
The Role of the Strategic Planning in Developing the Future and Ensuring Continuity in the Educational Institution

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Abstract:

The educational institution is a part of the community developmental structure, which can preserve the past and take the advantages of the present, also the educational institution works to develop the future to be more useful and progressive. As the strategic planning is the most important thing in founding an institution, this makes the planning process itself the most important phase in the educational operations, due to this the objectives and the strategies are set to ensure the future of the educational institution. The aim of this study is to analyze the efficiency of the strategic planning role for the educational institution to ensure the future and continuity of its work, to keep the development and the planned and the unplanned changes.

Key words: planning, strategic planning, educational institution.

INTRODUCTION:

Future is always full of unknown things that we can't predict, failure might happen when we can't look forward to things that we should do, the inability to predict future and expect the coming events can cause obstacles in achieving success, but

expecting them can eliminate these obstacles and thus accomplish the success we predicted. (NY&Thott,2005) added that who can predict the future, as if he attends the day will come. Especially that the continuing changes in all fields of life, technology, politics, economics, competition, human resources, social criteria and trends can reach his goals. Planning is the spirit of prediction that can draw a frame that includes all types of activities and business, analysis of the past and imagine what will be happen in the future by monitoring and preparedness the influential environmental variables. Planning is the beginning to achieve goals, it is an ongoing activities, most important than the other administrative activities, depends on collecting data and information, and analyses studies to achieve results to help the manager to choose when, whom and what should be done to expect future events that should occur.

Strategic management is important to all organization. Correctly formulated and communicated strategy provides leaders and employees with a clear set of guidelines for their daily actions. This is why strategy is so critical to the principles of management you are learning about. Strategy is about making choices: What should I do today? What shouldn't be done? What should my organization do? What should it stop doing? (Carpenter, and Bauer, and Erdogan, 2016: v.1.0). Zappulla,2002)considers that the educated strategic planning enhances the common collaborative culture, determines validity of the manager and the staff, sets expectations, devotes the decision to participate, expands cooperative outside the school, shows the vision, development plan and observes the effectiveness of performance.

The educated strategic plan is an administrative responsibility essentially connected with the school administration and the employees should work on its achievements. Now it is the time to adopt the strategic planning as the only legitimate approach at schools to prepare

for their future but it should be observed. If it is achieving success, the required changes will be developed (Bell, 2004). The researcher believes that the Palestinian society needs strategic planning in both public and private institutions such as the educational and military institution. Most of the organizations permanently closed because of the past events in an occasional phenomenon. The reason of this is the spontaneous work without planning, bad expectations and the crises that have occurred where it didn't achieve the long term degree of strategic planning.

The researcher explained crises that affected the educational institution in Palestine like closing many of them by the authorities because of the disability to continue or they didn't meet the required conditions of public safety. The reason for the financial crises in Palestinian universities is the absence of planning, fiscal deficit and the need to cover this deficit by foreign and other Arab financial aid. The management of the educational institution is the most important humanitarian activities in different types of society. Because it directly affects people socially, economically and politically. Weakness in the required performance has a negative effects on students' future and on the society at all. This required a serious effort to develop this performance by applying the modern educational theories that enhance and keep the status of educational institutions to develop and face all the challenges. Strategic planning one of the important ways to achieve it (qou, 2014: 19).

The aim of this study is to analyze the importance of strategic planning in the educational institution at present and ensure continuity through questions and the answers to them, the axes of this study and studies on international experiences for educated strategic planning are determined by the following points:

- What is the strategic planning?

- What is the purpose of the educational strategic planning?
- What are the stages and elements of strategic planning?
- How do we maintain the strategic planning from the failure?
- Studies on international experiences for educated strategic planning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Here are some definitions for the strategic planning term:

- *Strategic planning* is the process of defining an organization's plans for achieving its mission. An organizational *strategy* is a derived approach to achieving that mission. The product of a strategic planning effort is typically a document (a *strategic plan*) that elaborates a high-level strategy and articulates the elements that influence it—it is a full description of the organizational environment and intentions. Note that a strategy is directional in nature; although descriptions and analysis of the present situation are included, a strategic plan does not merely endorse the status quo, and it directs change of some kind (Cassidy 2006).
- The United Nations define strategic planning comprehensively is a process that sets out the organizations goals in the medium and long term and put out the observed material plans to achieve these objectives (Inomata, 2012:2).
- Strategic planning is an official administrative process and a clear mission indicating the institution and its existence and reality, strengths and weaknesses points. (Berra, 2012: p23) shows it like where are you, where are you going. If you didn't know, you would likely end

in another place. We need a glance from future to guide us to the right way.

Strategic planning involves many steps which determines the current situation of the institution including its future vision, operating capabilities, strengths and weaknesses points, opportunities, threats, goals, procedures, priority strategies and present and future work plan (The Foundation for Community Association Research, 2014: p4).

Many businesses develop strategic planning within a short-term, medium-term and long-term framework. Short-term usually involves processes that show results within a year. Companies aim medium-term plans at results that take several years to achieve. Long-term plans include the overall goals of the company set four or five years in the future and usually are based on reaching the medium-term targets. Planning in this way helps you complete short-term tasks while keeping longer-term goals in mind (Markgraf, 2016).

The goal of the educational strategic planning and its importance:

The term of strategic planning is used in the administrative domain and widely in manufacturing. Its general objective was to prepare for the future because it is an unknown thing. Businessmen can deal with the expectations and changes of the future to develop and innovate ideas to suit the reality in all periods (Ny&Thott, 2005:7).

(Mbugua,& Rarieya,2014: 13) explained in his study that targeted schools for the educational institution field that the strategic planning is a process causes a challenge in the schools therefore, there is a need to educate the staff to develop schools to gain benefits.

There are many documented approaches to strategic planning, five typical strategic planning processes examine an organization's current environment and abilities (the present situation), considerations about how it would like to grow or evolve (the desired future), its aspirations as an organization (what it will strive to do), and its intentions for moving forward (how it will move forward). These high-level elements are described below:

- **The What:** These are descriptions of what the organization does and what it aspires to achieve—its organizational targets—including its goals, objectives, and quantitative performance measures.
- **The Present:** The present situation, or current environment, is typically described in terms of the organization's mission, guiding principles (or values), organizational strengths (or enablers), and organizational barriers (weaknesses or challenges).
- **The Future:** The desired future is described by the organizational vision and targets.
- **The How:** The preferred route to achieving the organizational goals, objectives, and mission is communicated as a strategy or as strategic goals (Gates, 2010: 6).
- Strategic planning in the educational institution works to improve the conditions, recruits the best employees, attracts the excellence students, redevelops the buildings and gets the material resources to achieve goals (Doris) (Kelley, & Trainer, 2004).

From this point the educational departments adopt the strategic planning. Due to the important results achieved in the educational institutions, it provides an opportunity for all senior management, the middle and the lower participation in the planning implementation and evaluation of strategic plans. Also, contributes to improve it, creates a sense of responsibility,

belonging and commitments from people towards it. Also strategic planning includes measurable specific objectives and goals, action strategies, and determines standards for accountability especially by the monitoring bodies (Brewer, 2003).

A manager should be able to outline the benefits of strategic planning to others. These include:

□ ***Motivating staff and volunteers.*** Thinking about the future is a stimulating and energizing process. It can create a shared vision, with concrete ideas about how to surmount obstacles in order to achieve that vision.

□ ***Building a planning team with a common vision.*** The strategic plan that emerges from the process is generally more realistic and achievable, and the working or the interdependent relationships within the organization are strengthened.

□ ***Confronting key issues and solving problems.*** Strategic planning sets in motion a dynamic process that allows the organization to continually reassess, confront change and grow within an agreed-upon framework. Good strategic planning is a time- and labor intensive process. Before you begin, it is important to ask some key questions:

- Have you consulted at all levels and fully explained the purposes and levels of involvement required for strategic planning?
- Have you assembled important background data and information about your organization and the environment in which you work, or created a team or teams to collect and review it?
- Have you determined whether an external facilitator is advisable given the size or nature of your planning group or organization?

- Have you included representatives of all levels of your organization in the planning process?
- Have you identified and allocated all of the financial resources needed for the planning process, including the production and dissemination of the final plan?
- In fact, have you developed a simple work plan and budget for the exercise?

□ ***Defining roles and responsibilities.*** Measurable performance objectives are set and the person(s) who is responsible for specific activities is/are identified.

□ ***Challenging the status quo.*** The process creates an open atmosphere and stresses the interests of the whole organization. It often answers the question “How can we do things better?” in a more systematic and thorough way.

□ ***Allowing busy managers and policy makers to concentrate.*** Exclusively on the organization’s future for a short period of time, meaning that they will be able to focus their expertise and insights on self-assessment and planning future directions.

□ ***Explaining or exposing your organization to others, particularly donors.*** A thoughtful and clear strategic plan is often a good marketing tool and can encourage donor support for the organization and its future directions.

□ ***Developing a renewed sense of organizational mission and consensus,*** so that individual perspectives, roles, and problems are subsumed by an overall plan that coordinates all staff members and volunteers so that agreed-upon goals and objectives are achieved in a timely manner. (Pathfinder international, 2016:65)

Strategic planning stages and elements:

Not to oversimplify the planning process, but by placing all the parts of a plan into three areas, you can clearly see how the pieces fit together. The three pieces of the puzzle has certain elements to show you how and where things fit in. For a visual on this discussion see Figure 3-1.

- Where are we now?
 - Strategic Review
 - Mission
 - Values
- Where are we going?
 - Vision
 - Competitive Advantage
- How will we get there?
 - Strategic Objectives
 - Goals
 - Priorities
 - Action Items
 - Strategies
 - Scorecard
 - Execution. (olsen,2007:36)

The researcher combines strategic planning stages of several studies: (Brayson, 2003), (gates, 2010) and (The Foundation for Community

THE STAGES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING:

First: preparation stage

- 1- Strategic planning for the environment surrounding the organization, includes:
 - External environment: It means the factors that affect all organizations located outside the boundaries of the organization and the

management control, and within it the administrative work had done Include all political, economic, cultural, social, legal and technological factors.

- Internal environment: represents the current and future energy, financial, humanitarian possibilities and values of the members that affect the goals and strategies of the organization. These factors may represent strengths or restrictions that should be made to avoid or minimize the negative effects.
- 2- Strategic formulation: Define strategy as if it is a declaration of intents and determine what you want to be in the long-term, and this needs to be familiar with all operations in order to avoid potential stumbles.
 - 3- Set on the strategic plan: Setting the strategic plan for the institutions going through the following steps:
 - Formulate the vision and the thesis of the institution.

The vision: It can be said that the vision is the form of the organization in the future as the manager wants, this includes the organization's position in the market depending on its value, reputation, production and services.

The organization thesis: The existence of any organization is linked to a specific message that is sought to be achieved, and it is derived from the environment and the community to which the organization belongs.

- Set on the goals and objectives:

The concept refers to the goals of the final results for the organization that are related to determine the purpose to distinguish it from other similar organizations.

Second: Implementation stage

It is a process of policies and plans that have been previously fulfilled through programs and the needed current budget to

reach the optimal strategic choice, then to implement the strategy and monitoring it to get feedback on any deviations to be adjusted, or emphasize the implementation and promotion steps.

1- Strategic alternatives, includes:

Studying number of alternatives that help in bridging the gap and achieve the ordinary goals. The decision-maker may create new entrances to resolve any problem, this means that the choice is between two types of strategies which are:

- Offensive or preventive strategies: Are the strategies that the decision-maker take before the environmental conditions do that.
- Defensive or therapeutic strategies: Strategies taken by the decision maker in reaction to the surrounding environmental pressure.

Third: Monitoring and evaluation stage.

Mainly intended to make sure of the accuracy of thought, planning and execution efficiency, monitoring the strategic plan extends to ascertain the quality of strategic thinking and the strategic plan, making sure of the quality of the actual performance and to match it with the planned target, in order to enable the organization to compete with others, and pay attention to operations and activities of strategic planning. By being the best competitor this will enable the team to provide higher value products and contribute to support the organization.

How do we maintain the strategic planning of failure?

Strategic planning is a real cultural sense and recently new to the Arab Universities, needs to be more patient to set the plans especially that the Arab universities lack of culture-based planning goals which convert the planning documents to realistic. It seems for the strategic planning researchers that the failure of the Arab Universities and institutions is caused

by the insufficient financial funding which weaken and stop their work.

The causes that lead to the success of the strategic planning in universities: there are some points that summarize the discussion between the administrators and the staff in the academic institution which indicates that the strategic planning is a cultural practice, and concentrate on the need to think about these points before starting the strategic planning process, and take seriously the fundamental principles that help to the success of the strategic planning process. These principles clarified by the following ten tips:

1. The clarity of the role of senior leadership and their commitment.
2. Participation of faculty members in the strategic planning process.
3. A balanced role of the Trustee Board in the strategic planning process.
4. It is important to avoid listening to yourself more than necessary.
5. Extraordinary efforts to communicate with stakeholders at all stages of the planning process.
6. Trust is the most important factor in the planning process.
7. Planning is not a linear process.
8. Dreams do not cost a lot.
9. Stakeholders need to see tangible results.
10. The risk of work. (Balanced Scorecard Institute, 2015)

The Association for Strategic Planning (2016), a U.S.-based, non-profit professional association dedicated to advancing thought and practice in strategy development and deployment, has developed a *Lead-Think-Plan-Act* rubric and accompanying Body of Knowledge to capture and disseminate best practice in the field of strategic planning and management. ASP has also

developed criteria for assessing strategic planning and management frameworks against the Body of Knowledge.

The criteria developed by the ASP are:

1. Uses a Systems Approach that starts with the end in mind.
2. Incorporates Change Management and Leadership Development to effectively transform an organization to high performance.
3. Provides Actionable Performance Information to better inform decision making.
4. Incorporates Assessment-Based Inputs of the external and internal environment, and an understanding of customers and stakeholder needs and expectations.
5. Includes Strategic Initiatives to focus attention on the most important performance improvement projects.
6. Offers a Supporting Toolkit, including terminology, concepts, steps, tools, and techniques that are flexible and scalable.
7. Aligns Strategy and Culture, with a focus on results and the drivers of results.
8. Integrates Existing Organization Systems and Aligns the Organization Around Strategy.
9. Be Simple to Administer, Clear to Understand and Direct, and Deliver Practical Benefits Over the Long-Term.
10. Incorporates Learning and Feedback to Promote Continuous Long-term Improvement.

Studies on international experiences for educated strategic planning:

The researcher was able to get global strategic planning experiences through studies of educational institutions in many countries through leaflets and pages of these institutions, which explain their strategic plans:

Experience of Pingry School and on the official front page (2015) study showed that the Technology Committee formulates the Strategic Technology Plan, intended to support the vision of technology at Pingry, and revises the plan annually.

The Pingry School is committed to fostering intellectual exploration, individual growth and social responsibility in their students' lifelong pursuit of excellence and honor. Pingry envisions its students as global citizens and leaders in the 21st century. The mission of technology is to support the broader statement/mission of the school.

In the interest of having students take ownership of their education, technological skill-building will be integrated into the curriculum. Pingry believes that full and equitable access to technological resources, available anytime and anywhere, must be a high priority for Pingry students, faculty and staff, classrooms that facilitate inquiry-based learning, cooperative learning and collaborative partnerships are needed to support this new and exciting enterprise. Teachers will have the resources to support guided inquiry and direct their students as they become independent and fully engaged learners.

The research (Wanjala&Rarieya, 2014) shows the success of Kenya's secondary school experience in strategic planning. And finds out the reasons for the success of these schools and the failure of a lot of other schools experiences include knowledge and awareness of strategic planning, leadership methods, financial resources, training and technical support.

Park Tudor School published its experience and mention that the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic year brought with it the launch of our Strategic Planning Process for the next generation of our Strategic Plan, PT 2020. The Board of Directors has approved our master plan as a "plan in process" and the new Strategic Plan will aim to align with this evolving campus master plan. The master plan can be seen as a flexible

framework by which the school can begin to make long-term decisions about where future structures should be placed and how current structures may evolve. The new Strategic Plan will weave itself into this framework and help define the vision for Park Tudor's future.

A Strategic Planning Steering Committee has been created as a subcommittee of the Board's Long Range Planning Committee, and three strategic focus areas have been identified. Over the course of the year, the committee will conduct learning sessions on these focus areas whereby we will begin to create a lens through which to view change, develop priorities and generate action steps moving forward.

Public high school experience in Amman (Azboon, 2012) explained the implementation of strategic planning in public high schools. The targeted group was formed from supervisors and managers of educational schools in Amman. The study revealed that the degree of implementation of the strategic planning in public high schools in Amman was moderate on all sides. According to the results, the Ministry of Education must publish the programs which supported the dissemination and implementation of strategic planning methods in Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Develop the administrative department in the Ministry of Education in order to monitor and evaluate the strategic planning process at the school.

Romanian educational institutions experience: (Teodora, ttarcza & Laszlo, Florian & Aurelia, Bodog,2012) shows that the experiment began in Romania (2012) analysis the environment based on student's performance, parents, school boards, local authorities and stakeholders that should be involved in the great effort for the success of strategic plans. It was clear that the Romanian schools lack quality of sources, therefore, and because of the awareness of the importance of strategic planning it was necessary to increase the quality of human resources in the Romanian education institutions. Since

increased of funding will not solve all problems, the money could serve to increase the quality of learners through incentives.

Atlanta International School experience: The Atlanta International School Strategic Plan for 2011-2016 was crafted during the 2010-2011 School Year using input from the AIS community. The plan objectives, project goals and continuous improvement goals will direct the school's growth, development and improvement over the next five years as they seek to maximize the delivery of their mission and live their core values as a school and wider community. The overarching themes of the plan will in turn be used to guide their action planning as they seek to move from strategic thinking to actual implementation for each and every project goal.

Calhoun school experience: Calhoun's goal is to inspire a passion for learning through a progressive approach to education that values intellectual pursuit, creativity, diversity and community involvement. When Calhoun's most recent strategic plan was adopted in 2006, the school had completed a period of significant growth and accomplishment. In the seven years following the setting of 1999 goals, Calhoun's growth was remarkable.

Their vision is to strengthen their place among the world's preeminent progressive schools and to sustain the ongoing vitality of their mission by assuring that the school has the financial resources to fully support their aspirations.

Calhoun's faculty is passionate about the mission, dedicated to the students and highly skilled and knowledgeable. By improving salaries, recruitment, retention and professional development they will fulfill their commitment to better support Calhoun's greatest asset.

Because of the hard work and generosity of a great many people, Calhoun is now in a position to reinvest in and further invigorate their program. They will improve Calhoun's progressive educational programs with richer and deeper

immersion and interdisciplinary approaches, more fully integrate the school's core values into the curriculum, build external relationships in service of the mission, and advance their role as a nationally renowned leader in experiential and site-based learning.

Palestine, West bank experience: (Kurdi,2010) study shows that the implementation of strategic planning of the West Bank in Palestine were intermediate, which confirm the need to use strategic planning in educational institutions, enhance and publish the culture of strategic planning, training employees in the departments of Education on strategic planning skills and how to prepare strategic plans.

(Le Jardin) experience: The Le Jardin Academy strategic planning process was initiated by the Board of Trustees in Spring 2009, A strategic planning committee was formed, consisted of 20 members with representation from faculty, administration, trustees, and parents. The coheirs of the committee were LJA Head of School, Adrian Allan, and Trustee, Mark Recktenwald. The committee began its work with an organizational meeting in June 2009. A consultant, Thomas Mitrano, was retained to support and guide the process, which emphasized a web based approach to facilitate the committee's work and to efficiently capture the input received by the committee. The committee met a total of seven times to develop the strategy for the planning process, to collect information, and then to develop the plan submitted here.

Greenhill School (2009): Building on the work done in their comprehensive Strategic Plan of 2002, issues were identified that resulted in working groups of Board, administration and faculty. Today, Greenhill School is a strong and vibrant institution that excels in its mission and is justly recognized as a leader among independent schools, in Dallas and beyond. As they continue to strive for excellence, the Board of Trustees, administration and faculty have worked together to

identify specific courses of action and prioritize needs for Greenhill School over the next few years.

Millard school experience: (Johnson, 2004) study shows that Millard schools used an integrated way summarized the strategic planning, and show the relationship between the framework of planning and performance results. It has been used Cambridge strategic planning model and implementation of effective policies, programs and operations through observing leadership and management, teachers and community members, parents and students in the school district. And it was necessary to continue to assess the success, enable organizations to implement the strategic planning processes.

Italian universities experience: Bronzetti, and Mazzotta, Ana Nardo(2012)the strategic planning process in Italian Universities. We identify two macro strategic planning dimensions: one for the process and one for the plan substance. We create a synthetic indicator of plan and process quality. Based on quality of plan and process we create a cluster matrix of universities. We also conduct empirical research to determine if university size is correlated with quality of strategic planning. We find a positive correlation between university size and the process and plan quality.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Planning is linked between the past, present and future to ensure the future.
2. Planning must involve all resources and manpower in strategic planning.
3. Spreading awareness of strategic planning, leadership styles, financial and technical support are the basis of the success of the strategic planning process.
4. Government and leadership support and ensure success for the planning stages.

5. Improvement process (Programs, salaries, professional development, external relations and multi-disciplinary approaches) must precedes the strategic planning and be contemporary with its steps.
6. Some countries still need initial steps in strategic planning, includes cultural planning, training and skills, and the study of previous plans and initiate strategic plans.
7. The stage of thinking about the strategic planning must be coincided with the stages of the implementation and the following-up
8. In strategic planning we need to be more patient, especially there are some educational institutions lack the culture of strategic planning by which the goals are transferred from being documentary planned to actually being achieved in the reality.

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