



Evaluation of Strategic Management Components in the Universities of Iran with Internationalization Approach

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Evaluation of strategic management components in the universities of Iran is carried out by internationalization approach. This has a great importance in terms of health and survival of organization and codification and appropriate implementation of strategies. As managers and other stakeholder in codification process and strategy implementation are not aware of the effective factors of this process and reasons of failure in practice as well as they don't benefit from proposed theoretical frameworks, successful implementation of strategic management will be so difficult or sometimes impossible. Therefore, there is a need for accurate investigations about the key factors of codification and implementation of the most practical management tools. Thus, a comprehensive knowledge is acquired to help the policymakers consider effective implementation of strategic plans. **Method of research:** This is a descriptive research and analytical type. Statistic population of the research includes 800 faculty members of the universities of Tehran during 2005-2006. Cochran sampling method was used and 260 people were selected as sample. Data have been analyzed and calculated by SPSS software. **Results and conclusion:** The obtained results have indicated that the strategic management components with internationalization approach are desirable. This can be accepted for management to consider possibilities, limitations and educational implications, exchange of information between managers and faculty members of universities, management control over implementation of educational strategies and the emergence of strategic implications.

Keywords: Strategic Management, Internationalization Approach, Iran

JEL Classification: L1

1. INTRODUCTION

Increase in complexity of activities and change in environment of today's world have faced managers with difficulties. Ignoring these problems will have irreversible consequences. This fact can be confirmed by successful organizations that have lost their high position as a result of ill-conceived strategies and have been excluded from the competition. In the recent years, many managers have realized that traditional planning is unable to solve their problems. So, strategic management is raised as a necessity of organizations and has been discussed in societies. Every organization or university having appropriate strategic management resulted from competent management and international approach will be successful in practice. When the strategy of organization is inappropriate, it doesn't have a good chance to be stable in today's changing world, despite some within organization success or some sectional efficiency (Shani, 2004). Therefore, we can say that in terms of health and survival

of organization, the codification and appropriate implementation of strategies is very essential. If managers and other involved forces in the codification and strategic implementation process don't be enough aware of effective factors on this process and reasons for their failure in practice, and if they don't benefit from theoretical frames presented by professors, then successful implementation of strategic plans will be difficult or impossible (Arabi, 2007). So, there's a need for accurate studies and researches on key factors of codification and implementation of the most practical management tools, so that a comprehensive knowledge is acquired before strategic plan implementation. According to the mentioned issues and since universities of the country are the main effective organizations of the country and due to the expectation of officials and public from this organization, and because the main purpose of universities is offering services, training experts and communication with other scientific centers, therefore it's not appropriate to continue current situation. Senior administrators of organizations are required to empower themselves in order

to offer good services and implement the considered goals and commit themselves to meet the needs more and better. Strategic management that most of top and successful organizations tend to implement it is a way that can help senior administrators of universities of the country to achieve the mentioned goals with internationalization approach. Therefore, this issue is raised that how much attention has the strategic management component with internationalization approach received in universities of the country?

The impact of strategic management phenomenon on the system of universities of the country covers different subjects. With a comprehensive approach to different dimensions of the system of universities, we can mention some items such as contents, ability of teachers, teaching methods, and assessment of educational progress, scientific resources and physical environment of the universities. In this strategy management age, If university wants to do well, it's required to consider some key factors such as contents of the books, ability of teachers, teaching methods, assessment of educational progress, scientific resources and physical environment of universities with an international approach. In this changing and turbulent age, the managers of organizations and institutions have faced severe insecurities in planning and future decisions due to the global and regional quick changes and internal events. These new changes require new needs and one of them is the need to evaluate strategic management component with internationalization approach.

As a result of interaction with social, economic, political and cultural environment, the universities of different societies have had some changes too, so there's a need to strategic management with internationalization approach in universities of the country (Karimi, 2002).

Also, according to the studies in documents of high education, as a developing country, Iran has to experience new changes to stay in the world competition field. As mentioned in 20 years perspective of Iran (1404): "Iran is a developed country, in the first economical, scientific and strategic place in the region with Islamic and revolutionary identity, inspiring in the Muslim world, with effective interaction in international relations, advance knowledge, capable of producing science and technology, dependent on human resources and social capital in national production and reached to the first economic, scientific and technologic place in the south west of Asia (including middle Asia, Ghafghaz, Middle East and neighbor countries) emphasizing on software movement and producing science, rapid and continuous economic growth, promoting the relative level of per capita income" (council of cultural revolution,1378).

Therefore in such situation that universities and high education institutions of the country have capacity and extensive internationalization capabilities. From another hand, according to the regulatory approvals and documents, internationalization of universities is illustrated as a perfect priority. Although, it's not clear that for what reason or reasons these opportunities aren't utilized for scientific promotion and providing financial resources for universities of our country, while there're few foreign students

studying there, and it doesn't illustrate capacities and abilities of our universities.

In addition to ignoring internationalization approach of our universities, traditional approach benefits more than other approaches and educational courses. It means that internationalization mainly requires education to consider researches and offering services as main functions of universities and high education institutions to an approach for responding to requirements of environment and international citizens. So, in this research we evaluate strategic management component of universities of the country with internationalization approach. These components are based on 5 components from Kaldol And Spiknez. These components are:

1. Educational manager's attention to possibilities, limitations and consequences
2. Exchange of information between managers and faculty members
3. Manager's regard to processes that enable universities to determine their strategies and set their priorities.
4. Manager's care of faculty member's attention to strategic issues
5. Manager's control on the performance of educational strategies and strategic consequences (Karimi, 2002).

1.1. Strategic Management

Among knowledge advances of management in the past decades, we can mention a new movement called strategic management. This movement is developed through trading comparative efforts and now is taking its way in other domains of management, due to the ability of principles; it has been able to find an appropriate place and has been accepted by all (Monavarian et al., 2010).

So far, many definitions have been presented on strategic management and many of them have had common points that some will be mentioned here.

Strategic management indicates the proceeding process of strategic plans and ensuring appropriate implementations of them to guarantee long term success of organization (Arabi, 2005).

Haskison and colleagues believe that strategic management is a set of commitments, decisions and activities that a company requires to achieve a strategic competitive situation and higher than average incomes. Also, we can say that: Strategic management is a process that domestic and foreign organizations analyze themselves based on it and acquire knowledge from it. Besides, they can establish their strategic path and create a strategy that helps them to achieve the goals. All these efforts are to satisfy key members of organizational formation called beneficiaries (Arabi and Almasi, 2010).

In another definition of strategic management, it's a set of management decisions and activities that determines long term performance of an organization and includes codification, implementation, evaluation and strategic control. Therefore, strategic management indicates observation and evaluation of opportunities and environmental threats by emphasizing on

identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization . In another definition, strategic management is a systematic reaction or a sensitive responsibility in general management domain to guarantee constant success of organization and prevent from sudden events. It should be able to connect organization with the environment and stand up (Ansof, 2000).

1.2. Internationalization in Higher Education

Experts around the world have always made efforts to conceptualize the internationalization theory in higher education. Among them Nite has had a great role (Zhun, 2010). Nite has defined organizational nationalization as “the process of integrating an international, cross-cultural and global dimension in objectives, functions and method of education.” Although internationalization and globalization aren’t the same, but they have connected concepts. Globalization is supposed to be as a catalyst, while “internationalization is a kind of response, active and smart” it can change the world of higher education and globalization can change the world of internationalization .

Internationalization indicates the relation between government and nations, so that it encourages knowledge and respect to traditions and differences .But globalization phenomenon doesn’t tend to respect differences and borders. It analyzes many basics of governments and follows homogeneity and integration 3. Internationalization is a compensation process to globalization tendencies and supporting resistance against the latest effects of homogenization and nationality purge 4 (Gacel, 2005). Anti-domination and live education occurs in the context of science and international action, where societies are considered as a part of bigger and more comprehensive world. In educational system, this process requires a multi-dimensional and comprehensive practical plan to be integrated and combined in all domains of education (Knight and de Wit, 1999).

Most experts believe that the main element of internationalization is curriculum of universities. Knight (2003), believes that internationalization is a theory that tends to create two types of changes in curriculums of universities: One of them is changing curriculums to match them with the needs of students and activate students of different cultures, and second , changing curriculums with the purpose of preparing students for life and work in the environments and organizations different from home and university of students.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

Knight (2004), has conducted a research on the relation between the method of regulatory leadership and strategic management, a case on the 4-year universities in New York City. In this research, he compares strategic management and leadership by evaluating the states of leaders and planning documents of institutions. In this study, first two connected structures are explained and data was gathered on different indices of strategic management and different types of leadership. This data represents that determination of different types of strategic management and types of regulatory leadership is complicated.

Finally after evaluation and data analysis, the following consequences were obtained:

- Regulatory leadership is very important in the process of formal planning.
- Strategic management will remain as very important factor in higher education.

In their article entitled the quality of management and leadership issues and the role of manager in setting implementation strategy, points to the role of leadership as a key element of organization in providing and implementation of strategic plans. He states that strategic understanding of leadership on organizational performance requires the evaluation of different level of leadership in organization simultaneously. He also notes that in different levels, the leaders affect on strategic plans and their implementations. In line with this fact, he has studied the relationship between leadership setting and implementation strategy in a big health care product organization. He concluded that successful implementation of strategic plans requires tangible and intangible process and resources occurred in two spheres and two levels.

The first level mainly has focused on explanation of special and new strategy of tangible resources for supporting the change and in the second level, emphasize has been on changing nature of interaction between doctors and patients.

One of the prominent researches who has conducted a research with the purpose of evaluating relation between the internationalization and quality of higher education. In the evaluation of higher education, he represented qualitative indices as the research default to evaluate universities with internationalization approach. He has concluded that there’s a positive and significant relation between internationalization and quality of higher education.

Kallen (2005), is another researcher who has conducted a research on the effect of studying abroad on students and he concluded that in line with internationalization of curriculums in universities, there’re special cultural opportunities and of course cultural trainings for students. Crossing cultures helps to acquire knowledge and experience that can’t be achieved at home country. The stereotypes are broken, vain prejudices are moderated and a wider perspective from individual and society will be provided for foreign students.

2.1. Hypothesis of the Research

- Manager’s regard to possibilities, limitations, and educational consequences based on internationalization approach is pleasant.
- Exchange of information between managers and faculty members based on internationalization approach is pleasant.
- Manager’s regard to processes that enables universities to determine their strategies and set priorities based on internationalization approach is pleasant.
- University manager’s control on the implementation of educational strategies and strategic consequences based on internationalization approach is pleasant.

3. METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This is a descriptive-analytical and practical research. The statistic society in this research includes faculty members of Tehran University in study year of 1394-1395, approximately 800 members. So, sampling will be stratified method commensurate with the size. First, different units in different regions of several universities will be selected, then all managers and faculty members will be determined and finally random sampling will be used. By Cochran sampling, the sample size of 260 members was obtained. To measure variables, some tools were used in this research such as:

The researcher made questionnaire was used. To determine internal consistency and validity coefficient of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used. According to the conducted analysis by SPSS software, the total Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire (21 test question) is 0.742.

And it represents a very good coefficient. It suggests that the elements of the questionnaire have good internal consistency (Table 1).

This value represents that the questions of the questionnaire are completely consistent with each other. In another word, the elements and components of the questionnaire have homology and homogeneity and measure a common concept.

3.1. Explanation of Findings

3.1.1. Demographic analysis of the sample

From total of 260 people answered to the questionnaire, most of them were between 40-50 with the estimate of 52.31%, 179 men and 81 women.

In terms of education, most of them were people with PHD or above. In terms of job experience, with the estimate of 61.92, most of them have 11-15 years of experience.

Table 1: Total alpha coefficient of the questionnaire

The questionnaire alpha coefficient	The number of questionnaire's items
0.742	21

Table 2: Descriptive indices of single sampling T results

Factor	Number	Mean±SD	Standard error
First hypothesis	260	16.4769±1.52313	0.09446
Second hypothesis	260	15.0577±1.91734	0.11891
Third hypothesis	260	17.0500±2.80674	0.17407
Fourth hypothesis	260	13.4000±2.51206	0.15579
Fifth hypothesis	260	13.2308±2.38087	0.14766

Table 3: The results of single sampling T test for hypothesis of the research

Factor	Statistics t	Degree of freedom	Significance	Mean difference	Confidence interval 95%	
					Lower	Higher
First hypothesis	47.395	259	0.000	4.47692	4.2909	4.6629
Second hypothesis	25.715	259	0.000	3.05769	2.8235	3.2918
Third hypothesis	11.777	259	0.000	2.05000	1.7072	2.3928
Fourth hypothesis	8.986	259	0.000	1.40000	1.0932	1.7068
Fifth hypothesis	8.335	259	0.000	1.23077	0.9400	1.5215

3.2. Hypothesis Test

In order to evaluate the hypothesis, single sampling T test have been used (Tables 2 and 3).

The results of single sampling T test and also the results (sig<0.05) represented that with the confidence of 99% and the error level of <0.001.

Mean difference of scores for all hypothesizes is in a good level.

3.3. Fridman Test

In order to evaluate and analyze the variance of variables Fridman test is used here. This test is applied when we want to study the opinions of a group in different areas and according to these opinions we determine priorities. The following indices are prioritized based on the sample society's opinion (Table 4).

According to output of the table, which is based on statistics, we can conclude that it shows important indices in line with internationalization approach respectively. According to the table, manager's consideration to facilities, limitations and educational consequences as an important factor in line with internationalization approach is the most important and determination of university manager's control based on internationalization approach is the least important priority (Table 5).

4. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

According to the results of the research, we can conclude that strategic management components have been applied more than average. When they're planning and making decisions, educational managers consider the limitation of society, university and threats of society. They act in a way to perform strategic plans without the pressure of different groups of society and university. They also consider facilities; it means that considering the facilities of universities and the around environment, they codify plans to perform.

Also, the reaction of performed strategic plans is very effective in decisions and future planning because through the reaction of plans, some changes or amendments can be done. Fortunately, the results have represented that most of managers consider this issue, and considering facilities, limitations and educational consequences has been more than average. Sanderson (2008), in their article entitled the key factors of success in strategic management, have focused on 5 dimensions of effective analyses on strategic implementation. They include the process of strategy codification, systematic implementation, following and control of implementation, management of implementation, senior

Table 4: Rating results based on the respondents opinions

Rating	Index	Mean
1	Manager's consideration to, facilities limitations and educational consequences	4.13
2	Exchange of information between managers and faculties	3.97
3	Determination of manager's consideration based on internationalization approach	3
4	Determination of manager's care based on internationalization approach	2.04
5	Determination of university manager's control based on internationalization approach	10.86

Table 5: The results of Fridman test based on the respondent's opinion

Test	N	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Fridman	260	493.564	4	0.000

management, staffs and finally participatory supervision leading to change. This study supposes that systematic development of the 5 mentioned dimensions can increase the chance of definite progress of successful implementation of strategic plans.

This research considers some factors such as clear strategy, organizational culture, staff participation, organizational structure, implementation periodic pursuit of senior management, leadership support in implementation of strategy, appropriate and motivated human resources as successful factors of strategic plans implementation. They are also in line with the results of this research.

Also, Oreali and colleagues (2010), in their article entitled the quality of management and leadership issues and the impact of manager's role on setting of implementation strategy, emphasizes on the role of manager as a key element of organization in providing and implementing strategic plans. He states that strategic understanding of management on organizational performance requires different leadership levels of organization to be evaluated simultaneously. He notes that in different levels, the leaders affect on strategic plans and their implementation. In line with this issue, he has studied the relation between leadership setting and implementation strategy in a big health care organization. He has concluded that successful implementation of strategic plans requires tangible and intangible resources, in two areas and two random levels. Mainly the first level has focused on explanation of new and specific strategy of tangible resources for supporting the change. In the second level, the emphasize has been on changing nature of interaction between patients and doctors which is in line with this research. It also is in line with Karimi's research, Karimi's findings represent that the consideration of facilities, limitations and educational consequences components in Isfahan city has been more than average. The issue of participatory management in different organizations is one of the issues that has been considered by the relevant officials. Managers are required to be aware of the verdict and opinions of others in their decisions, because participation in strategic plans increases the responsibility and commitment of the staffs for implementation of plans. Knight (2004), in a research entitled "regulatory leadership

style and strategic management in new York state universities" has concluded that regulatory leadership is very important in the process of formal planning.

Having enough time for control and supervision and orientation with appropriate control of activities and appropriate management are reasons for this issue.

5. SUGGESTIONS

The results of conducted research represent some important points in different dimensions. Some suggestions are presented as following:

- It's necessary for strategic decisions and planning to be decentralized and it's possible by the establishment of self-regulation system and devolution and codification of planning in regard to geographic, cultural and social conditions.
- By providing fields of creativity and for faculty members and students and encouraging them, university managers can utilize their achievements to advance the goals of university in line with internationalization approach.
- University officials should try to provide friendship environment in universities so that they can discuss problems and their activities without fear of each other, so they can help each other to solve problems.
- Increasing scientific information and also new and advanced technologies should be provided for universities to set strategic plans and prioritize them in line with internationalization approach.
- In discussion meetings on the codification of strategic plans and even implementation of these plans in line with internationalization approach, managers should ask for faculty members opinion and always try to engage agreement of others in planning.
- University administration should encourage and persuade faculty members and appreciate them.
- Managers are required to evaluate the results of plans and review the reasons of success or failure of plans and if necessary, try to change, correct or complete the plans.
- Managers are required to evaluate the performance of faculty members regularly and this evaluation is for those people to be aware of their performance and to strengthen abilities and remove weaknesses in line with internationalization approach.

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