

Factors and Priorities Considered in the Product Design Process:

A Case Study of SMIs

BY

Assoc. Prof. Dr Moharnmad Basir Saud

Adam Mohd. Saifidin -

Universiti Utara Malaysia

MALAYSIA

Wiwiek Rabiatal Adawiyah

Sri Murni Setyawati

Universitas Jeneral Soedirman

INDONESIA

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This main aim of this paper is to identify and prioritise the factors considered by the Malaysian SMIs (small and medium industries) in their product design process, particularly in the manufacturing sector. As we know that, the manufacturing sector is the most players in the country's continued economic development by producing products and services for the local market as well as for foreign markets. Thus, SMIs (known more generically in other countries as SMEs, small and medium sized enterprises) played an important role in the supply chain management of most industries and often end producers in their own right. The Malaysian SMIs need to work hard and smartly in order to have competitive advantage and to produce successful products. This company's competitive advantage could be achieved by creating differentiation of products in order to distinguish them from the offerings of other companies, particularly in Malaysia and overseas. Nowadays, the Malaysian SMIs have been struggling very hard to survive and to design and develop products that meet customer requirements and needs in the competitive global environment. The Malaysian SMIs need to compete in different aspects of products in one or more areas. Therefore, the quality of management of the product design process is an important characteristic and should be efficient enough to cater for the whole product design processes. Overall, Malaysian SMIs need be able to make adequate efforts in their product design process in order to compete more effectively in enhancing their product marketability in the open market. The most effective product. design process is a major variable when SMIs want to increase their product's quality to enable them to be successfully marketed their quality's products to both local and foreign customers. Even though the products already existed in the current open market, but then, SMIs need to continue thinking about how to make further product's improvements and development in order for them to sustain their competitiveness or increase their product's value in the eyes of customers. However, product "redesign" also relies upon quality management programmes and management. In addition, SMIs also heavily rely on how they utilized the available guidance and resources in term of the labour and

capital markets. Hence, the main aim of this study is to identify the factors, priorities of product attributes been considered by Malaysian Small and Medium Industries (SMIs) when designing and redesigning their products. This study also focuses on who are involved in the company's product design process and their level of involvement in managing their product design process. It is believe that well designed products that match customers' needs, requirements and tastes will win the customer's heart and could improve orders (demand) in world open markets.