time in leading the development if a dynamic, learned and moral.
University Malaya (UM)	To be an internationally renowned institution of higher learning in research, innovation, publication and teaching.
International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM)	IIUM aims to become a leading international centre of educational excellence which seeks to restore the dynamic and progressive role of the Muslim <i>Ummah</i> in all branches of knowledge and intellectual discourse.

As with the pronouncements made at the university level, most of the pronouncements appear focusing on the challenges in the educational industry. These indicate the universities' intention to become a 'world class' institution that focuses on research, publication and teaching activities. Nonetheless, these universities have not made any reference to any specific values or ideals to which they subscribe. Although those universities remain steadfast to educational excellence, there is a goal that is common to most universities. One of the university's vision statements also lie out aims that are meant to distinguish the university from other institutions. In the explanations of the vision, they claimed that the university (IIUM)'s visions are inspired by the worldview of *Tawhid* (the concept of monotheism or asserting oneness) and the Islamic philosophy of the unity of knowledge, as well as its concept of holistic education. The aims also include restoration of intellectual vigour in the Muslim *Ummah*, integration of Islamic values into all disciplines of knowledge and re-establishing the place of Muslim *Ummah* at the forefront of knowledge and consequently improve the qualities of human life. Such belief may thus be contrasted with the educational mission of other universities that does not include the element of spiritual parts. Meanwhile, the values such as the concept of monotheism (*Tawhid*), the qualities of faith (*iman*), knowledge (*ilm*), good character (*akhlaq*) and Islamic moral-spiritual values are also embedded in the vision or mission.

The promotion of the sovereignty of the Malay Language (*Bahasa Melayu*) as the first language and internationalises knowledge rooted in the national culture has been stipulated in UKM's vision, potentially reflects the university's endorsement of patriotisms spirit rather than Islamic or other values.

The vision statements discussed thus far are essentially formulated within the context of universities as a whole. In addition to these pronouncements, a review was also carried out on similar statements made by the faculty where the programme of accounting was conducted. This was thought to be useful in identifying the ethical values that are emphasised to undergraduate accounting students in Public universities.

The pronouncements, comprising statements on the Faculty's philosophy, aims and quality of its graduates, are depicted in Table 4. The statements made by the faculty appeared to reflect the university's emphasis on advancements in knowledge. For the faculty, however, such advancements are expressed within the context of business and management to meet the need of employability. As with the pronouncements made at the university level, the statements made by the faculty in the universities (except IIUM), in the researcher's view, do not seem to indicate a commitment in developing the students' moral character or spiritual and emotional part, as suggested by NPE. Instead, the pronouncements appear to focus on the challenges in the business environment,

and the ways in which education at the faculty would enable the students to face those challenges. While such educational outcome is common to many business and management faculties, this, to a certain extent, would have also implied the faculty's endorsement of competitiveness. This, in turn, may well be associated with the university's emphasis on the 'world class' reputation institution, as explicitly stated in its vision statement.

TABLE 4
Faculty's vision and mission

Faculty, University	Faculty Statements
Faculty of Economics and Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)	<p>VISION To be a leading business school in Malaysia fulfilling global expectations.</p> <p>MISSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To produce business graduates who meet the needs of the business community and to develop innovative and socially responsible leaders who are capable of dealing with changes in the global environment. • To contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the area of business and management. • To develop linkages and to collaborate with institutions, industries and communities at large.
Faculty of Economics and Business National University of Malaysia (UKM)	<p>VISION To be a distinguished faculty, which stimulates and generates knowledge for economics, business and professional development aimed at national and universal well-being.</p> <p>MISSION Committed to strive towards excellence in the disciplines of business management, accounting, and economics through the integration of knowledge and ethical practices, high professionalism and current developments</p>
Faculty of Business and Accountancy University of Malaya (UM)	<p>VISION To remain at the forefront of business and accounting education and continues to enjoy the reputation as an excellent knowledge-based institution.</p> <p>MISSION We aspire to be the leader and preferred institution in business and accounting education by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing graduates with quality education and global perspective that meet the evolving needs of various stakeholders. • Contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the area of business and accounting through quality research and publication.
Kulliyah of Economic and Management Science International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM)	<p>VISION To be a leading faculty of international excellence for teaching, research and consulting services integrating conventional economics, accounting and business-related areas with Islamic values and ethics.</p> <p>MISSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To produce well-rounded professionals in economics, accounting and business administration who are imbued with Islamic values and ethics. • To spearhead research and consultancy activities in Islamic economics, accounting and business-related areas. • To promote publication activities in Islamic economics, accounting and business-related areas

Faculty's (Kulliyah of Economic and Management Science) statements at IIUM, as presented in Table 4, contain three major elements that could be associated with the pronouncements made at the university level. Firstly, the faculty aspires to excel as a centre of education, particularly in the areas of economics, accounting and business. Secondly, the faculty attaches itself to the idea of integrating religion values and ethics into each of the three disciplines of knowledge. Thirdly, in the first objective stated in its mission, the faculty has made specific reference to Islamic values and ethics in respect of the moral qualities that may be expected of integration of Islamic ideals into all branches of knowledge. The faculty may be seen as to have expressed a commitment to ethical development of accounting students at undergraduate levels through the use of terms that may be associated with Islam, that such development shall have a religious and spiritual bearing. Specific mentions are also made of other qualities that the faculty seeks to instil into the students, such as professional competence and the values of care and compassion.

Based on a review of pronouncements made by the university and the faculty in the four universities, some observations may be offered regarding values within the context of education in universities. First, most of the universities in this study (UPM, UKM, UM) seemed to affix themselves to the purpose of university education in the more conventional sense, that is, the pursuit of academic excellence. Second,

while these particular universities do not appear to make an explicit commitment to a certain set of values, the objectives found within their mission statements could be argued to imply an emphasis on certain matters such as the materialist worldview, social responsibility, competitiveness and the support for diversity (research, teaching and publication). Third, these universities have not made any indication of the importance of spiritual elements in their educational context. Fourth, the pronouncements made by the universities and the faculties do not explicitly indicate a commitment to develop the students' spiritual and emotional part.

In the researcher's view, the official pronouncements made at IIUM, faculty and departmental levels reflect university's desire to make its Islamic identity and commitment to Islamic causes and ideals explicit to those within and outside the university. The statements also appear to signify the university's endorsement of Islamic values and systems of morality. Therefore, these are the values that the university subscribes to and would have emphasised within its community. This, in effect, would have also reflected the university's conceptualisation of the Islamic values and moral ideals as the right and most proper foundation for its attempt to develop the students' moral character. It may also be suggested that by framing the values in such manner, values that are regarded incompatible with the Islamic ideals would have been discouraged.

*Objective of Accounting Education
According to the Faculty Members*

NPE has indicated the emphasis on moral conceptualisation of values. Yet, NPE's statements seem to have made little elaboration on what should be the primary objective of education either moral or what they call the 'intellectual skill'. Therefore, this topic was explored further with the faculty members (accounting educator) who teach accounting programme at Public Institution of Higher Learning (IHL).

*The Primary Objective of Accounting
Education from Educators' Point of View*

In elaborating the objective of accounting education, one senior educator argued that the objective of accounting education should put moral issue as the primary objective, as extracted from her statement that:

*'For me, I will put the moral issue in the first place then the technical'
(Assoc. Prof., aged 30-40).*

According to her, this term should be representing the ideals which the university firmly subscribes and seeks to integrate into its educational aims. Another senior educator explained that accounting education in the university needs to integrate moral revealed knowledge and conventional knowledge. In summing up the expected outcome of accounting education in public university, which is structured around the mission, the educator member asserted and translated from Malay language as:

'We want to produce graduates who are not only knowledgeable but act morally or ethically. They will bring the characteristics of students who excel, those who mean good character, not only physical but spiritual'. (Senior lecture, aged 40-45)

*The Difference between Moral and
Conventional Knowledge*

Based on the western philosophy, educator members who viewed the conventional knowledge will basically devoid any element of religious or divine guidance. Since most of the educator members are Muslim, they looked at the objective of accounting education from the Islamic perspective and several educator members touched on this matter and emphasised that our education could not be departed from any element of ethics and morality, especially the divine guidance, the religious aspect. One of the educators emphasised that:

'Of course, number one is our religion (Islam), our belief in our religion (believe in God) is important and the rest will fall accordingly' (Lecturer, aged 43)

In a similar vein, another senior educator member asserted that the goal of accounting education based on the Islamic framework is expected to adequately address the objective of the life and the responsibility to divine guidance. He stated that:

'I think to be human, students, workers; they have to think about their creator and the purpose of their life. (Assoc. Prof., aged 42)

One senior educator member, for instance, contended that the goal of the Islamic education and the notion of NPE should become the essence of universities' idea of a holistic education, in which no separation is made between knowledge and ethics.

"Because we following western style education, we just focus on the marks, the grade and everything that can be measured. So here we are trying to make sure, when the student graduated from universities, they not just knowledgeable but also have the characters that following the eastern values" (Senior lecturer, aged 30-40).

A majority of the respondents agreed that public universities should embrace eastern moral values especially from the Islamic religion as the essence of the idea of a holistic education, in which no separation is made between knowledge and religion. The following quotes illustrate their shared sentiment in relation to the appropriateness of moral values.

"For me, the vision is to produce students who are not only knowledgeable (meaning know accounting terms and technical such as preparation of financial statements, interpretation, etc.) but they can also make decisions by weighing the pros and cons (the consequence) of ethical decisions and develop individuals who have self-integrity. Self – integrity means character (akhlaq)." (Senior lecturer, aged 43)

"It is important for our future accountant to have that's kind of ethical behaviour (good relationship with environment). We would not suppose to give for only worldly knowledge but also the eternal knowledge (ukhrawi) or perennial knowledge." (Senior lecturer, aged 35-40)

Discussion

Based on the vision of the universities, the missions of the faculty and department, accounting education at three universities out of four (UPM, UKM, UM) in this study do not emphasised on the development of moral character (spiritual and emotional development) as the main objective, as suggested by NPE. This is in line with some previous findings from the literature (e.g., Armstrong *et al.*, 2003; Abdolmohammadi & Baker, 2006; McPhail & Walters, 2009). Only IIUM emphasises the development of moral character in its university's vision and faculty's mission. UKM did mention the moral development in the university level but not at the faculty level. Two other universities (UM and UPM) have been seen separating the curriculum from religion philosophy, which is parallel with the western style of educational framework.

Based on the universities' vision and mission, it is possible that the accounting programme's objectives have secular-based objective by putting academic excellence as the primary objective compared with moral development as a secondary. In fact, it is also seen as 'outrageously stressed' on technical skill and alleviates the other

important things (besides moral) such as critical thinking skills. The technical skills, which need a lot of time and the syllabus, are too much to cover and may be part of the problems faced by accounting educators. The curriculum set up by professional body in Malaysia is also seen as too rigid and there is no room for creativity and the university does not have a chance to produce graduates according to their own unique set up.

Does this mean that in striving for this rather high sounding objective, the vocational aspect of training in accounting should be eliminated? Of course this is not the case. The technical aspects of accounting must be taken up as well. If the programme of professional accounting education ought to provide possible professional accountants with a construction of professional values, ethics and attitudes for exercising professional judgment and for acting in an ethical behaviour (IFAC, 2003), such judgement must be carried out beyond the narrow point of weighing the effects upon income or financial position. If this were not true, then accounting education could be approached almost entirely from the standpoint of limited vocational training, with no attention at all given to the moral or ethical viewpoint involved. The primary (technical skill) and secondary (values, ethics and moral) objectives may not only be compatible but mutually beneficial to students' development (Amernic & Craig, 2004). As a language of business, accounting needs appropriate communication.

Communications of business situation need an awareness of the nature of the problem. Technical competence is necessary as a prerequisite to ability to communicate. Business situation is expressed in monetary terms. Accountants make contributions by communicating these financial facts orally and in writing. The report must be honest and show the real situation or without manipulation for own interest or that of particular parties. There must be transparency on the effect of the real situation to the society and environment as a whole. This is where moral and ethics (spiritual and emotional parts) will take place. It is personal fruitful of accountants because the individual who has achieved the primary objective feels he/she is making contribution to his society and the contribution is not bounded by monetary sign. Like a painter, he must know how to paint and will decide which colour to use, or either it is suitable or not.

As suggested from the results of the study, such commitment has not been made visible in the university's mission and vision statements. It is possible that this has resulted in the differing views among public universities' accounting educators on the nature and extent of their roles in relation to imparting values to their students. Hence, public universities, and in particular, the faculty and the Accounting department within it, need to consider incorporating the objective of instilling spiritual and emotional part such as moral character into their educational outcomes, and to make a formal expression on this

matter through official pronouncements. As asserted by Albrecht *et al.* (2006), the task of developing the students' moral character requires an institution-wide involvement, in which the educational institution needs to set a highly visible ethical tone and solicit commitment and participation from within its community of staff. In some universities (such as UPM), however, there has been separate pronouncements about ethics and values.

Despite the differences in their general context of education, universities were highly concerned about meeting the accreditation requirements of the regulatory body, namely, MIA. Such requirements were viewed by some accounting educators in this study as a major obstacle in their efforts to impart spiritual part through the curriculum. This instance would signify the need for the regulatory body to consider some changes in their accreditation requirements. Ideally, such changes should allow more freedom for universities to instil values in ethics (one example of emotional part). In such manner, educational institutions that have set their sole focus on meeting the requirements of the regulatory body would have also sufficiently dealt with the matter of spiritual and emotional development of the students.

CONCLUSION

This study has developed the theme that the primary objective of accounting education should have to create individuals who are well-equipped intellectually, spiritually and

emotionally. This effort aims to produce knowledgeable, ethical and responsible Malaysian citizens who can contribute towards the harmony and prosperity of the community and nation. Through the pursuit of this primary objective of accounting education, the individual is encouraged to grow in technical accounting skill. Other than the technical skill, there is a need to improve the power of mind and strengthen the sense of responsibility both in professional and personal sense. In the end, the monetary evaluation should be tempered by accountability and strong sense of integrity.

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