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Title : LEADERSHIP STYLE INFLUENCE ON ADOPTION OF AN IMPROVED PROCESS INNOVATION BY MALAYSIAN CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES

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The research studied on the leadership style influence on adoption of an improved process innovation (ISO 9001: 2008) by Malaysian Grade 7 construction companies that had used the previous version (ISO 9001:2000). Process innovations play important roles in realizing the goals of the Malaysian Construction Industry Master Plan (CIMP) 2006-2015. The Construction Industry Development Board Malaysia (CIDB) uses compulsion to make construction companies to adopt process innovations under threats of sanctions. However, it does not guarantee that companies would adopt upgrades of process innovations voluntarily beyond the minimum compulsory requirements by CIDB. The review of past literature shows there is a research gap about the influence of leadership upon the intention to adopt the improved version of a currently used process innovation. There is a research gap about the influence of leadership upon the realized adoption of the improved version of a process innovation to replace the older version of the innovation. Respondents for the research were drawn from ISO 9001 registered companies under the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB). The research used a quantitative method for its methodology through a structured questionnaire survey as its instrument. Manager and subordinates of Malaysian Grade G7 construction firms were the respondents. This was followed by telephone call interviews. The analysis of the feedback from structured

questionnaire survey was through a parametric statistical analysis and a structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis. For the telephone interview, a content analysis was conducted. The findings indicate managers perceived their leadership styles as transactional leadership while employees perceive them as transformational leadership. There are significant differences ($p \leq 0.05$) in perceived leadership among age of managers, working experience of managers and the numbers of years the company. There is also significant differences ($p \leq 0.05$) in intended adoption of ISO 9001:2008 innovation among manager's gender, age of managers, numbers of years the ISO 9001:2000 has been implemented inside the company, the numbers of years the company has been in operation and a company's specialization. A Structural Equation Model (SEM) with good fit was generated that showed the relationship among transformational leadership, perceived of use, ease of use, satisfaction and continual improvement. The analysis of the follow-up interviews of the managers of the respondent firms generated four factors of the actual adoption of the improved innovation. These are Leadership, Perceived Usefulness, Difficulty of Use and Institutional Influence.