

EDITORIAL

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Welcome to the eighteenth volume of the *Malaysian Management Journal* (MMJ).

It is now twenty-two years since the first issue appeared in 1992. As we enter the age of maturity it may serve as a useful reminder to reflect on the original purpose of our journal and decide on how to stay on course. It is clear to me that the MMJ was originally intended to be an interactive platform for the articulation of informed viewpoints. This means more discussion, debates and commentaries beyond the IMRAD template regularly found in contemporary academic writing.

In his forward to the first issue of the MMJ (1992), His Highness the Chancellor, Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah Ibni Almarhum Sultan Badlishah, expressed his hope that the MMJ "...will benefit the community as a whole and be a source of reference both here and abroad. I strongly believe that this journal will be useful to academicians, researchers, managers and management consultants". This sentiment was reechoed twelve years later in the editorial which hoped that "...this journal would find the academic discussions and ideas incorporated in the issue to be substantially interacting and illuminating" (MMJ, 2004, p. iv). Nearly two decades earlier the first Vice-Chancellor, in his forward to the first UUM journal, *Analisis*, called for publications that are relevant to the discourse on societal development—that publications in the journal should contribute to policy discourse. To him researchers should be in the position to suggest policy alternatives for tackling development issues in society. In this way the performance of *Analisis* "...should not be measured in terms of sales and size of readership but on how significant its contribution is as a channel and forum for the exploration of alternative development strategies for the betterment of human life" (p. iii, 1986; original in Malay, translation by editor).

After three decades of growth, the "channels" for publication of articles in UUM have now exceeded a dozen serials, but the ecosystem of learning focusing on management, has yet to generate that forum for intellectual discourse that many had hoped for. We have therefore decided to reappraise our production-centred approach to be in favour of more interactive discourses which address a variety of content segments. In the ideal situation, the journal as a forum or space for academic exchanges may have up to a dozen sections, each with its own genre, comprising the editorial which sets the tone and agenda of discourse; a survey or an invited review paper that presents viewpoints on the state-of-the-art on chosen topics; research articles which constitute the bulk of submissions; rejoinders which are reaction papers to earlier contributions, and commentaries which are informed reflections on particular subjects of interest generated within or outside the discourse community. Besides these, there are supplementary sections which accommodate research notes usually in the form of tentative claims based on preliminary or irregular findings; and also opinion pieces in the form of letters which revisit particular conceptual or empirical observations. Most established journal would have a book review section which contributes a scholarly evaluation of a work that is deemed important by the reviewer or editor, and that can be positive or negative, but rarely promotional in the marketing sense. Occasionally, when a renown member of a discipline fraternity dies, there would be a special issue of the journal published in honour of the deceased or at least an obituary which highlights the scholar's significant works.

So far there have been precious few efforts to serve readers with the kind of variety that were familiar features in the traditional academic serial. The recent trend has been towards a singular focus on publishing full articles

which are getting shorter while the number of joint authorship are, on the moving average, increasing with extended lists of co-authors some of whom may not be involved in writing but are only privileged 'gift' or 'guest' partners. The days of single authorship is diminishing as more people seek tenure or promotion through displaying a long list of co-authored titles often oblivious to intellectual exchanges in the relevant discourse community. Clearly, there has to be a proper balance between the numeric and the rhetoric in a professional media.

At this juncture it is perhaps time to reflect on what an earlier editor had wished for, that is, to publish "...an issue that is substantially interacting and illuminating" (MMJ Editorial, 2004). I remember a few lively exchanges in the past, between Augustine Tan and E. K. Fisk (1964) in the *Economic Record*, 40(89): 121-123 on the "Special development problems in a plural society: A rejoinder", and Brian Parkinson and Wilfred Wilder (1967) a heated debate on "The non-economic factor in the

economic retardation of the rural Malays" in the *Modern Asian Studies*, 1(1): 31-46, and more recently Noor Azlan Ghazali and Izani Ibrahim's commentary on "Testing the Lucas Critique in Malaysia" *Analisis*, 2003: pp. 181-191. In the same discursive spirit we have included in this issue a review of an important work which deals with multicultural governance as it is practiced in Europe in the context of the growing presence of Muslim citizens there. It is a concern which resonates with Malaysian thinkers on the fundamental issues of nation building. There is also a conference report of a recent tourism conference in Langkawi which represents a landmark event for the IMT-GT academic fraternity.

On that note we would be happy to welcome thoughtful submissions to fill up any of the above supplementary sections other than the editorial, unless of course if there is a volunteer who is interested to contribute a lead editorial for a special issue of his/her choice.