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SEAAIR
SOUTH EAST ASIAN ASSOCIATION
FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to this edition of JIRSEA.

Although the SEAAIR Executive Committee planned two editions of JIRSEA for this year, various events, including the publication of a SEAAIR Book, a new venture by SEAAIR and supported by American AIR, had precluded realizing this plan, at least at the time of editing this issue.

JIRSEA Editorial Board continues to apply the quality and standard criteria for papers to be included in this journal. As in the previous edition of JIRSEA, we also include in this edition papers that were not previously presented at a SEAAIR conference.

In this edition we have eclectic origins of papers. From Indonesia we have a paper advocating the establishment of regional accreditation bodies, from Thailand and Australia a joint paper addressing generational dimensions on teaching and learning while from Malaysia there are three papers the first dealing with students' perceptions on generic skills, the second on testing hypotheses on customer relationships in an academic setting and the third suggesting higher education institutions to learn from development in business management in order for these institutions to address various shortfalls in their management.

I believe this is another stimulating edition for those involved in or are contemplating to manage higher education institutions or wishing to embark on institutional research.

Further information on the SEAAIR Book will be made as soon as it is available.

For those who wish to contribute to JIRSEA please visit our website http://www.seaair.info, also for further information on any aspects of SEAAIR activities.

Happy reading,

Nirwan Idrus
Editor

Academic Quality Improvement:
The need for regional accreditation agencies in Indonesia

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Abstract

With the rapid increase of higher education study programs in Indonesia, the National Accreditation Board (BAN-PT) is charged with institutional accreditation to assure their quality. BAN-PT was established in 1994. In the thirteen years of its existence, BAN-PT had only managed to accredit about 50% of study programs in the country. A major challenge for BAN-PT is clearly the number of study programs that need to be accredited and the geographical area to be covered by Accreditation Panels. Such centralized control and management appear to need a fundamental review and its roles to be devolved. This paper explores the development of Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Indonesia and recommends the establishment of Regional Accreditation Agencies in order to carry out BAN-PT functions in the various regions of Indonesia. These Regional Accreditation Agencies should then be accredited by BAN-PT.

Keywords: *Accreditation, quality assurance, regional accreditation agencies*

The Perceptions of Malaysian Undergradaute Students About a Set of Generic Skills

Mohd Lazim Abdullah and Abdullah Sani Kamaludin

Abstract

This article reports the perceptions of Malaysian undergraduate students toward a set of generic skills using a factor analysing approach and explores the relationships between factors. A Generic Skills Survey was employed as the basis of this investigation and distributed to undergraduate students from three public universities in Peninsular Malaysia. A factor analysis of 460 responses identified five dominant skills in a set of generic skills. Correlation tests indicated that all skills were significantly correlated. It was concluded that the five skills became an integrated entity of the set of generic skills perceived by Malaysian undergraduate students. Statistical evidences in exploring the generic skills were presented and some implications in the context of Malaysian were discussed.

Keywords: *Generic Skills, Malaysian undergraduate students, University Education, Dominant Skill of Skills*

Academic Computing Assessment Framework: Hypothesis Testing of the Value Chain Relationships

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Abstract

The paper extends the research on the value chain concept of the academic computing assessment framework proposed by Mokhtar *et al*. (2006). The framework was developed using qualitative research on pilot higher education institutions in Malaysia. The framework encompasses six broad academic computing areas: 1) Teaching and Learning Using ICT; 2) Researching Using ICT; 3) ICT Vision, Plan, Policies and Standards; 4) ICT Infrastructure; 5) Information Services; and 6) Institutional ICT Support. The areas are further decomposed into components and indicators, with rubrics describing the different levels of implementation. To investigate the academic computing value chain relationships, a nationwide academic computing survey was conducted. A data set involving seventy higher education institutions in Malaysia is used in the research. Five hypotheses representing the academic computing value chain relationships are identified. The testing of the hypotheses using bivariate correlation analysis, partial correlation techniques and ANOVA supports the academic computing value chain concept proposed by Mokhtar *et al.* (2006) and highlights the generalisability of the academic computing assessment framework to all higher education institutions in Malaysia.

Keywords

Academic computing; higher education; assessment; indicators; survey; mixed-method; principal components analysis; reliability analysis.

Beyond Quality – towards Kinetics and Blue Ocean Management in Higher Education

Nirwan Idrus♣

Abstract

Quality Management Systems in Higher Education institutions around the world are now increasingly becoming commonplace. The move from standard-based audits, using say the ISO 9000 series of standards, to fitness-for-use-based audits is beginning to take place in a number of countries. Some countries that started somewhat later than others, may still be conducting standard-based audits but they too are rapidly re-tooling and re-arranging their SOPs to move towards fitness-for-use-based audits. This paper reports on a number of investigations of management development generally and the potential application of the latest management philosophies to higher education specifically. The latter includes Kinetics Organization and the Blue Ocean Strategy.

This paper shows that higher education institutions are lagging behind industries in applying new management philosophies. This results in poor alignment between graduates' skills and industry requirements. Given the very rapid and pervasive expansion and application of technology, it is inevitable that higher education institutions seriously consider the adoption and adaptation of these new management philosophies. After all, the human capital of a country is pivotal to prosperity and economic survival of the country and the business of higher education institutions is indeed to provide relevant, up-to-date skilled and knowledgeable human capital.

The paper concludes with recommendations on applying these management philosophies to the various aspects of higher education and higher education institutions.

♣ This paper is reproduced here from the Proceedings of the SEAAIR 7th Annual Conference held in Bangkok in September 2007, as it is considered to be a seminal paper that may extend the management of higher education to a higher level.

Generational Perceptions of Teaching and Learning in Thai Universities

U. Thasnapark UTCC, R. Sharma Swinburne University of Technology and W. Launglaor UTCC

Abstract

The literature suggests that generations can be subdivided into Seniors (born prior to World War two), Baby Boomers (born 1940-1959), Generation X (1960-1979) and Generation Y (post 1979). Past studies indicate that these generations vary in terms of their defining events from a historical perspective (for instance the seniors landmark event is World War Two whilst Generation X are marked by the Vietnam War), music (Generation X prefer Punk disco and Generation Y Grunge Boy bands), their heroes and so on. But does this variability in characteristics, values
and the like impact on tertiary education? The literature search does not indicate much in the way of institutional research within the South East Asian region in this area. This study attempts to bridge this gap or at least contribute to a better understanding of the potential differences, particularly between Generation X and Y in terms of their University experiences regarding learning and teaching and their point of views on working. It is based on a survey of students within the Thai Universities comparing and contrasting student characteristic on the one hand and perceptions of the learning and teaching environment and outcomes on the other. The paper considers some implications of its findings.

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[The Editor apologizes to authors whose details are not included here as definitive association with particular universities was not available. Ed.]