

## SHORT NEWS

### Discover Dutch culture

The International Students Meet Enschede (ISME) event brings new students from abroad together to explore Enschede city through thematic guided tours on September 26. From bike-riding lessons to learning a few essential Dutch words, the day is designed to welcome students from all parts of world who can gain valuable information about extracurricular activities offered at the higher education institutes in Enschede. Mayor Peter den Oudsten will be on hand to kick off the evening program, open to all international students. The ISME event is free for all new international students who are studying at the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC), Saxon University and the University of Twente. Register on the International Office website: [www.intoffice.utwente.nl/](http://www.intoffice.utwente.nl/)

### New student handbooks

Now available at the International Office are two new student handbooks. Learn how to open a bank account, arrange for housing, connect to the internet or apply for a visa. Just arriving expats can benefit from a wealth of information inside the pages of part two, designed to help international students adjust to their new life abroad and Dutch culture. Print edition copies can be picked up for free at the International Office in the Bastille building, room 322, or can be easily downloaded in pdf-format online: [www.intoffice.utwente.nl/nieuws/handbooksavailable/](http://www.intoffice.utwente.nl/nieuws/handbooksavailable/)

### Jeanet Timmerman's 'News'

Jeanet Timmerman uses edgy humor in her creations to express her interpretation of social questions, making her work innovative yet approachable.

Timmerman's found inspiration for her latest exhibition 'News' from an old black-and-white photo, which she made in to an impression of clay. She gathered newspaper photos and the theme "News" emerged.

She studied sculpting in 2005 at Academy for Art and Industry (AKI) and has since then participated in several exhibitions. Her work is regularly available to admire in galleries and businesses in Twente. Seen earlier this year in March at the Galerie Werkplein was also an exposition of objects called 'The Food Bank for the Poor' and '3XNX.' Her current exhibition is open through September 25 at Galerie Werkplein in Enschede.

For more information visit: [www.twenteutdekunst.nl/expo/jeanet-timmermans](http://www.twenteutdekunst.nl/expo/jeanet-timmermans).

## RESEARCHER ADVISES ON SELECTING MANAGERS

# Emotional intelligence matters

**YoungHee (Sylvia) Hur successfully defended her PhD dissertation entitled 'Optimizing managerial effectiveness through emotional intelligence' on September 3. She stood before a panel of eminent professors and posed the question: Does the emotional intelligence of a manager/leader really matter in a work setting? Her answer, in a nutshell, is yes, emotional intelligence matters.**

With a master's degree in international business from Yonsei University in South Korea and ten years of business experience, Hur has developed a keen interest in the qualities of successful leadership in the workplace. In her research she asks, would highly emotionally intelligent managers lead their teams more effectively than less emotionally intelligent managers? 'Emotional intelligence,' she says, 'is the ability to identify, understand, assimilate and manage the emotions of both self, and others. It's not about being positive all the time. Sometimes a more positive emotion doesn't work at all, especially for critical evaluation in the workplace. But knowing the causes and consequences determines how a manager will approach an employee in order to increase performance.'

In her thesis Hur proposes a link between transformational leadership and emotional intelligence. An emotionally intelligent transformational leader, she explains, focuses not only on their tasks, but also on the emotional state of their followers. They engage qualities of self-awareness, emotional stability, empathy, and authentic motivation and are able to find alternative solutions to problems. By showing sensitivity



In her dissertation Hur expressed the wish that her study might open new avenues of research on the relationships between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and performance. She said, 'Comments from experts on the real psychological effects of emotional intelligence would be useful. Photo: Gijis van Ouwerkerk

to the individual they can redirect negative feelings like frustration and helplessness in their followers. This in turn leads to an improvement both in the performance of their followers and their teams.

In her research study, Hur sent out questionnaires to both employees and managers in the public, banking and retail sectors in South Korea. In the national prosecutors' office she asked employees to rate all team managers

on emotional intelligence and leadership style. The findings showed that team leaders with higher emotional intelligence were more effective and able to contribute towards a better service climate. Hur claims these findings can impact positively in organizations, and recommends the selection of people with a high emotional intelligence for leadership roles, as they have the potential to become effective, transformational leaders.

In the banking sector, Hur was interested in the collective effect, or moods of the employees and whether the environment supported employee learning. She also measured the likelihood of staff turnover. Her findings showed that staff members are less likely to seek employment elsewhere when they are in a learning-rich workplace. In this study, Hur also discovered that gender and age play an important role. The analysis indicated that if there are more females than males working in a bank, the learning activity in the branch is increased. This supports the theory that women in general have a higher emotional intelligence than men. Unexpectedly, Hur also found that younger bank managers were more receptive to feedback, suggesting that the younger generation is less set in their ways, and casting doubt on the argument that emotional intelligence comes with age.

In Hur's study of a large electronic retail company, sales performance was compared to the emotional intelligence of the branch managers. Here, Hur concluded that a friendly atmosphere and cohesive work climate has a positive effect on both sales and the performance of the employees. Her three empirical studies showed that a more emotionally competent manager will achieve better results. She advises companies to stimulate the emotional intelligence of their managers through selection and training. Her message is simple, emotional intelligence really does matter.

Hur's promoter, Professor Celeste Wilderom, at the UT's School of Management and Governance, praised Hur for her emotional intelligence and resourcefulness. Hur has returned to South Korea where she is to start an assistant professorship and continue to work with Wilderom on video-detecting emotional intelligent behavior.

Audrey Rhodes

# Ramadan, more than just fasting

**With the final days on the horizon of the religious observance Ramadan, the Muslims' holy month of self reflection, four Pakistani students, Abdul Rauf, Mudassir Iqbal, Muhammad Asif and Muhammad Akram Raza shared their personal thoughts with the UT-Nieuws on how they practice their religion in the Netherlands.**

*Most Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. How do you maintain your energy level?*

**AR:** 'Fasting is the fourth pillar of Islam. Understanding the philosophy behind fasting and having faith in Allah (God) provides you with enough energy to spend the whole day in happiness.'

**MI:** 'It's not from "sunrise to sunset" but from "dawn to sunset." If you eat in the morning and evening then the nutrients required by your body will give you energy for the whole day.'

*Is the Muslim community on campus planning for a 'sugar party' when the fast is broken?*

**AR:** 'First of all, this practice is neither in Dutch a 'suikerfeest' nor in English a "sugar party," but truly known as "Eid-ul-Fitar," which is for all Muslims, at the end of Ramadan, when we arrange a get together. Hopefully we will, InshAllah (god willing).'

**MAR:** 'I don't know about the whole Muslim community on campus, but I am sure members of the Pakistani Student Association (PSA) are arranging an "Eid Milan" party which means "a gathering to celebrate a happy day" because "Eid" means "Happy." I think 'sugar party' is a common word, but "Eid" is a specific term for this religious event as is "Ramadan".'

*Can you describe a typical day during Ramadan?*

**RA:** 'The day starts with a pre-dawn meal followed by five prayers spread over the course of a day and then at sunset fasting ends with a meal. Afterwards I spend some time reading the Holy Qur'an as much as possible.'

**MAR:** 'I have to wake up during the last part of night and after two or three days, it becomes a routine. Since there isn't stress to have lunch, I can work more in the lab; it makes me adhere to a more regular schedule to complete my daily duties.'

*The Prophet Muhammad says: "Fast so as to be healthy." What changes do you experience in your body?*

**AR:** 'Yes, I fast as Allah commanded us. I believe it gives many benefits, including learning how to control hunger, thirst and other desires. It trains you how to become a good Muslim, both ethically and morally. Fasting also purifies both

my body and soul, so I feel healthy and thankful to Allah for this blessing.'

**MI:** 'Personally I have a stomach problem. If I am fasting then my stomach actually feels a bit better.'

**MA:** 'I think many of the health-related problems arise due to irregular eating patterns. I notice losing inches and feeling healthy.'

*Are there differences in observing Ramadan here or at home?*

**MI:** 'Actually in my home country, I feel a bit better because the "delicious" cooked food is served to me by my mother, and here I have to cook by myself.'

*Can you explain the basic principles of Ramadan?*

**AR:** 'Fasting is an obligation for Muslims who have reached the age of puberty, but some exceptions are allowed. For example, women who are pregnant and anyone who is traveling or ill can postpone fasting. It is not simply abstaining from food and drink, but refraining from indecent speech or acts like lying and any lustful thoughts.'

**MI:** No eating or drinking from dawn to sunset and also no sexual relations with your life partner. If you are not able to participate in fasting then you need to feed a poor person two times a day, if you can afford to.'

*Do you read the Qur'an from beginning to end, according to tradition?*

**MI:** 'Unfortunately I am not doing this; also it's not necessary but a good deed.'

**MA:** 'I do my best to keep to this tradition.'

**MAR:** 'This is just a tradition and a noble deed but not an obligation, so if you have enough time you should do it, but if you are also busy with your studies then you can read as much as time allows. I used to do this in my homeland, but here I am busy with my lab work. I try to read or listen to parts of the Qur'an every day.'

*Any personal reflections on Ramadan?*

**AR:** 'I am thankful to Allah for witnessing this blessed month again in my life.'

**MA:** 'Ramadan is more than fasting for the whole day. It is about the control of desires. It is a beautiful combination of simultaneously purifying body and soul. It is about putting yourself in the shoes of the "weak and deprived people in society".'

**MAR:** 'I want to say one thing; Ramadan or fasting is a religious prayer, so when some Muslims fast, they are only abiding to the wishes and will of Allah and nothing else.'

Robbin Engels