

5th World Conference on Learning, Teaching and Educational Leadership, WCLTA 2014

The Application Strategic Planning and Balance Scorecard Modelling in Enhance of Higher Education

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Abstract

In the past few years, many models and approaches to quality improvement experienced in commercial organizations, such as total quality management, continuous improvement and EFQM model have been accepted and used by universities and other research and educational institutions and the results also have been used effectively. Strategic Planning and Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model are also among the approaches and models that deals with planning and performance assessment of organizations and corporates with a great broad vision . But some questions are raised here: How these two approaches make enhance the quality of universities and higher education institutions? Is it as much useful for organizations and commercial institutions as it is for higher education institutions and universities? What are the necessary requirements and infrastructures for deployment and implementation of these two approaches in higher education institutions? And whether they really are used in higher education. This is a descriptive research which aims at answering the above questions concerning the application of strategic planning models and balanced scorecard in higher education quality improvement.

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Peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Education and Research Center

Keywords: Balanced Scorecard, Strategic Planning, Higher Education, EFQM Model

1. Introduction

Universities need appropriate tools and models to assess and ensure qualitatively of the plans and related processes and application and effectiveness of graduates in the market in order to perform their great important

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duties. On the other hand, the country's higher education system should attempt to increase the efficiency and optimum use of the assets available in the country and should promise the prosperity and academic and cultural empowerment of the community (Fooladvand and et. al., 2012).

In this regard, higher education centres in the world review their existing situation precisely with a strategic view and by outlining the visions and missions based on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and concerns set up their goals in order to deal with their duty-related operational programs more effectively. (Ghorcheian & Salehi, 2005). Strategic planning analyses the basic environmental risk factors and offers the solutions which are more possibly suitable to reach the goals. In fact, strategic planning is the process of setting the organization goals and making decisions about comprehensive operational and administrative plans to fulfil those purposes. Despite the importance of strategic planning, yet its critical impact (vital impact) to reach the Organization's goals are not well understood in many organizations and even in some cases managers consider it as a costly affair. In the opinion of some scientists strategic planning represents executives' creativity power and making the future (Mackeyon, 1996). One of the basic steps in strategic planning is providing information about the internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats that university is faced with because every effective strategy make use from benefits of strengths and locations and at the same time reduce the weaknesses and threats to the minimum extent or overcome it. Strategic planning in higher education creates a long-term vision in the director and is helpful in the realization of a desired and idealized future. Without strategic planning and considering the organization's internal and external affairs, the plans are not any more realistic and it would not work practically. (Kafman & Herman, 1996). The organization's internal and external environment assessment is an administrative tool that besides strategic planning is used in policy making and problem solving. This instrument provides a realistic and reliable scale for assessing the organization. The process of evaluating the internal and external environment of the organization is called SWOT analysis because it includes identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and external threats. The information collected during the assessment process often leads to identify strategic issues. SWOT analysis can be completed with different methods. Management of any organization should determine the best way to organize and evaluate the implementation of the internal and external environment. (Tabybey & Maleky, 2005; Yarmohammadian, 2007, 2009)

One of the methods which can be used to evaluate the strategic planning is balanced scorecard. BSC is not only a comprehensive and integrated performance measurement tool, but also is a management system with the new approach of strategic management that was introduced by Robert Kaplan and David Norton. BSC offers a diverse collection of performance indexes in four groups that include financial performance indicators, customer, internal processes, learning and growth. The increase in the use of this card in various parts of the world has made its strengths and weaknesses clear in practice, and many researches have been carried out in this field. Evidence obtained from these studies verifies the effectiveness of the balanced scorecard in the public and private sectors (Azari & Safari, 2003). Balanced Scorecard is introduced and evolved to implement strategy and achieving successful results and improvements and strategic translates. It has also turned into a powerful management tool and strategic formulation. BSC provides a suitable framework to facilitate the implementation of strategy. This idea is confirmed through a process that transparent the vision at the beginning and connect each individual performance to the strategy at the end and thus, both behaviour and performance of employees are affected by the operational objectives resulted by strategy. Finally, the strategy-oriented organization is formed. Aspects of the balanced scorecard are:

1.1. Financial Perspective

In this aspect, common financial objectives and measures are described. Also, criteria like investment return rate, shareholder value, profitability capability, income growth and unit cost will be determined which are among the delayed measures and indicate the organization strategic success.

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