Challenges faced by Malaysian private HLIs in providing quality education: a thematic analysis

By: Anis, A [Anis, Azilah][1]; Islam, R [Islam, Rafikul][2]; Abdullah, NA [Abdullah, Nur Anisah][1]

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION
Volume: 26 Issue: 3 Pages: 349-373
DOI: 10.1108/QAE-10-2015-0039
Published: 2018
Document Type: Article

Abstract
Purpose The paper aims to identify the emerging themes on the challenges faced by the Malaysian private higher learning institutions (HLIs) in the provision of providing quality education.

Design/methodology/approach Semi-structured interviews were purposively conducted with 29 of the Malaysian private HLI internal and external stakeholders ranging from the relevant personnel of the institutions (the quality director, administrators and senior academics), regulatory agencies, prospective employer, students and parents. Thematic analysis was then applied to analyze the participants’ responses in determining and clarifying the challenges faced by the Malaysian private HLIs in the issue of providing quality education.

Findings Eight overarching themes were identified, namely, Academics, Facilities, Students, Programs and curriculum, Competition, Accreditation, Finance and Research. Academics represent the most frequent challenge raised by the participants, whereas Research emerged as the least mentioned challenge during the interview sessions.

Research limitations/implications The present paper focused solely on Malaysian private HLIs, and thus, the findings may not be applicable to the foreign private HLIs that are operating in Malaysia as well as to the public HLIs.

Originality/value The findings are expected to provide valuable guidelines to the Malaysian Private HLIs in areas where resources need to be critically disbursed. To the regulatory agencies and policy-makers, the findings could enlighten them on the difficulties faced by these privately funded institutions so that further policies can be designed and implemented to assist these institutions in their operations and long-term survival.

Keywords
Author Keywords: Challenges; Thematic analysis; Malaysian private higher learning institutions; Quality of education
KeyWords Plus: BUSINESS; INSTITUTIONS; EXPERIENCE

Author Information
Reprint Address: Islam, R (reprint author)
Int Islamic Univ Malaysia, Dept Business Adm, Kulliyah Econ & Management Sci, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Addresses:
[1] Univ Teknol MARA, Dept Business Management, Puncak Alam, Malaysia

E-mail Addresses: rislam@iium.edu.my

Publisher
EMERALD GROUP PUBLISHING LTD, HOWARD HOUSE, WAGON LANE, BINGLEY BD16 1WA, W YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND

Categories / Classification
Research Areas: Education & Educational Research
Web of Science Categories: Education & Educational Research
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