Reviewer 1

The paper discusses in some details the professional role of quality engineers, taking into consideration their experience status and authority within the organization. They collected data through questionnaire/survey. Some of the conclusions are not clear, e.g. but it is not clear how the the authors would conclude that the organizations had the desire to maximize their profits while deviating from quality and mentioned that this is on the way of quality engineers practicing their roles. Although this is true, they did not defend their hypothesis (not present) which should be supported by literature.

Statistical analysis of results are weak, need to be more robust!

Most of the references are outdated with the exception of two 2016 and 2017 papers. Need to update the references.

It will be a good idea to list your hypothesis and defend the findings in the discussion/conclusions section of the paper.

Few grammatical errors, which can be easily fixed with the editorial support.

Reviewer 2 - Review of “On the Professional Authority of Quality Engineers…”

This paper seeks to address the role of quality engineers in private industry in Israel, seeking to understand the circumstances under which professional authority and its exercise vary across contexts. The data collection involves qualitative interviews with 7 experienced quality engineers and survey data from around 90 such engineers recruited from occupationally-related websites. The results suggest that there is considerable contestation of authority of this occupational group.

The analysis and presentation review brings up several questions the author(s) need to address.

First, the author(s) begin by tying their theoretical presentation to Abbott’s and Weber’s conception of authority and contestation for task domains. This is fine but there is relatively little discussion of the development of quality engineering as a semi-professional group. The circumstances under which a professional group develops are usually tied to how it is subsequently received. In the case of quality engineering there is some implied statements that suggest there were serious product debacles that led to regulatory action and that (as a result) quality engineers were viewed as the solution. If this is so, then institutional theory’s concerns with coercive or normative isomorphism might suggest why quality engineering spread (governments mandated it and “good organizations” had them as a result). Then, in order to shelter the core activities of organizations from these institutional pressures, quality engineering was only loosely coupled with everything else – hence the relative lack of authority.

At this point it’s difficult to tell if this account is true (or false) because there isn’t enough background on the development of the professional group in the paper. That should be improved.

The other possibility the author(s) resort to near the end of the paper is Giddens’ concept of structuration. This could work but it is also might be less effective. Quality engineers could be structurally stuck in roles peripheral to actual organization activities and that would be “structuration”. They could also be totally integrated into the organizational apparatus, etc. and that could be “structuration.” Presumably, the occupational group would prefer the latter.

Second, you have seven interviews and surveys from 90 quality engineers, but there is no quantitative analysis actually presented. Even if the results could be presented as simple descriptive statistics, that would be worth knowing. As it stands now, it isn’t clear exactly what is being analyzed and what isn.t

Finally, If the first and second points above could be cleared up, the conclusion could focus on what the next steps are for the professional group. Right now the situation does not look optimal. There doesn’t appear to be a uniform educational standard. It seems that employing organizations aren’t taking the time to find people who they would benefit from (which supports the account in the first point above). The quality engineers that are present are not listened to, so the purpose of the professional group in the first place is in question. This is another major reason why more background is needed on the development of the profession itself generally, and in Israel.