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## Editorial

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**Biographical notes:** Muhammad Madi Bin Abdullah is an Associate Professor in Management and Human Resource Development at the Faculty of Management, Multimedia University (MMU), Malaysia. His PhD thesis is about the influence of soft factors on quality improvement and performance in the electrical firms. His current research includes soft factors of quality improvement and its relationship with organisational performance.

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The papers in this issue analyse an important theme of global business in the Malaysian context. Malaysia aims to become a high-tech industrial nation by 2020 and this will require a focus on quality and various business improvement strategies. In addition, the implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) agreement in 1992 has increased the competition among the ASEAN countries. Therefore, Malaysian manufacturing and service organisations and public sectors have to introduce new innovative strategies to improve performance and then compete in this global market. The six papers discuss several strategies to improve competitiveness in Malaysian manufacturing and services organisations such as the adoption of quality practices (first paper), the online repurchase behavioural intention (second paper), the internationalisation process (third paper), the enterprise risk management (fourth paper), the style of leadership (fifth paper) and the sourcing strategy (sixth paper).

The first paper focuses on quality issues in manufacturing organisations. The paper by Abdullah and Tarí examines the influences of soft quality management practices on quality improvement, and discusses the importance of soft issues for organisational success using 255 electrical and electronics firms. The authors find that management

commitment, employee empowerment, reward and recognition, customer focus and supplier management are important factors for organisations' quality improvement. The paper concludes that managers need to focus more on these soft practices to achieve higher quality improvement levels and then increase the probability of competing in the global market. The employee empowerment is the most important soft practice for quality improvement because it is a way of acquiring knowledge by employees and obtaining their commitment by participating in quality efforts (e.g. solving quality problems). The role of management in facilitating the other soft practices, the importance of people management (e.g. empowerment, reward) and a focus on customer and supplier, create an environment to develop quality initiatives in a higher extent as a useful strategy to improve performance.

The second paper by Rezaei and Amin explores the antecedents of online repurchase behavioural intention toward retailers' websites. The aim of the study was to investigate online repurchase behavioural intention of online shoppers and specifically to examine the impact of pre-purchase user perceptions of attributes, pre-purchase user attributes and post-purchase user attributes on repurchase intention of university students. The study findings show that perceived value, perceived risk, trust with repurchase intention were not conformed and whereas trust, perceived value and perceived risk are not predictors for future behavioural intention among experienced shoppers. The study also found that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, privacy concern, internet literacy/affinity and satisfaction were positively and significantly related to predicting repurchase intention among online shoppers.

The third paper, written by Hashim, is based on the process of internationalisation of a local firm, Top Glove, which started as a new venture and then expanded globally and drastically to ensure its foothold in the global market. The study uses the content analysis of qualitative approach to examine its internationalisation process. The findings of this study indicate an early internalisation of Top Glove to the global market despite its deficiency in terms of global experience, lack of technology and smaller size. The author concludes that the company represents a truly born global company from the emerging economy like Malaysia.

The fourth paper, by Azizan and Woon, analyses the enterprise risk management in Malaysian Government agencies. The aim of the study is to investigate the depth and penetration of enterprise risk management practices and their effects on public sector performance. The statistical analysis provides two models of relationships between enterprise risk management intensity and performance. The findings show that the implementation of enterprise risk management initiatives leads to different benefits such as, among others, enhancing enterprise's ability to take appropriate risks in value creation, strengthening management's confidence in business operations, improving the monitoring of enterprise performance, enriching corporate reputation, creating smooth government procedures, improving clarity of organisation-wide decision-making and chain of command and facilitating the effort of reporting to regulators. These results suggest that the level of enterprise risk management penetration in public sectors is still low and then these initiatives should be promoted to improve the performance and corporate governance of Malaysian government.

The fifth paper, by Ahamed, Hassan and Hashim, investigates the differences in employees' perception of the authenticity in managers' leadership style, interpersonal and institutional trust and work engagement between two types of banks in Malaysia, that is, Islamic and conventional. The sample of the study consisted of 189 employees from

Islamic banks and 206 from conventional banks. The study tested two different structural models and found that supervisors in Islamic banking sector were perceived to be more authentic and likely to be more trusted by the subordinates who contributed to their work engagement. The paper lends support to the argument that formal and informal characteristics of organisational situations have the potentiality to influence the employee behaviours. The paper concludes that the situational strength of Islamic banks accentuated authentic leadership style produced more interpersonal and institutional trust and more engaged workforce in the organisation.

The last paper, by Hilman and Mohamed, investigates the influence of flexibility and sourcing strategy on organisational performance based on 314 respondents from Malaysian manufacturers. The paper discusses the effects of the make strategy and the buy strategy on the relationship between product diversification and organisational performance. The authors show that the make strategy mediates the relationship between the related product diversification strategy and the organisational performance, and the buy strategy mediates the relationship between the unrelated product diversification strategy and organisational performance. The paper concludes that managers should understand these specific combinations to build new competitive advantages.

The papers included in this issue are important attempts to understand how to reinforce competitive advantage of Malaysian organisations in such a global market. The role of leadership to create values and ensure better company performance, the adoption of quality practices and sourcing strategies, the internalisation process, the role of online marketing strategies and the enterprise risk management are important issues to know better how to improve organisational performance. These papers can stimulate new discussions in future research by other scholars to increase competitiveness in the Malaysian context.