

## The Prospects and Challenges of Adopting an Environmental Management System by Higher Education Institutions in Lebanon

**Authors :** May A. Massoud, R. Harissi

**Abstract :** The fundamental principle and overall goal of an Environmental Management System is the concept of continual improvement. The implementation of such a system reveals a commitment to compliance and sustainable development. This research project aims at identifying and evaluating the prospects and challenges facing the adoption of ISO 14001 standard in the higher education system of Lebanon. It examines the corresponding barriers, drivers and incentives associated with the implementation of the standard. For this purpose, primary data were collected using quantitative method. The results revealed a significant lack of knowledge and sense of responsibility towards ISO 14001 standard and environmental accountability. Improving educational and social responsibility, improving environmental performance and enhancing institution image are the most noticeable drivers to adopt ISO 14001. The main perceived barriers for acquiring the standard are unclear benefits of ISO 14001, the lack of government support and the fact that the standard is not seen as a priority by top management. Lebanese Higher Education institutions are far likely to consider ISO 14001 before having proper accreditation programs or until ISO 14001 become widely-known in the Lebanese economic sectors.

**Keywords :** ISO 14001, higher education institution, environmental management, system

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