Dear Colleague,

I am trying to catch up with a backlog of papers, chasing up reviewers etc.

Your paper is a bit long, but it provides a fairly clear and detailed picture of the Malaysian situation.

I might need to get back to you after I go through the paper again, but we will be able to use your paper in the third issue of 2017.

Regards,

Ian

[Quoted text hidden]
Dear Dr Ian,

I am submitting to you the manuscript that have been improved based on the reviewer's comments. I've addressed all the comments and all amendments made are highlighted in red.

Herewith attached are the file of:

1. Improved manuscript.
2. Feedbacks on the reviewer's comments.

Please apologies me because I need many weeks to complete the amendment works.

Thank you indeed for your cooperation and attention.

Regards.

2 attachments

- BD Basir&Davies Jhepm improved manuscript.doc
  149K

- BD Basir&Davies Jhepm feedbacks on the reviewer's comments.doc
  69K
Dear Colleague,

I have received a review, which perceives an edited version of the paper as being publishable. The page references mentioned in the review could be out of kilter, because the reviewer had an anonymised version of the paper.

I note that the reviewer comments on English expression, something I mentioned in an earlier email. If you are unable to gain the assistance of your UK-based co-authors in upgrading the English expression, I fear you will need to hire a professional revision service.

Please consider incorporating the suggested changes, and have the paper revised, if you intend to resubmit. On receiving a resubmission, I would send it for consideration by a second reviewer.

Regards,

Ian

Reviewer 1:

This needs a good edit just to get the English better - it's not bad compared to some, but a bit overdone in some places. Usual comment about deleting 'the' before 'university management' for example. There are far too many commas for even a comma obsessed person like me. The authors need a reminder that when referring to academics the correct term to use is 'who' not 'that'.

And there were a few generalisations like: "... inhibited them from delivering the course content with their instinctive flair and creativity" (page 3).

Also on page 3, first para under The Influence of individualism on quality management - I am not sure why the phrase "Universities have embedded knowledge" is there at all.

There was also a statement on page 2, third para that "there is a lack of literature regarding ISO 9001 in higher education". I searched for the term 'quality management in universities' and got 2,270,000 hits.

It seems a bit superficial to me - the conclusion? Ensure that academics are fooled into believing that quality management systems are good for their professional development (my words). This finding is derived from their research but I'm not sure it adds much to the discussion about quality management in universities. Perhaps some more words on what 'management' could do in each of the four areas to (as they say) customise the generic system for universities, and how they can involve academics in that customisation rather than imposing the system on the academics.

Perhaps a bit more context about the Malaysian education system and government imperatives to introduce quality management in universities would be useful too - what is distinctive about their system? How long has it been going? Has has the system changed?

In terms of presenting the results, a table comparing the differences between the two institutions across the four areas would be useful. For me, the text descriptions was a bit hard to follow at times. And a bit more about why culture is important in organisations generally, not just QM. Culture isn't something that can be manipulated. It emerges from the practice of leaders and managers and the interaction of people - they touch on all of this but a bit more discussion might strengthen the paper.

I err on the side of saying it's publishable with editing/additions as indicated above.

[Quoted text hidden]
The influence of academic culture on Quality Management System ISO 9001 maintenance within Malaysian universities

Siti Arni Basir  
University of Malaya, Malaysia
John Davies  
University of Salford, United Kingdom
Jacqueline Douglas  
Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom
Alex Douglas  
No affiliation

Abstract
This study investigates the influence of elements of academic culture on Quality Management System ISO 9001 maintenance within Malaysian universities. There is a dearth of empirical studies on ISO 9001 maintenance, particularly in the higher education context. From the literature review, academic culture was classified into four elements – academic freedom, individualism, professionalism and collegiality. Two case studies were conducted within Malaysian universities that had been ISO 9001 certified for five years. At the time of this research, these two universities were the only two that had certification for their entire organisation (most organisations gain certification for specific departments). The findings showed that academic freedom, individualism and collegiality had worked against ISO 9001 maintenance, while professionalism had influenced ISO 9001 maintenance both positively and negatively. The opposites of individualism (teamwork) and collegiality (managerialism) had supported ISO 9001 maintenance in one of the cases.

Keywords: Quality Management System ISO 9001, Academic Culture, Malaysian, Universities, Influence.

Introduction
In order to survive and prosper, organisations are increasingly focusing on providing superior quality products and services. The most popular quality approaches are based on ISO 9000 Quality Management System (QMS) and Total Quality Management (TQM). ISO 9000 is a series of quality system standards that were developed from the military standards (Bendell, 2000) – the Allied Quality Assurance Publications (AQAPs); ISO 9000 was first published in 1987. The standards were reviewed in 1994, 2000 and 2008 (ISO, 2014). Up to the end of December 2013, 1,129,446 ISO 9000 certificates had been issued globally (ISO, 2015).

Previous studies concerning the implementation and certification of ISO 9001 have addressed various aspects (Lipovatz, Stenos & Vaka, 1999; Williams, 2004; Casadesus & Karapetrovic, 2005; Kunnanatt, 2007; Rodriguez-Cerillo, Fernandez-Diaz, Inurrieta-Romero & Poza-Montoro, 2012; Abdullah, Abdul Razak, Hanafi & Jaafar, 2013). However, little research has been carried out on the cultural aspects of the maintenance of ISO 9001 registration once the certification has been gained, particularly in the higher education context. This paper aims to address this gap in the literature. The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of the elements of academic culture on ISO 9001 maintenance within Malaysian universities.
Malaysian higher education system and quality movement

The history of higher education development in Malaysia began with the establishment of the King Edward Medical School and Raffles College in Singapore. In 1942, the two institutions were merged to form the University of Malaya. After the separation of Singapore from Malaysia, in 1962, the university was divided into two different entities – the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur and the University of Singapore in Singapore. In 1984, there were 7 public universities in Malaysia (Ghee, 1995), which increased to 20 universities by 2016 (Ministry of Higher Education web, 2016a). With a multi-ethnic population of about 28.3 million, Malaysia also has 53 private universities and six foreign university branch campuses, 403 active private colleges, 30 polytechnics and 73 public community colleges. These higher education institutions offer a wide range of tertiary qualifications at affordable prices (Study Malaysia, 2016).

The higher education sector is responsible for the operation of higher education institutions in Malaysia and is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Higher Education. The education sector has always enjoyed the highest national budget, which symbolises the commitment of the Malaysian government towards education (Study Malaysia, 2016). The total allocation for the education sector from the national budget in 2014 and 2015 was 21 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively (Malaysia's Ministry of Finance website, 2016).

The Malaysian higher education system was developed to ensure that it was able to build a reputation dynamic, competitive and capable of facing global challenges. Government efforts to improve the ability of public higher education institutions to develop into excellent universities have been continuous. In line with these objectives, public higher education institutions have been categorised into three (3) groups, namely, research universities, focus universities (technical, educational, management and defence) and comprehensive universities. Up to now, there are five (5) research universities, four (4) comprehensive universities and 11 focus universities. Research universities focus on the field of research, while focus universities focus on specific areas related to its formation. Meanwhile, comprehensive universities offer a range of courses and fields of study (Ministry of Higher Education website, 2016b).

In 1996, the Higher Education Institutions Act was passed by the Parliament of Malaysia. The Act allows the liberalisation of the private higher education sector and the corporatisation of public universities (Marimuthu, 2008). After the act was passed, the Malaysian public universities began to be corporatised with the purpose of giving more autonomy to the management of universities. The aim of this policy was to enable the public universities to generate income from other government sources (Prime Minister Department, 2000). Marimuthu (2008) argued that the corporate universities were expected to be managed like business corporations to minimise costs, increase efficiency and to be more market oriented.

The Higher Education Institutions Act 1996 was an important factor in the significant increase in the number of private institutions (Chai, 2007). With the liberalisation of the tertiary education sector, the issue of quality was becoming a major concern in Malaysia. Therefore, the government set up the National Accreditation Board in 1996, which monitors the quality of the courses delivered by private higher education institutions. The Ministry of Higher Education set up a Quality Assurance Division in 2001 to provide quality assurance to public universities. Finally, the National Accreditation Board and Quality Assurance Division were merged to form the Malaysian Qualifications Agency in 2007 (Marimuthu, 2008). This serves to monitor the accreditation process of academic programmes and to develop a code of practice for quality assurance in Malaysian higher education institutions. The Malaysian Qualifications Agency used the Malaysian Qualifications Framework as a basis for the quality assurance of higher education, and as the reference point for the criteria and standards for national qualifications (Malaysian Qualification Agency, 2015). Nowadays, most of the higher education institutions in Malaysia are implementing the Malaysian Qualifications Framework as one of the quality initiatives. In addition, the ISO 9000 quality management system is also used as a quality initiative in higher education institutions. In the 1990s, only a few public universities had implemented the ISO 9000 quality management system;