

Thrust on quality research to develop BD's economy

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The two-day 1st International Conference on Business and Management (ICBM) 2017 concluded Friday with a call for becoming global citizens to give one's best in writing quality papers for publishing in peer reviewed journals so as to be of use to society as a whole, said a statement.

Addressing a "Meet the Journal Editors" session at the conference organised by BRAC Business School (BBS) of BRAC University (BRACU) at The Westin Dhaka, BRACU Vice Chancellor Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb Ph.D. delineated on characteristics of quality papers and journals.

On the Journal of Bangladesh Studies, of which he is the editor, Professor Andaleeb said it had a paper rejection rate of 80 per cent for plagiarism, insufficient definitions, improper rationale flow, amateurish styles, inadequate designs, irrelevant topics, over-engineering and misaligned conclusions.

Writers from this part of the world lack quality in writing and so should make use of close circles of "brutal reviewers" and Turnitin software for better results, he said. Moderating a corresponding question-answer session afterwards, BBS Associate Professor Dr Md Mamun Habib, Editor-in-Chief, Scopus Indexed Journal, emphasised on having patience and not to be disheartened easily, as publishing a paper takes four to five years.

Professor Dr Mark GOH of NUS Business School, National University of Singapore said with 1 billion PhDs rolling out every year, there was a “publish or perish” culture, generating tremendous pressure on getting papers published, which ultimately led to bad behaviour.

On creating journals, Dr Pairach Piboonrungraj, Associate Dean, College of Maritime Studies and Management, Chiang Mai University, urged on building brands, setting up special issues on specific topics, nurturing good personal relationships and knowing the audience for promotions.

Professor Ramayah Thurasamy, Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Applied Structural Equation Modeling, spoke on building tolerance on chances of papers being rejected and on staying alert of self-plagiarism and spam journal mails which hijack original logos.

An industry talk was held in the morning chaired by Professor Dr Mirza Azizul Islam of BBS.

BRAC Bank Ltd Head of SME Banking Syed Abdul Momen first took the floor, giving an outline of how the bank pioneered dedicated services for small and medium enterprises (SME) and promoted sustainable economic, social and environmental development being a member of The Global Alliance for Banking on Values.

He said 76 per cent of its customers were from micro and cottage enterprises while 24 per cent from small enterprises while 75 per cent of small business loans the bank disbursed every month were in rural areas around the country while 25 per cent were in Dhaka and Chittagong.

With 181 branches, 450 SME offices, 1,500 sales staff and 125 credit managers, the bank goes to the doorsteps of SMEs disbursing loans in a

maximum seven days and had over 400 billion portfolios of collateral free loans, maintaining 2-3 per cent of NPL after 15 years of operation, he added.

Now the bank has over 100,000 customers and did over 8,000 loans every month, of which 4,000 were new inclusions, he said.

He said BRAC Bank conducted an impact analysis in 2012 which found that its financing increased employment by 72 per cent and now would need researchers to conduct another. Moreover, the bank was seeking to digitize its services with hopes of disbursing loans in two working days' time, he said.

In another speech, First Security Islami Bank Managing Director Syed Waseque Md Ali spoke of how his 18-year old bank transformed from a conventional bank to an Islamic bank in 2009 after conducting research and following suggestions of policymakers, expanding to 160 branches and providing agent banking.

He then went on describe the scenario of Islamic banking, saying it worked on principles such as profit sharing, safekeeping, joint venture and cost plan.

In the banking sector of Bangladesh, it accounted for 18 per cent of assets, 23 per cent of investment portfolios, 20 per cent of deposits, 16 per cent of equity and 19 per cent of liabilities while its net profit increased 18.1 per cent year-on-year in 2016 and it mobilised over one-third of remittances.

Lastly, Deputy Managing Director of Abdul Monem Ltd, ASM Mainuddin Monem spoke of his pursuit for innovation and research to develop a 314-acre land the government provided to develop an economic zone.

Professor Dr Salehuddin Ahmed of BBS conducted a question-answer session where BRACU Vice Chancellor Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb Ph.D. informed that he had proposed to the government to form a research council and suggested industries to provide funds in small amounts to develop a “brain trust” in this regard.

The conference is one of the first major international initiatives in Bangladesh of recent times under the theme of global contemporary practices in business and management, attracting academic participants from prominent universities such as those of Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and the USA. It saw over 150 academic papers being presented in multiple parallel sessions and talks bringing together the industry and academia.