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Industry View on Academic Programme Development: An Empirical Study

Hussain, S.^{a*}, Hanaysha, J.^b, Ibrahim, M.S.^c

^{a & b}*Faculty of Business & Management, DRB-HICOM University of Automotive Malaysia (DHUAM), 26607 Pekan Pahang, Malaysia,*

^c*Faculty Legal Department, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.*

Abstract

Automotive education trend in Malaysia is rapidly growing in both skills and academic based qualifications. There are various relevant programmes offered by public and private educational institutions in Malaysia. This study is conducted on Automotive Education Institution (“AEI”) in East Coast Malaysia with an objective to acquire the automotive and services industry feedback prior to the new programmes development. A survey method was used for collecting the data from 323 respondents from various positions. The findings indicated the feedback from industry in various field and this could assist the AEI preparation of teaching and learning facilities including the academic staff.

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1. Introduction

Automotive industry in Malaysia is facing a stiff competition from a number of global players. The initiatives taken by the Malaysian Government include the launch of National Automotive Policy (“NAP”) 2014. The main objective of NAP 2014 is to transform the competitiveness of Malaysian automotive industry to face the global challenges. According to Malaysia Automotive Institute (2013), on the 20th January 2014, the “National Automotive Policy (NAP) 2014” was launched with a vision of transforming the competitiveness of the Malaysian automotive

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +60-12-577-4114

E-mail address: suhaidah@dhua.edu.my

industry to face the global challenges. In complementing the implementation of the NAP 2014, there are 6 roadmaps outlined together with the implementation plan under the supervision of Ministry of International Trade and Industry (“MITI”) and the Malaysia Automotive Institute (“MAI”). MAI shall act as the agency to coordinate, implement and monitor the programme. These roadmaps serve as a guideline to achieve the transformation objective of the local automotive industry. The summary of these roadmaps are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Malaysia Automotive Roadmap
(Adapted from Malaysia Automotive Institute, 2013)

Malaysia Automotive Roadmap	
1. Malaysia Automotive Technology Roadmap (MATR)	Focuses on the latest green technology development which is supported by environmental friendly supply value chain and enhancing competitiveness.
2. Malaysia Automotive Supply Chain Development Roadmap	It aims to enhance the component and spare parts of manufacturer’s competitiveness in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. This will lead to quality improvement, operation and business management systems.
3. Malaysia Automotive Human Capital Development Roadmap	It is targeted to develop competent workforce at every level within the automotive industry. The development of specialized local skilled workforce in automated production, hybrid component and engine transmission will reduce the dependency of the less skilled foreign workers and consequently producing a more local skilled worker with high-income salary.
4. Malaysia Automotive Remanufacturing Roadmap	The Remanufacturing roadmap outlines in detail the criteria of remanufacturing as well as the standards and best practices that will be used by the local industry players in transforming Malaysia as the hub for automotive remanufacturing activities.
5. Development of Automotive Authorized Treatment Facilities (ATF) Framework	The ATF framework shall serves as a guideline to transform the automotive after sales businesses in relation to the effort in developing a green and sustainable automotive industry within the sales, service, spare parts and repair sectors.
6. Malaysia Automotive Bumiputera Development Roadmap	The Bumiputera Development Roadmap details out the activities related to technology development, human capital and supply chain to increase the competitiveness of Bumiputera’s companies within the automotive industry.

The establishment of Malaysia Automotive Roadmap has given opportunity for the automotive industry players in Malaysia to enhance their competitive advantages in competing with the global players. The third Roadmap - Malaysia Automotive Human Capital Development Roadmap provided an opportunity to automotive education and training centres to developing competent workforce at every level within the automotive industry.

In East Coast Malaysia, the establishment of an Automotive Education Institution (“AEI”) has the same vision to develop the competent workforce specifically in automotive industry. The institution offers undergraduate programmes covering the upstream and downstream chain of automotive industry. The upstream and downstream process of automotive and services industry starts from producing automotive components, manufacturing, assembly, distribution, and inspection. In order to be competitive in the market, AEI is working towards the development of the academic programmes. The future academic programme development will be based on the feedback and demand from the industry. Therefore, this study aims to elicit the views of the industry personnel on their academic needs and career development. The outcomes of this study would enable AEI to develop such programmes to suit the industry requirements as well contribute to their career for higher positions.

2. Background of Study

According to Malaysia Automotive Institute (2014), the economy of the country has been affected because the currency crisis were noteworthy on the general headway of car industry, specifically in the field of item advancement, innovative work, mechanization and human capital, and all of them are vital to position the business at higher standard with other worldwide players. The crisis has driven the Malaysian car industry into despondency to stay coordinated to keep on looking for survival answers for maintaining future business. For instance, the liberalization of auto business is urgently approaching for Malaysia to keep up its solid ties inside the business groups in the ASEAN and global markets (Madani, 2014). However, the execution of economic liberalization structure should consider conceivable mishaps such as expanded reliance on overseas countries, especially in engineering and technology of the car, imbalanced growth inside the car segment, and employability of unskilled and semi-skilled workforce.

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